

# connect

August/September 2011

by MAIL PRINT

## CHANGE

A Catalyst for Transformation

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A photograph of a man with dark, curly hair and a surprised expression, looking over the top edge of a silver laptop. The laptop's Apple logo is visible in the bottom left corner.

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# It's Natural

**W**e have a saying here at Mail Print. Your company might even have the same one, "The only thing we can count on at Mail Print is change."

Having thrived for 23 years (it's hard to believe it all started August 8, 1988) in an industry that has been rocked to its very core we know that change brings both good and bad. It's not the destination it is the transformation that is awe inspiring.

Over those 23 years Mail Print has progressed from quick printing and sticking address labels, to complex variable data printing; from bounced email to direct mail that happens because a record got altered in a database. We have gone from a darkroom where film was developed, stripped into flats and plates being burned to a world where there are no plates and a run of one piece is possible.

Transforming a business is a journey and demands a completely different mindset than the one that brought us to this point. Typically, a marketer's mind is one that sees possibilities and embraces change. It's part of why Mail Print is not only a printing company, but a marketing services firm. We have the minds of marketers who just happen to also be printers. In turn, marketers, by definition, are market based, and when you are market based then the answers flow freely and change comes easily.

In this edition of *Connect*, we are proud to present a unique look at how to manage transformation and how astute marketers utilize the lifecycle curve as their guide. Our interview with Elle Harrison, author of "Wild Courage," combined with University

of Alabama's Adam Rapp's insights may provide some ideas around both personal and business transformation that will lead to greater prosperity.

In addition to our cover article, we are very excited to present a unique perspective on cross media campaigns. With expert advice from Karin Stroh of XMPie, a Xerox company, and the inspiring story from the National Hockey League (NHL), you will get an idea of what it means to use cross media to truly engage clients on a deeper level. We believe that modern marketers realize that a successful strategy must utilize multiple channels of communication. Mail Print continues to be at the forefront of providing the tools, but we are more excited about sharing the ideas of how to succeed and how to properly manage expectations and generate return.

Offering a good mix of thought-provoking and digestible content and data, we hope that you enjoy the latest issue of *Connect*. We continue to endeavor to make people think, and we hope that you will feel free to share these insights with your peers. We believe sharing is where true knowledge exists and that people who share rather than hoard create long-term competitive advantages.

All the best,

**Mail Print**

**Mail Print continues to be at the forefront of providing the tools, but we are more excited about sharing the ideas of how to succeed and how to properly manage expectations and generate return.**



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2. Using the scanner on your smartphone, take a picture of the QR Code.
3. You'll be linked directly to an online article, video, or other content.

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# Traditional Ads Play Key Role in the Smartphone Purchase Funnel

**G**oogle, in partnership with Ipsos OTX MediaCT, an independent marketing research firm, conducted a study in late 2010 to gain a better understanding of smartphone consumer behavior.

The Mobile Movement study examines mobile habits and online activities—searching, shopping, and actions taken, such as making purchases, having interviewed over 5,000 U.S. online adults (18-64 years of age) who identified themselves as using a smartphone to access the Internet.



What is this? See page 3

Check out the Do's and Don'ts of Personalized QR Codes at <http://mprnt.co/using-qr-codes>

## Key findings:

- Nearly nine out of ten (89 percent) smartphone users say they use their smartphones throughout the day.
- Search engine websites are the most visited websites with 77 percent of smartphone users citing this, followed by social networking sites (65 percent), and retail websites (46 percent).
- Smartphones are a key shopping tool and are used across channels and throughout the research and decision-making process:
  - 79 percent of smartphone consumers use their phones to help with shopping (comparing prices, finding additional product info, locating a retailer).
  - 70 percent use their smartphones while shopping in the store.
  - 74 percent of smartphone shoppers make a purchase as a result of using their smartphone in-store.
- Nine out of ten say smartphone searches result in an action (purchasing, visiting a business, etc.).
- Cross-media exposure influences smartphone user shopping behavior:
  - 71 percent search on their phones because of an ad exposure—traditional, online, and mobile.
  - Traditional media advertising is the top driver of online search. Nearly seven out of ten smart phone users (68 percent) say that TV, radio, or print ads motivated them to perform a mobile search compared to mobile ads (27 percent) and online ads (18 percent).

**SOURCES:** Google Mobile Ads Blog, *Smartphone user study shows mobile movement under way*, April 26, 2011 and eMarketer, *How Searches on Smartphones Fit in the Purchase Funnel*, May 11, 2011.

[www.printinthemix.com](http://www.printinthemix.com)



## THE STATE OF CUSTOM CONTENT PUBLISHING - 2011

The year 2010 saw a surge in emerging platforms for custom content with video, mobile and virtual events spending, hitting an all-time high of \$12.5 billion, according to Characteristics Study: A Look at the Volume and Type of Content Marketing in America for 2011, by the Custom Content Council and ContentWise. With this said, the annual study finds print still dominates the market, with \$24 billion spent on print production and distribution, and \$3.6 billion spent on other forms of content.

### Highlights from the 11th Annual Study:

- **Investing in higher-impact print publications:** The average number of publication titles per company fell from 2.3 in 2007 to 1.7 in 2010, and the frequency of the average title dropped from 9 issues per year to 6.1. Yet the average per-issue page count rose from 22.2 in 2007 to 29.4 in 2010. The study finds that this is because marketers are investing in “less-frequent, higher-impact print publications.”
- **Use of color:** Nearly nine out of ten (88 percent) of companies used four-color production in printed custom publications—an all-time high.
- **Custom magazines making a comeback:** More than half (56 percent) of respondents say they are choosing to publish more costly magazines as opposed to putting out newsletters (37 percent).
- **Audience is customer-centric:** Companies are focusing their custom publishing on external audiences versus employees (79 percent to 21 percent). The study finds that employee communication is increasingly met by electronic communications while print is mostly reserved for marketing vehicles.
- **Decline in number of titles:** The number of custom titles in 2010 was 110,174 – 3,000 less than 2009. Companies have focused on broadening the array of content marketing media beyond print to make room for new communication media.
- **Circulation soars:** In 2010, average circulation per issue increased to an all-time high of 52,010 copies per issue, dwarfing the 19,595 circulation average of 1999, the year the study was initiated.
- **Paid advertisements expanded** for the third year in a row, with 30 percent of printed custom publications carrying them.



- **Other forms of content beyond print:** The most common alternative to custom print media being used are website updates of articles (79 percent), e-newsletters (61 percent), and branded video (44 percent). Video proved to be the fastest gainer, up 7 percent in popularity over 2009.
- **Growing popularity of branded video and mobile:** Companies say they plan to significantly grow their use of video. Video was the biggest gainer in 2010 and should see big gains in 2011 with nearly two-thirds saying they'll produce more this year. Marketers also plan to increase spending on mobile, with 43 percent planning to increase their use of this on-the-go content delivery method.

### Forms of Branded Content Used (percent of Respondents)

CONTENT	YES	NO
Website updates	79 percent	21 percent
Email newsletters	61	39
Branded video	44	56
RSS feeds	37	63
White papers	30	70
Virtual events	30	70
Podcasts/other audio	24	76
Mobile content	19	81
E-zines	18	82

**SOURCE:** Industry Characteristics Study, ContentWise & Custom Content Council, April 2011

**ABOUT:** The research was conducted via a mailed survey targeting a random sample of companies across all industries. Eight thousand surveys were mailed and close to 200 were completed and returned, producing a +/- 6 percent degree of accuracy at a 90 percent confidence level. Among the responding companies were: AARP, Allstate Insurance, ASPCA, Boston Scientific, GE Healthcare, Hoosier Energy, MassMutual, Nationwide, TCF National Bank, University of NC. The research was conducted by the monthly subscription newsletter ContentWise, a source of news, information and research on the content marketing industry.

# CHANGE

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## A Catalyst for Transformation

by Lorrie Bryan

**“What we call a beginning is often the end, and to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from.”**

– T. S. Elliot, prominent 20th century poet



**T**he rock stars of science—notables including the real inventor of the World Wide Web, founders of Akamai and iRobot, and the leaders of the Human Genome Project—gathered earlier this year for a symposium at MIT called “Computation and the Transformation of Practically Everything.” These über intellectuals reflected on the evolution of the Information Age in the last century and discussed the transformations that new exciting research of this century will yield. To illustrate how far technology has come in recent history, a prominent scientist noted that the computational power of the computer that guided man to the moon was literally embodied in the Furby—an inexpensive robotic toy mass produced in the late ‘90s.

Computation has changed finance, commerce, politics, entertainment, architecture, biology, manufacturing, and, well... practically everything, these pioneers asserted. They also noted that each landmark change seems to be eclipsed by a greater change in succession. In 1999, the Human Genome Project made history when they sequenced a billion letters of human DNA in just one year. Ten years later, biological researchers were able to sequence 125,000 billion letters in one year.

And so it goes. We have experienced tremendous change in recent years, but more spectacular quantum changes undoubtedly lie ahead.

### **Changes to the Conventional Business Lifecycle**

For businesses, this means change is a constant that necessitates we continually transform ... or perish. Life is inherently cyclical, and businesses have a lifecycle as well. Traditionally, it has been marked by introduction, growth, maturity and decline. Not surprisingly that the lifecycle model has changed in recent years along with everything else. “Businesses have a shorter lifecycle due to globalization, increased competition and increased customer expectations,” explains Adam Rapp, a marketing professor at The University of Alabama. “Consequently, firms must transform—move with greater speed and become leaner and more responsive. They need to see the market changes before they happen and keep a close eye on competition and customer demands. Firms need to be market-driving and not market-driven, be proactive and not reactive.”

The best way to develop responsiveness is to become more customer-oriented, according to Rapp. “Firms need to remove cumbersome standard operating methods and entrenched





attitudes and functions, which often delay the implementation of much needed strategic change. In other words, remove bureaucratic hurdles and roadblocks to strategy implementation.”

### Starting From the End

Although decline marks the end of this conventional lifecycle, the end is also an opportunity for new beginnings and a new cycle of introduction, growth, maturity and decline. Elle Harrison, author of *Wild Courage—A Journey of Transformation for You and Your Business*, says that decline or dying is an essential first step on the transformation journey. “It’s the time to look at what is ending, what is changing and what/who you want to be going forward. Come back to what you love and follow that energy,” she suggests. Although an obvious change in the working world may be the trigger for transformation, sometimes the call is more subtle—a longing for something more, a sense that you’re not fulfilling your potential, a lack of purpose or meaning—the first stirrings of discontent.

An international leadership coach, Harrison possesses passion that is guiding leaders and organizations through change so that they can find purpose and meaning in their work. Departing from conventional business leadership ideology, Harrison instead explores the six qualities of: dying, stillness, intuition, wildness, vulnerability and surrender, all relative to the transformation journey.

### The Journey of Transformation

“Over the years as I guided various leaders through change, I began to notice similarities in their experiences. Each journey of transformation was unique, triggered by different circumstances and leading to distinct personal challenges. Yet, within these differences, I also started to recognize certain patterns. Somehow, regardless of where their journeys began, all these leaders faced experiences that brought them face to face with these same six qualities,” Harrison explains. “In a sense, an encounter with each of these qualities became a threshold to take them deeper into their journey of transformation.”

Dying, stillness, intuition, wildness, vulnerability and surrender are not qualities usually associated with successful leaders and businesses, but Harrison suggests that now is a good time to venture into the wilderness of our unconscious and discover little-known

## THE LIFECYCLE

### Market introduction stage

1

1. Costs are high, sales and profit are low
2. Little competition
3. Demand must be created

#### RAPP'S ADVICE:

“Now is the time to embrace the affordable opportunities of social media.”

2

### Growth stage

1. Costs reduced due to economies of scale
2. Sales and profits rise
3. Competition increases and prices decrease

#### RAPP'S ADVICE:

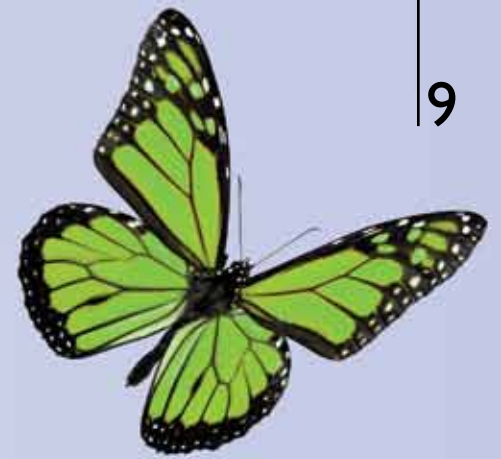
“You need to make sure consumers understand what you are offering and why it is better than everything currently available in the marketplace. Then when low-cost copies enter the market, you can retain your market share by having a stronger brand name and consumer identification.”





What is this? See page 3

**Talk about change? What printer shows you how to decrease your direct mail volume? Learn more at <http://mprnt.co/decrease-spending>**



parts of ourselves—new, yet ancient, sources of creativity, power and wisdom—to help us navigate through challenging times. “When we hear the call for deeper change, we have a choice. We can resist it and struggle on with old habits, beliefs and traditions. Or we can turn into the journey of transformation and follow it through to a new reality.”

Harrison says that dying to old habits and identities is the first step because it creates space for something new to emerge. “It leads to an empty, in-between space where you can learn to trust stillness and wait attentively and patiently for the new world to take form. Intuition offers guidance through the murkiness of change, leading the way into new possibilities and new life. Wildness helps you break free of old rules, beliefs and habits that were limiting your creativity and authenticity. Vulnerability—the willingness to feel and share feelings—creates a deeper sense of trust and community. And

surrender? Surrender is the current running through all these qualities. Letting go of the need to control and direct life opens the way for radically new solutions to emerge.”

Harrison stresses that it’s important to ask yourself the big questions in order to find the solutions. “Take the time to ask yourself what you do best and how you can bring that into the world—what are my gifts, what are my passions, what can I contribute to the bigger story?” She also reminds us to trust the stillness, seeing it as a gateway into deeper change. “Give yourself time to answer these questions. Purposefully engage your intuition, listen and be open. As you discover the answers, commit to them. And then surrender—let life show you the way.”

At first, it may be difficult to trust your intuition because it taps into the mystery of life, some function of unconscious perception that we will likely never understand. It is by its very nature difficult to define—it’s not concrete, rational or measureable. But some of the greatest scientific intellectuals in human history sing its praises. Albert Einstein, who would have likely been a keynote speaker at MIT’s recent symposium if he were alive, said, “The intuitive mind is a sacred gift, and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift ... The only real valuable thing is intuition.” ☐

## CLE IN 2011

### Maturity stage

3

1. Costs are lowered as a result of production volumes increasing and experience curve effects
2. Market saturation causes sales to peak
3. Lots of competition leads to price drops and lower industrial profits

#### RAPP’S ADVICE:

“Acquiring new customers is too costly at this stage. Instead, keep those that you have, and make sure you are in every available channel and outlet.”

4

### Saturation and decline stage

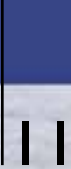

1. Costs become counter
2. Sales decline or stabilize
3. Prices diminish and profit becomes a product of production efficiency rather than sales

#### RAPP’S ADVICE:

“Define who you are. Understand and embrace your core competency rather than run away from it. This will lead to innovation.”







## CROSS MEDIA MARKETING

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# *Follow the Lead of the NHL and* **SCORE**

### **Goodbye Spray and Pray Marketing**

For decades, the SOP has been S and P advertising. In other words, the standard operating procedure for marketing has been spray and pray advertising. The objective was to spray large groups of consumers with information via TV, direct mail, radio and signage on the side of a bus, and pray that someone would notice. This method ensures that the marketing message is widely distributed and, in an era of fewer messages, this was an effective way to reach potential customers.

But in an era where consumers are increasingly bombarded by messages, this method is increasingly less effective. The United States Postal Service reports that the average person in the U.S. is sprayed by more than 5,000 messages each day. Of the 5,000+, we notice perhaps 54 of these messages. At the end of the day, we remember only four. That's a lot of wasted ineffective messages and a lot of wasted resources.

Savvy marketers aiming to break through the clutter and make their message one of the memorable ones are quickly adopting a more precise and effective marketing method. In the information inundation age, going deeper rather than broader is proving to be an effective marketing strategy.

"We are finding new ways to penetrate all the noise and ensure the message is heard using new tools that create a more personal and engaging experience," explains Karin Stroh, VP of Marketing for XMPie, a Xerox company providing marketing solutions. "Using a cross-media campaign, companies can communicate more directly and effectively with each individual customer in multiple ways rather than blasting a general message out to everyone."



**“We are constantly looking for innovative ways to engage our fans and encourage participation, and we know that portability—i.e. smartphone and iPad experiences—is becoming increasingly important.”**

– Perry Cooper, NHL, SVP of direct and digital marketing

### The NHL Scores Big

Businesses looking for a model of how to go deeper can take a page from the playbook of the National Hockey League. Following the 2004-2005 lockout, the NHL adopted an aggressive marketing campaign aimed at engaging hockey fans on a deeper level with more frequent robust experiences. Targeting a primarily tech-savvy fan base, the NHL is optimizing their use of digital media marketing, and the results have been phenomenal.

- League revenue is rising for the fifth consecutive year.
- Annual revenue is expected to grow 14 percent this year, resulting in an 85 percent increase over the last four years.
- Sponsorship and marketing revenue is up 32 percent YOY (year over year).
- The NHL Winter Classic on Jan. 1, 2011, was the most viewed NHL regular season game in 36 years. (4.5 million viewers in prime time.)

“The NHL is experiencing unprecedented engagement across all platforms,” affirms Perry Cooper, the league’s SVP of direct and digital marketing. “We’re offering more depth, more of what fans want, with continual access to live scores and stats, unique video content and enriching commentary.”

Leveraging the powers of traditional media, digital media and social media, the NHL is successfully converting fans into brand evangelists. Most notably:

- The Stanley Cup was the #1 trending topic on Twitter in June 2010.
- The NHL GameCenter Premium for iPad was the iPad App of the Week during the first two weeks of launch.

- A revamped mobile site averages 25 million WAP page views per month.
- Fantasy Hockey has 570,000 participants, more than any other fantasy property.
- The NHL is rapidly approaching 1.7 million fans on Facebook.

“Rather than relying on traditional broad advertising avenues like TV, we are creating one-on-one marketing opportunities that shorten the distance to the fans, no matter where they are, by offering a great experience on a variety of platforms. If we can continue to satisfy our fans, then ad revenue and everything else will continue to take care of itself,” Cooper explains.

### The Three Ps

Cooper notes that the marketing strategy at the heart of this success is the Three Ps—participation, portability and personalization. “We are constantly looking for innovative ways to engage our fans and encourage participation, and we know that portability—i.e. smartphone and iPad experiences—is becoming increasingly important.”

With an Apple iPad and subscription to GameCenter, hockey fans all over the world now watch their favorite hockey games anywhere they want at any time. A subscription provides ardent fans with dream-come-true content: full access to about 40 games per week, with TV and radio broadcasts available; in-game video highlights; and access to the NHL’s video archive, with thousands of highlights covering every day during the current season; extensive player profiles with video highlights and detailed in-game stats; and condensed versions of every NHL game.



With an **Apple iPad** and subscription to **GameCenter**, hockey fans all over the world now watch their favorite hockey games **anywhere they want at any time.**

Cooper says that collecting and analyzing data at every transaction is key to creating a deeper, more personal experience for each fan. “Everything is coded—we look at every definable area of behavior—and we tailor our marketing accordingly to make it as personal and relevant as possible.”

Print joins the mix with a growing licensed merchandise catalog circulation base. “Targeting current customers and new prospects with favorite-team content has been very successful. Segmenting displaced fans that have an inherent access constraint has been a key strategy. Based on our match analysis, we are able to connect online purchases to catalog drops ... the ROI is excellent. Customers tend to browse the book which converts to online transactions. This behavior is observed by most multi-channel marketers ... especially those who tailor the experience with a strong on-line call-to-action,” Cooper adds.

The wonderful thing is that each transaction or engagement is an opportunity to collect data that will make future engagements even more relevant and produce greater results. Stroh notes that this is basically the way marketing was done prior to mass media. “In some ways, marketing is heralding back to the ‘50s, the era preceding mass media when marketing was more of a one-on-one enterprise. Local store owners made recommendations directly to customers based on that customer’s particular circumstances and buying habits,” Stroh explains. “The more information you collect, the more you can tailor your communication with your customer and communicate with each individual on a deeper level rather than communicating to a wide audience on a broad general level.”

### Relevance Equals Results

So, how important is personalization? A

Maryland college that formerly solicited new students with traditional generic direct mail packages quadrupled admissions and doubled enrollment by launching a multi-channel campaign that started with a personalized mailer and e-mail directing the prospective students to a personalized URL (PURL).

Using variable data technology, the engaging personalized mailers included: a map from the student’s house to the college, the student’s name on a business card, a personalized message highlighting his or her intended major or area of expertise and images based on gender. Each customized mailer prominently displayed the recipient’s PURL that included his name.

Prospects could conveniently access their PURLs right on their smartphones (or computers) and view a personalized campus tour video, fill out pre-populated financial aid estimators and forms, and sign up for text updates on open houses and admission deadlines. Depending upon their interactions, any of 20 personalized follow-ups were possible. The PURL evolved throughout the enrollment process to remain a handy and valuable resource.

Citing this case study, Stroh notes that there wasn’t anything particularly difficult or costly about this campaign. “It was essential to start with good clean data, and continual tracking and analytics were important as well. We have the tools to easily process the data and the technology to use the data to create a deep and personal experience. The cost of this direct marketing campaign was actually less than in previous years, and the process freed up admission counselors to use their time more effectively.”

Additionally, the college received an increase in top-level applicants. The students reported they felt like they were being specifically targeted and personally recruited.


**Score with more relevant messaging that drives interaction.**



What is this? See page 3

In this great video you will learn about result oriented capabilities of advanced variable data printing and how you can improve your results by pushing the limits of personalization and efficiency at <http://mpmt.co/advanced-vdp>

“Customers want to be talked to. And the surest way to make certain they hear you is to make your message personal and relevant,” Stroh affirms. “With cross media marketing, you can get beyond the spray-and-pray numbers game and take your marketing to a whole new level—a deeper level than your competition.”

“Cross media is becoming bigger as technology leads to innovative new media platforms that consumers become increasingly comfortable with. We’re committed to anticipating where our fans are and ensuring we are there offering direct access to the NHL—keeping them satisfied with relevant and robust experiences,” affirms Cooper. 

# Remember the Big Picture

– Mark Potter, Publisher of CANVAS Magazine

**I** was sitting at a conference recently, surrounded by powerful marketing professionals. The keynote speaker was a well-known CMO who has found great success in building brands and sustainable competitive advantage. He discussed marketing's rightful place at the big table and shared his thoughts on how marketers will now be considered more often for the corner office. He also talked about a marketer's mindset and how taking care of a brand started with becoming an intimate part of a specific community.

The audience was composed of many new-age marketers, well versed in the latest tools and committed to measuring everything.

The speaker acknowledged that he was kind of “old school” and that he

didn't really understand all the sophisticated things these marketers might be doing today.

Feeling a bit out of it myself, I started chatting with the speaker after the presentation. “Is this the way it is?” the speaker asked.

I replied, “Yes. The short-term pressures to measure everything are enormous.”

The speaker sighed and said, “The last decade belonged to the accountants. This decade belongs to the visionaries.” Is he right?

Marketing has long fought for its rightful place in society. However, with the current trends of short-term pressure and the constant need to measure, it can quickly become a case of missing the vision.

Take the game of golf, for example. If a player is too focused on what kind of clubs he has, he may be missing the most important aspect – and that's the skill and talent behind the player. Marketers should keep in mind that short-term tools won't necessarily launch them ahead of their competition.

Marketing is about building deep-rooted relationships with specific segments of people. To develop real relationships, we must create trust. In turn, when building trust, we must be willing to share more of ourselves and invest in the long term. Marriage, business partnerships, friendships and brands are all

forms of relationships. They all take time and can be difficult to measure as in some sort of speed-dating ritual.

Marketing is everything in your business from how your phone is answered to how your customers think about your organization. Most importantly, marketing is about the relationships you have. Regardless of the tools we use to connect and communicate with our community, it is critical to be engaged

**The last decade belonged to the accountants. This decade belongs to the visionaries.**

in an honest and trustworthy relationship. Accordingly, all good relationships have solid two-way communication that includes an unparalleled level of understanding and trust.

Please understand I am not condemning the use of new-age tools and measurements; however, I am cautious of using these tools without an over arching strategy on customer care.

Our speaker mentioned, “True empathy is not necessarily something you can teach, but you can't market without it. And we can't succeed without marketing.” **■**





# How to Develop Triggered Customer Life Cycle Communications

**Using business intelligence along with triggered communications** is the new rocket science behind digital and direct marketing. Identifying prospect and customer activities as well as behaviors that indicate the need for more or less contact, business intelligence is what makes everything else happen.

For example, using strategic business intelligence to detect when a prospect has moved further into the buying process allows you to trigger communications and influence the behavior of the individual. Triggers can be simple or complex depending on your strategy and capabilities.

## Some common triggers include:

- A prospect changing to a customer
- A customer requesting a new product demonstration
- A prospect's status changing from "cold" to "warm"
- A customer missing a regularly placed order
- A prospect visiting your website multiple times within the same week
- Online shopping cart abandonment
- Algorithms and predictive models that indicate probability of purchase

## Using Triggers to Initiate Multi-Channel Communications

With programmed business rules, triggers can then automatically initiate the appropriate actions, including automatic electronic and printed communications in the forms of: email, direct mail, and personalized URLs (PURLs). These

individual communications can be sent one at a time, and can include highly personalized information such as product information and recommendations, case studies, testimonials, and satisfaction surveys to name a few.

Identifying and mapping the stages of the customer life cycle, and then applying strategic direct marketing plans



to build sales and customer loyalty are worthwhile activities. By identifying the critical communication points for each stage of the customer life cycle, and then deploying relevant, triggered communications at those critical points, direct marketing can positively influence the life time value of the customer by increasing sales and the length of the relationship.

## Creating Your Customer Lifecycle Communication Strategy

Developing a solid triggered life cycle communication plan begins with common principles:

- Who wants or needs to hear from us?
- What do they need to see or hear to make a decision?
- What are they trying to decide?

Other important aspects to consider:

- When do they need to see or hear the information.
- Where would they like to receive the information: in the mail, via personal visit, telephone, email or Internet.
- Understand why they want or need the information.

How buying decisions are made has changed. In the past information was provided by a sales person. Today buyers start their research on the Internet some time

BEFORE they are ready to buy. Your marketing, management of information flow, AND SALES PROCESSES, must evolve to meet this significant change. Defining a triggered customer life cycle communication plan can help you capture, nurture, and retain more business from your prospect and customer base. ■

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- ✓ Are your users and locations wasting time searching for or re-creating marketing materials?

Mail Print's Marketing Communications Portal is a centralized online system where all of your materials reside, ready to be easily accessed, customized and deployed by users across the country.

It's not unusual for companies to save \$80,000 to \$100,000 in their first year using Mail Print's portal.  
**Really.**