

connect

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by MAIL PRINT

Let's Get *Personal*



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A photograph of a man with dark, curly hair and green eyes, looking over the top edge of a silver laptop. The laptop is in the foreground, and the man's face is partially visible above it.

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Buying invites a personal relationship

Buying invites a personal relationship. I don't know about you, but I LOVE going to a store or restaurant where they know my name. I love having my favorite thing brought to me AND those stores or restaurants that know my size or my favorite drink generally get more money from me.

The challenge is to create that personal relationship with marketing. Research shows that gathering and utilizing data to better know your customers is good business; campaigns show a positive ROI. The next hurdle of gathering and using customer data has its challenges.

Customers want the personal experience. They want a catalog that shows them products they are interested in – just look at all the niche catalogs. Customers want to know about events they are most likely to participate in. And customers respond to offers that are designed just for them – think of casinos offering free buffets, or free money.

Jumping into the customized marketing game isn't easy, but it is worth dipping in your toe. Start with your own dataset. Do you store birthdays, ages, incomes, number of children in the home, frequency of purchases, or any other data points that might help you drive a marketing message? If not, get started immediately.

Customers want that personal experience. You as a marketer must want to show you know them personally over and over again. Branding tends to talk about the product or service, but a well crafted direct marketing campaign talks about the buyer, his likes and how to entice him to purchase. VDP allows marketers to communicate that very personal message in an extremely focused manner.

In the cover article of our latest edition of *Connect*, we delve into the idea of personalization. *Let's Get Personal*, walks through some of the benefits of using VDP. As a collective industry, we have been preaching the benefits of VDP or *Variable Data Printing* for years now. We wanted

to see if what we have said is true. In other words, has target marketing with VDP truly elevated the performance of marketers around the world? With the help of industry experts and highly regarded marketers, we provide some answers.

In our second article, we aim to understand the marketing paradox in our article *Bold Brands Win*. Our interviews with Shaun Smith, co-author of "Bold—How to Be Brave in Business and Win," and Kevin Clancy, co-author of "Your Gut is Still Not Smarter than Your Head," allowed us to gain some new perspective on this concept. Managing the delicate balance between being heard and measuring your marketing spend will always be a challenge. We hope the insight from these thought leaders will aid in developing some clarity.

Whether you believe in measuring every investment you make, or you think that branding, albeit difficult to measure, is the only sustainable advantage, one thing is clear. Marketing makes all the difference in the success of an organization.

Be well and enjoy.

Gina M. Danner

Managing the delicate balance between being heard and measuring your marketing spend will always be a challenge.

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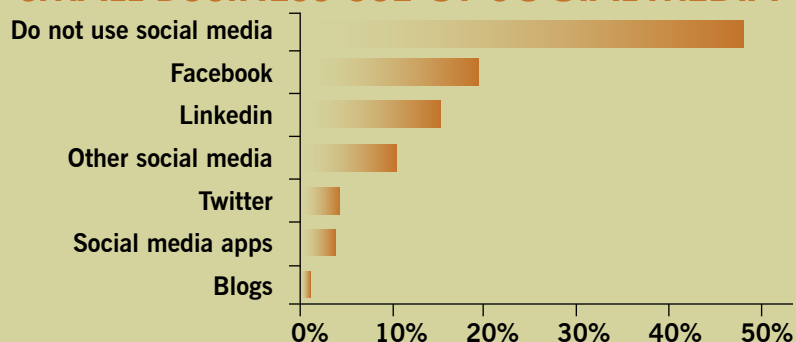
Social Media Gets Mixed Reviews from Small Business

Small business owners are still lukewarm about social media: 53 percent say they use social media for business, but only 12 percent say social marketing is a must for their business, according to a survey from Hiscox.

Social media adoption varies by company size, however: 62 percent of businesses with 50-249 employees use social media for business, compared with 46 percent of those with one to nine employees.

See the findings from the survey of 304 U.S. business owners below. Among all surveyed U.S. small business owners (1-249 employees) who use social media for business, Facebook is the most popular platform (19 percent), followed by LinkedIn (15 percent), and Twitter (4 percent). Only 1 percent of surveyed small business owners say they publish a blog for business, which is a shame.

SMALL BUSINESS USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA



(n=304)

Source: Opinium Research, commissioned by Hiscox, June 2011

Facebook Most Important for Growth

Facebook is also the top channel for business growth: Small business owners who use social media cite the following channels as most effective in helping them grow their business:

Facebook page:	28 percent
LinkedIn company page or group:	18 percent
Company blog:	8 percent
YouTube:	6 percent

Social Marketing a Low Priority

Even so, social media is a low priority for most small businesses. Asked to describe how their companies use social media, small business owners report the following:

Social media isn't important to our business:	43 percent
We use social media when we have time:	24 percent
We don't know enough about social media:	14 percent
Social media is a must; we use it all the time:	12 percent

Interestingly, **19 percent** of small businesses with 10-49 employees say social media is a must (and they use it all the time), compared with the just **10 percent** of those with 50-249 employees (the biggest social media adopters in the survey).

Top Goals with Social Marketing

Building awareness and new business are the top reasons small business owners use social media, citing the following top objectives with social marketing:

Brand awareness:	27 percent
Generate sales:	22 percent
Promote new offers, promotions:	11 percent
Customer service:	10 percent
Research:	10 percent
Improve SEO:	5 percent

Top Five Metrics to Measure Social Media

CMOs worldwide measure the value of social media marketing activities most commonly by the metrics below.

Site Traffic	68 percent
Number of fans/members	62.9 percent
Number of positive customer mentions	62.9 percent
Number of contributors	50.3 percent
Number of page views	43.4 percent

Source: Bazaarvoice and the CMO Club, "CMOs on Social Marketing Plans for 2011"

Sources of Marketing Advice

Most small business owners (**60 percent**) get advice about business from mentors and colleagues, while **43 percent** cite conferences and events, **28 percent** cite magazines and websites, and **14 percent** rely on online forums (e.g., LinkedIn).

About the data: Findings are from a survey of 304 owners and senior managers of small businesses (1-249 employees) in the U.S., conducted by Hiscox from May 18 to July 1, 2011.

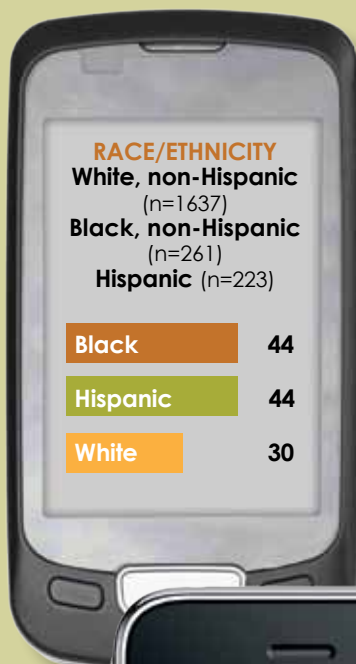
Read more: <http://mprnt.co/marketing-profs>

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Overview of U.S. Smartphone Adoption

In its first stand-alone measure of smartphone ownership, The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project finds that one-third of all American adults (35 percent) are smartphone owners.

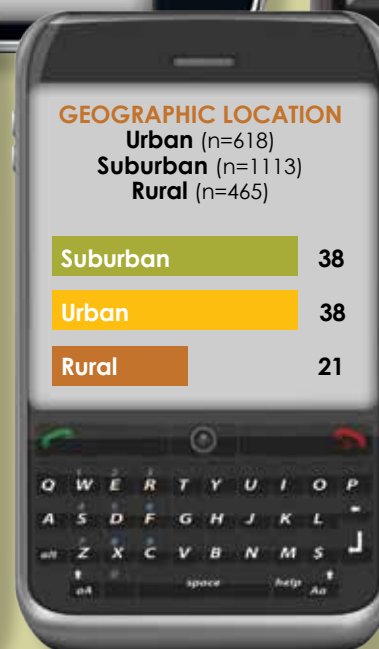
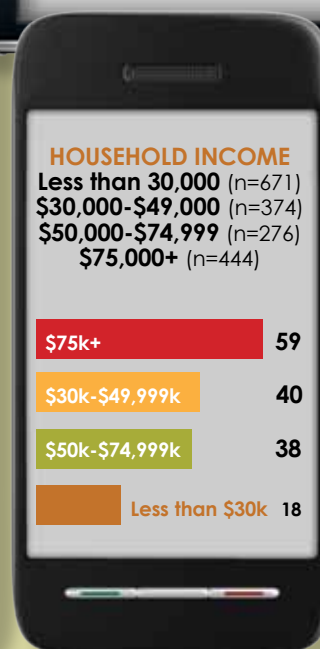
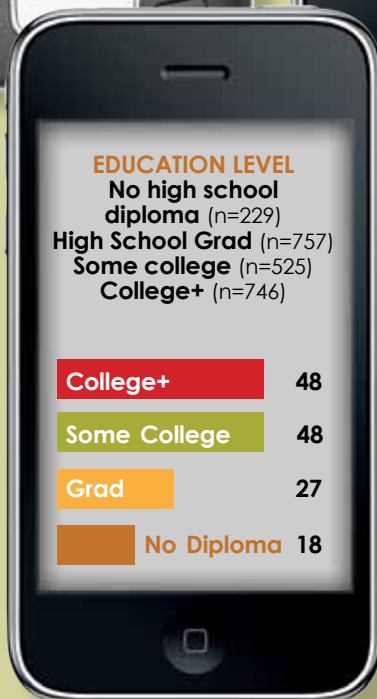
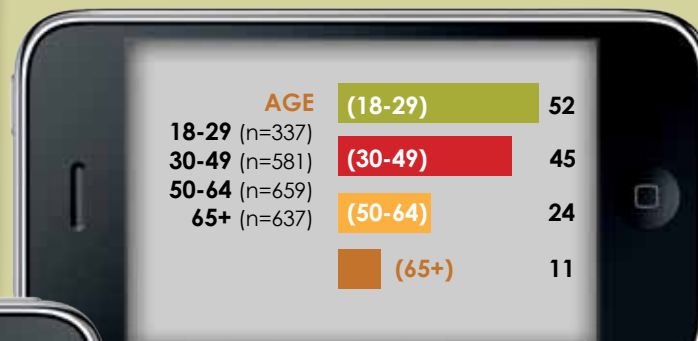
Some 87 percent of smartphone owners access the Internet or email on their handheld, including two-thirds (68 percent) who do so on a typical day. When asked what device they normally use to access the internet, 25 percent of smartphone owners say that they mostly go online using their phone, rather than with a computer.



THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF SMARTPHONE OWNERSHIP

% of US adults within each group who own a smartphone

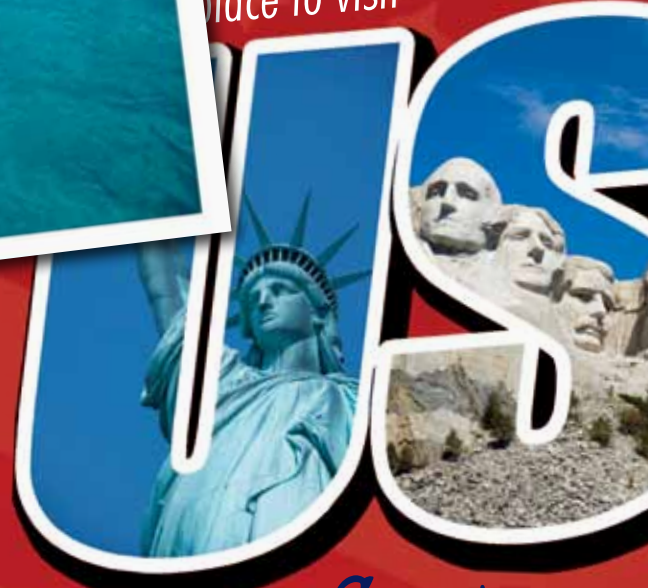
ALL ADULTS 35%



Source: The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, April 26 – May 22, 2011 Spring Tracking Survey. n=2,277 adult internet users ages 18 and older, including 755 cell phone interviews. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. "Smartphone ownership" includes those who say their phone is a smartphone, or who describe their phone as running on the Android, BlackBerry, iPhone, Palm or Windows platforms.

Aloha,
Kristina!

place to visit



Greetings,

I ♥

XYZ Company

*Kristina,
wish you were here!*

Hawaii

Let's Get Personal

by Lorrie Bryan



Have you taken a good look at your mail lately? Perhaps you're receiving far less mail addressed to occupant or resident these days. Instead your name is boldly printed on the front, in color. Whole catalogs now highlight the items that you are likely to be most interested in. Your dentist sends you a personalized checkup reminder card and a birthday card. And even statements and bills are becoming more attractive, taking on a friendlier, more personal tone, and offering special enticements and incentives.

Feeling special? Increasingly smart businesses are using variable data printing (VDP) to customize their communications and gain the attention of its intended recipient. Photos and graphics based on gender, geographic residence, buying preference, market trends, age, and other variables increase consumer interest. This type of targeted marketing, which uses digital print, is frequently replacing generic mass marketing.

VDP Triggers Results

But does it really work? "I've heard that using VDP can increase response rates from 2-3 percent to 10-15 percent. Now, that's substantial," says Elaine Fogel, president and CMO of Solutions Marketing & Consulting LLC. "An increase in performance will also depend on what type of VDP campaign marketers use. Adding the recipient's name in just a few key places, adds a personal touch that keeps the reader interested, but there's even greater results when marketers use versioning and the customization level is segmented according to the audience."

VDP benefits are measurable: larger sales, higher returns, and greater customer loyalty. Marketing studies repeatedly show that personalizing communications boosts its effectiveness. "There's a marked increase in the performance of companies who went from mass marketing to target marketing through VDP campaigns," affirms Sandra Zoratti, Vice President of Marketing at Ricoh Produc-

Hello Kristina!

As a marketer we know that you are always looking for cool new strategies. Through the power of VDP, this issue actually had three different covers, each featuring one of the postcards on this spread. This strategy is designed to create buzz! If you want to strategize on how you can use VDP to create a positive impression for XYZ Company call me!

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tion Print Solutions. "And we've discovered and documented that there is a direct correlation between the extent of the customization and the effectiveness of the communication."

According to Ricoh research, color, design, and content relevance are the customization elements that determine VDP return on investment. "When it comes to precision marketing, there are levers that trigger correlated results. Strategically using color, instead of black-and-white, will generally achieve ROI in the two-digit range. Strategic use of color and design—including relevant photos, icons, formats and promotions—will yield results in the three-digit range. And the optimal use of color, design, and relevant content can give you a four-digit return," explains Zoratti.



Rich, personalized content "lead to new opportunities for profitable customer engagement"

63%

would go online for more information if the advertising was customized

78%

are more inclined to re-subscribe if content is tailored to personal preferences

Better Data, Better Results

One key requirement for a successful campaign is good data. Fogel emphasizes that even though you use color, quality design, and relevant content, your targeted message will miss its mark if the initial data isn't accurate. "Without accurate data, it can be a big waste of time and money."

Zoratti says people get paralyzed by their fear of managing the data. "They aren't sure how to use and leverage data. We emphasize that it's not a flip of the switch; it's a multi-step journey, and you have to be committed to the journey. They're afraid to take the first step, but as they continue on the journey, they can collect new data that will then make their next communication even more relevant and therefore more effective."

Customer Retention Using VDP

Managing data doesn't have to be complicated. One easy and effective way to get started is use your current customer data. Every marketer knows that it is more cost effective to retain a customer than to acquire a new one. In their often quoted article in the Harvard Business Review, management consultants Frederick Reichheld and Earl Sasser estimate that "companies can boost profits by almost 100 percent by retaining just five percent more of their customers," whether you are a small local company or a large nationwide hotel chain.

But, according to the recent Routes to Revenue study by the CMO Council sponsored by Ricoh, 76 percent of senior marketers believe they are not realizing the full revenue potential of their current customers. In addition, only 46.5 percent say they have good insights into retention rates, customer profitability, and lifetime value. Marketers under pressure to reduce budget find that targeting current and recent customers with simple VDP campaigns lead to greater insight, increased customer loyalty, and ultimately more revenue.

A regional office of the American Red Cross needed insight regarding why they were losing business. "We sent out a personalized postcard to a targeted list of past customers. The postcard had several areas that were personalized, and had attractive graphics and a call-to-action to visit a personalized URL (PURL) where they were asked to complete a brief survey," explains Susan Elder, CMO of the American Red Cross of Greater Cleveland. With an 18 percent response from this campaign, they identified why they were losing customers and created a data base of customers who wanted to be contacted about upcoming Red Cross training.

VDP with TransPromo

On a much larger scale, Best Western International, the world's largest hotel chain, turned to Ricoh for insight into their inactive customer base. The challenge: Reactivate dormant customers who have not done business with the hotel in one year. The team quickly began analyzing the hotel's database to understand how existing, active customers respond to current and past offers.

By implementing a TransPromo Pilot program created by Ricoh, Best Western successfully grew awareness for its own branded credit card and increased revenues through incremen-



Marketing professionals find VDP to be a valuable tool for lead nurturing and lead generation.

tal bookings. TransPromo is a pioneering technique that combines transactional data with promotional information to provide more targeted marketing on trusted documents such as statements. It is an easy way to reach customers personally without having to make a huge investment in new promotions or materials.

The effort replaced inserts, previously included with the program statement, with personalized promotions on quarterly rewards statements, sent to a segment of Best Western Gold Crown Club International reward card customers in North America.

Applications for the Best Western credit card among the guests receiving the TransPromo statement jumped 500 percent and 15 percent more of these guests registered for the “More Rewards, Faster” promotion than those in the control group. More than one third (39 percent) of that group went on to stay in a Best Western location after signing up for the promotion, stayed a longer duration than the control group, and generated 30 percent more in incremental revenue during their stay.

In less than eight weeks, Ricoh delivered an ROI of 1090 percent. These stunning results validated Ricoh’s model to deliver tremendous results for hotels looking to reactivate dormant customers and up revenues. “The success of this pilot during one of the toughest economic times in many years, and the benefits of TransPromo are more than clear for any marketer looking to drive value and revenue from existing customer communications,” affirms Lee Gallagher, director, Precision Marketing & Enablement, Ricoh Production Print Solutions.

Lead Nurturing with VDP

Marketing professionals are finding that VDP is a valuable tool for lead nurturing as well as lead generation. Using VDP in tandem with innovative software marketers

Personalize their message to their prospects, and deliver custom content to them that is engaging and relevant—the proverbial right message to the right person at the right time and in the right way. Over time, the message and the content become even more on target and relevant as marketers collect more data while the prospect goes through the sales pipeline.

“Lead nurturing is basically content marketing—providing relevant, informative content to prospects long before they become customers. This allows marketers to court prospects, engaging them with valuable content they can use. The longer prospects stay engaged and subscribed, the better chance marketers have to gain brand trust,” explains Fogel.

“When these prospects do enter the buying cycle, the ideal situation is that they will consider the company’s products/services because it has been top-of-mind for the length of the nurturing period.”



Personalization – Here to Stay?

Marketing, using VDP and other technology, is a growing trend. Using VDP to digitally mimic the more personal way people did business 60 years ago rather than mass marketing, is good business.

Likewise, there is much discussion about engaging clients on a human level, and much effort going into blogs, tweets, and other media that foster a more personal relationship. Zoratti thinks this trend will endure. “The more personal, the more relevant, the more effective .”

Fogel concurs. “I believe personalization has endurance. Most people appreciate being the center of the universe. Marketing messages directed to the individual, targeted to that individual’s needs, wants, and interests, get closer to talking with that individual in person. Of course, engagement takes time. It takes a genuine effort on everyone’s part in a company or organization. Every time a prospect or customer calls on the telephone is an opportunity for engagement on a human level. Being personal and friendly goes a long way in brand building. This really needs to become part of any corporate culture to be consistent and genuine.”

BOLD B



RANDS WIN

by Lorrie Bryan

In 2009 when most luxury brand retailers were slashing prices and personnel to survive the global recession, Burberry, a British luxury fashion house, had a record year. Not only did they report record profits, they garnered accolades for their customer experience. The Luxury Institute published independent research concluding that Burberry offered the best customer experience in the retail luxury market. It's likely no coincidence that they delivered excellence and boosted earnings.

Burberry, an Old Company is King of Fashion Jungle

Recognized around the world for their signature trench coats and trademarked plaids, this iconic fashion institution was founded by Thomas Burberry in 1856. Dozens of economic cycles and a couple of World Wars later, this company is one of the most forward-thinking and successful companies in the global market. In 2010-11 Burberry was again included in Interbrand's Top 100 Global Brands, was recognized as the 13th most innovative company in the world by *Fast Company* magazine, and received the Inaugural Innovation Award at the 2010 British Fashion Awards. This staid old company that is the epitome of sophistication and British design is anything but quiet and boring. Burberry's brand is strong and growing stronger, and its message is roared loudly to the masses.

"Burberry's story shows the importance of knowing what your brand stands for, stay-

Making your message heard

ing true to it and making sure the decisions you make support it, not devalue it," affirms Shaun Smith, a thought-leader on the subject of customer experience strategy and co-author of "BOLD- How to Be Brave in Business and Win."

Why Burberry Has a Winning Brand

Smith cites three simple common characteristics of companies such as Burberry that have a successful brand, a brand with a message that cuts through the digital disruption, rises above the fray and succeeds. "They stand up, stand out, and stand firm. Even during the most difficult times they are relentless in pursuit of improvement, zealous in communication and take action in accordance with what is best for their brand, not just their bottom line. In short, they are bold. Not reckless; just bold. They stand out from others because they stand up for something. They have an unshakeable belief in what they stand for, and they let their actions follow their beliefs."

“You’re either a Purple Cow or you’re not. You’re either remarkable or invisible. Make your choice.”

– Seth Godin



Smith notes that when Burberry was founded, marketing was a comprehensive way of life for a company. “But at some point marketing changed from what it was originally—the totality of who you are and what you do—to a set of contrived processes. Authenticity was lost. And authenticity is what consumers look for.”

While other companies were rolling up and dying, Burberry was rolling out the new (burberry.com) website. The site, live in six languages and 45 countries, is known as *Burberry World*. The site is the ultimate expression of the Burberry brand, allowing customers globally—in many cases for the first time—to connect with all its aspects, from heritage, to music and video, to the full product offer. Through the use of dynamic audiovisual content the site becomes a place to engage, entertain and interact. And it provides the ultimate online luxury shopping experience through a personalized customer service offer that includes the ability to Click to Chat and Click to Call in real time and in 14 languages. The site provides a powerful center for ongoing efforts to build the Burberry community around the world.

But as Smith points out, Burberry’s brand doesn’t start with the technology—it starts with

a clear purpose. The technology is just a tool for delivering it. “If you focus your entire business on entertaining and engaging your customers, and brand the experience they have, then you don’t need to waste additional marketing dollars on fancy or phony campaigns trying desperately to persuade people to buy your product. That’s what Seth Godin meant when he said the only way to cut through clutter is to be remarkable and to innovate something new and unique – like a purple cow.

“Customer equity creates brand equity. You will already have a growing legion of advocates telling everyone how remarkable you are—and accelerating that word-of-mouth effect is the great opportunity that digital, mobile and social media offers.”

Keeping their brand consistent across channels, Burberry aggressively set out to capture both market and mind share. “They integrated digital media with all their other marketing activities so that it works with them as an integrated whole—it’s not treated as a separate and disconnected part of their marketing mix,” Smith explains.

Burberry was the first luxury brand to attract more than 3 million fans on Facebook, and they currently have nearly 7.5 million. Focusing

on their brand purpose of democratic luxury, Burberry streams their runway shows—previously closed-door events for invited guests—live to more than a million people in 180 countries. Their social media site, artofthetrench.com, continues to inspire people around the world and across generations to share their experiences of the iconic trench coat. In the first year after it launched, the site received more than 11 million page views.

“Burberry has an authentic brand, a clear purpose and a genuine story,” says Smith. “And that boldly cuts through the noise. I believe that the purpose that drives the brands we studied often stems from a strong personal conviction or vision backed by data.”

Data Drives Brands

Where Burberry succeeds, many fail, and Kevin Clancy, co-author of “Your Gut is Still Not Smarter than Your Head,” says that with a few exceptions, there’s not many winning the lion’s share in the marketing world. Existing brands become commodities so their services fail. “More than nine out of ten new products do not make it. Brands have no selling message—only about 7 percent have a clear selling message and communicate a real reason for people to





HOW TO BE BRAVE, BOLD, AND HEARD



buy their brand. Without a reason to buy a brand, it frequently comes down to price.”

Clancy says the key to giving people a reason to buy your brand is to determine what the consumers’ problems are that don’t pertain to price and offer them a solution to that problem that is substantial and compelling.

How do you find out what the problems are?

Unlike Smith, Clancy believes that data, not gut-instinct, is the best indicator, and he argues that brands should use marketing processes to research their way to a strategy or brand position. “The problem and the solution become obvious once you have the data. Superior research improves targeting, positioning, new offerings and more.”

Near Misses Lead to Mega Breakthroughs

Clancy cites the example of Gary Heavin’s experience in the women’s fitness industry. Along with Henry Ford, Thomas Edison and J.K. Rowling, Heavin was recently featured on Newsweek’s list of Most Successful Almost Failures. His first attempt at building a fitness empire ended in bankruptcy because he followed his gut instincts without adequately researching the market. In his second endeavor, Heavin and his wife Diane studied the problems that conventional gyms posed for their targeted market—busy women—and offered innovative solutions.

“The most frequent reason these women cited for not exercising was lack of time. By analyzing the data and focusing on what these consumers wanted and what they really needed, they designed a more efficient business model,” Clancy explains. In their new business model, the fitness and weight-loss centers provide an effective and fun 30-minute workout class while limiting the amount of equipment offered (thus keeping startup costs low).

The new research-based strategy worked, and his new venture, Curves International, is

Shaun Smith, co-author of “Bold—How to Be Brave in Business and Win”

1. **Stand up—stand for something.**
2. **Stand out—deliver a distinctive experience.**
3. **Stand firm—sustain this through your culture.**

Kevin Clancy, co-author of “Your Gut is Still Not Smarter than Your Head”

1. **Use data to identify a problem.**
2. **Offer a clear and compelling solution.**
3. **Offer your solution consistently in multiple ways.**

one of the fastest-growing and largest franchisers in the world with more than 10,000 locations in 85 countries with 4 million members.

Problem Solved!

“Curves studied the problems women faced at conventional gyms (time, money, comfort) and developed a solution which they then successfully marketed with a clear message in multiple ways. They offer a solution to a large widespread problem—solving a large problem is the key to great success,” says Clancy. “With-

“Listen to what people are saying, measure it and offer a solution to the largest problem that does not pertain to price.”

— Kevin Clancy, co-author of
“Your Gut is Still Not Smarter than Your Head”

out identifying a problem through data research, you can’t successfully market a solution.”

Curves brands itself globally as a gym where women change their lives 30 minutes at a time by providing cardio and strength training in a woman-exclusive environment. Interestingly enough, they did this without establishing a significant presence on the Internet, and rely more on old-fashioned word of mouth than word of mouse. But like Burberry, they stand out from others because they stand for something, and have a consistent message that roars and resonates on a global level.

Boldly Offer Customers Solutions

Who hasn’t heard of Curves?

Clancy contends that the reason you’ve heard of Curves is because it offers a great solution to a large group of people—women with limited time and money who want to get in shape. “Listen to what people are saying, measure it and offer a solution to the largest problem that does not pertain to price. If you only address price, then you will become a commodity.”

“Now I certainly don’t disagree with him on the importance of listening to customers, but I believe you have to start with your purpose or positioning if you are to arrive at true insight rather than simply data,” Smith counters.

Whether the idea for Curves resulted from insight or data analysis, Curves, like Burberry, has an authentic brand, a clear purpose and a genuine story that people hear and share. If they were just another fitness club, their message would be just more noise. If Burberry were just another luxury clothier, they would be just another commodity. No amount of Internet savvy or well-placed advertisement can transform mediocrity into sustainable success. But if you begin with a remarkable product or service that offers a solution to a problem, and create a brand that is consistent, authentic and unique, then people will seek out your boldness. ■

The Eight of Marketing

– Mark Potter, Publisher of CANVAS Magazine

The *Four Ps of Marketing*, otherwise known as *The Marketing Mix*, are the cornerstone of any sound marketing plan. However, marketing is so much more than that. An additional four Ps exist that can make your plan even more impactful. While the Four Ps of strategic marketing are critical to the prosperity of any organization, most companies don't invest time on these areas and suffer the long-term effects of ignoring them. Let's take a closer look at all Eight Ps and how great companies employ them.

The Four Ps of Strategic Marketing

Probe: Market research helps you uncover potential markets and what makes them tick. No business can operate without investing in thorough market research. A company shouldn't build a mousetrap without knowing if there are any mice. Using focus groups, surveys, sales rep feedback, and personal interviews are a few easy ways to start.

Partition: Otherwise known as *segmentation*, partitioning is power. Determining like characteristics within potential prospects and clients is potent. Defining certain variables and then partitioning the market into "like" groups is an exercise that few companies perform. The best companies stand for someone, and you cannot stand for anyone until you define them specifically.

Prioritize: Once you have probed the market and segmented customers into groups, you can determine which groups are most fruitful to pursue. Just because you have a segment does not mean you can make any money there. Look at your assets and your skill sets and prioritize the groups relative to your ability to serve.

Position: Many academics put *Positioning* as the fifth P of tactical marketing because it is so critical. It is the bridge from *strategy to offering*. In other words, once you determine the attractive markets, you define who you are to them. Are you the *low-cost leader*, the *high-quality supplier*, or the *intimate consultant*? Regardless, you need to make a decision about who you represent and what you mean to them.

The Four Ps of Tactical Marketing (The Marketing Mix)

Product: Now comes the *offering or marketing mix*. Base this on what your clients need and not what your capabilities are. It is not enough to build a product and then look for people to buy it. You need to define markets and then provide the products that the market demands. You can't do that without great insight and understanding that the above four Ps give you.

Price: After you know the products your customers need, you must consider the value of it. More specifically, price is not about affordability. It is about value. Having the right products is one thing, but understanding the value the client attaches to it is powerful.

Place: The marketing mix includes the manner in which clients acquire it. Is it through a store, online, through a sales rep with an order pad, or a phone call to a call center? How a customer gets the product is important not only to them but also relevant to the costs of doing business.

Promotion: Finally, we get to what most believe is marketing. Promotion is NOT marketing. Promotion is simply the communication pillar of the marketing mix. Promotion communicates the other three Ps of tactical marketing and nothing more. It tells you what the product is, how much it costs, and how you can get it. Unfortunately, most businesses ignore this idea. The belief that marketing is promotion is limiting, and, in the long term, deadly.

Marketing is everything. Use all Eight Ps to take control over your future and thrive! ☐

Ten Ways to Decrease Direct Mail Spending While Improving Results

Develop. Implement. Learn. Repeat... At Mail Print, everyday we learn from and refine our marketing processes. Back in October 2010, we posted a blog entitled “9 Ways to Decrease Direct Mail Spending While Improving Results.” Now, we have increased that list to 10 ways.

Here are 10 ways to improve both sides of the ROI equation with your direct mail campaigns:

1. **Clear out the Non-Responsive:** Determine what deems someone non-responsive, and stop mailing when it is clear they are not going to respond.
2. **Segment Your Lists:** Segment and target audiences on macro and micro levels. You don't have to mail to everyone to be highly impactful.
3. **Personalize Your Message:** Speak to specific audiences on a micro level. The more relevant your communications, the sooner you'll see results or be able to deem recipients non-responsive.
4. **Test, Test, Test:** Test the effectiveness of your message, offer and list on a smaller audience before deploying on a large scale. For example, direct marketers often send new messaging, creative or offers to 10% of their list first, measuring the results against the control or other versions of the marketing piece. Once a winner has been determined, the most effective version is sent to the entire audience.
5. **Automate:** Print Automation and Marketing Automation technology allows you to increase your speed to market and decrease the cost spent to deploy each campaign. Auto-triggered campaigns can also be used to respond to prospect and customer actions with timely, relevant mail touches.
6. **Clean Your Data:** Conduct a thorough data-cleansing of your house and purchased lists to eliminate duplicates, outdated or incomplete data. You'll mail less, more accurately and improve your ROI.
7. **Use Your Returns:** Do something with returned mail. This seems simplistic, but the tendency is to ignore returned mail and not update the database. Create a process so this is always done.
8. **Go Multi-Channel:** Incorporate non-paper-based mediums such as email, text messaging, and landing pages with your direct mail campaigns to increase engagement and reduce cost-per-touch.
9. **Pair Email and Mail:** Utilize direct mail to keep email as a main communication method by mailing only to bounces, unsubscribes and consistent non-openers with the goal of determining why they are not engaged via email.
10. **Honor Your Audience's Preference:** Eliminate people from your list who do not wish to receive mail by utilizing the DMA's Mail Preference Service. Learn more at <https://www.dmachoice.org>



Building a Plan for Reducing Your Direct Mail Costs

One of the biggest challenges to achieving the ten points above is not having a plan. Without a plan, marketers shoot from the hip and hope they get it right. And while that works occasionally, if you want something that controls cost and works consistently, start with a plan. **G**

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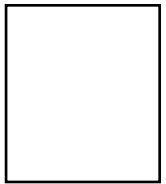
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