

Integrated marketing helps catch new customers



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Businesses can improve the odds of landing new customers with an integrated marketing approach—using multiple tools and channels to lure new prospects.

The concept of integrated marketing is a little like fishing. Traditionally, a fisherman takes his boat to a secluded spot in the lake, drops his hook, bait, and sinker into the water, and waits. Imagine how much the fisherman would increase his chances for success if he had multiple lines in the water...at varying depths...using different bait on each hook—and he was where the fish were. Every day, businesses try to “catch” valued customers. But in most mature industries, there are no more “secluded spots” — competitors are angling for the same trophy clients.

As a result, businesses can improve the odds of landing new customers with an integrated marketing approach—using multiple tools and channels to lure new prospects.

The basics of integration

The term “integrated marketing” means using multiple communication channels, often engaging prospects at a variety of “touch points,” in a coordinated effort to trigger specific responses. The most common are:

Advertising: The most traditional and recognized channel—businesses pay a negotiated amount and their messages are displayed in the media. Print advertising in geographically centered, targeted publications can yield the best results.

Interactive/electronic communication: The Internet, including Web sites, jump pages, e-mail/eNewsletters, blogs (web logs), search engine

It is wise to use a variety of strategies to enlist new clients, as a synergy emerges when many avenues are combined

optimization, as well as computer-based channels such as multimedia CD-ROMs. These methods can be broad-based or geo-specific.

Public relations: Communicating corporate messages through non-paid outlets, such as media coverage, special events, and promotions.

Direct marketing: Delivering messages to targeted audiences via one-to-one conduits, such as a mailed postcard.

Each of these disciplines can be effective on its own. However, the combined impact of these disciplines will generate more awareness, more opportunities and, ideally, more sales for you and your company.

Companies must coordinate all appropriate marketing media for brand consistency, cost efficiency and the best return on investment (ROI).

Engage, inform, persuade

Here’s an example of a program that really clicked for one of our clients. The campaign used print ads in key industry publications, public relations announcements and targeted HTML emails to drive interested customers to a Web site to register for a special promotional offer. Prior to this campaign, the client did not own any customer information.

In one month, over 8,500 people registered detailed customer information; and 60% asked to be contacted in the future with more special offers. Most important, the client started an important relationship with 8,500 potential customers it had never

met. The client tells us that the best customer lead responses have come from integrated campaigns.

Both bottom lines

Especially in an unpredictable market, an integrated marketing approach makes sense for businesses. Overall, companies using integrated marketing perceive these benefits:

- **Consistency:** Your company’s messages will be reinforced and thus become more recognized by your prospective and current customers.

- **Cost savings:** Marketing materials can be re-purposed by the different channels, so each project doesn’t have to start from scratch.

- **Multiple “touches”:** The more times you reach your audience, the more likely your business is to be remembered. This is also a cost-effective method since many publications reduce their rates for increased ads.

- **Measurement:** By establishing metrics across the board, businesses can evaluate which channel is most effective, allowing you to make adjustments as the project progresses and further improving the ROI.

If you really want to reel in new customers, and make the ones you have more profitable, use the power of integrated marketing. **BXM**

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