

CREATIVE COMPOST

Where Great Marketing Ideas Grow

Vol. I, No. 2

The Power of WEBvertising

Advertising has never been so exciting and full of choices for delivering your message. Still, good advertising differentiates your product or service in terms of the problem that it solves — in any medium. So when choosing between print, web, and/or CD-ROM based campaigns, base your strategy on these three words: form follows function. Don't just do an animated web ad because it looks cool! Mix your media to achieve the campaign that best fits your clearly defined advertising objectives.

Eight tips for webvertising success

- Realize that the major benefit here is two-way communication. This is your opportunity to build and maintain relationships with your customers.
- Bring your ad TO your target market; don't expect them to come after YOU.
- A web ad doesn't have to look like an ad; think "beyond the banner" and don't be obtrusive in your ad placement.
- Interact with your target market in a way that is mutually beneficial. Use an online registration page to get information from which you can craft future marketing plans, and be sure to offer customers the real value they expect in exchange for their time online.
- Integrate print (an inexpensive postcard will do) to drive traffic to your online effort. Tease your audience with the URL and one brilliant tagline.
- Don't pay to advertise on a huge search

engine if you can be creative about reaching your target market on a much smaller scale. Remember that too much exposure = wasted dollars and too little exposure = wasted opportunity.

- Steer clear of permissions issues that could tangle your web ad in legal trouble. For example, you might think it's OK to use a classical music piece on your web ad since the creator's not around to argue, but guess what? The company who recorded that music does own the rights to it and can make legal claim to it.

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Direct Mail: Lists 101

Thinking of venturing into the direct mail wilderness? Today, there's a list for virtually every offer. Want home furniture buyers? No problem. How about pet owners? Can do. Need veterinarians who take care of the pets who sit on that brand new furniture? Sure thing.

So how can you get the right offer into the right mailbox? There are four main types of mailing lists available:

Direct mail source lists are generated from buyers who've made a purchase from an offer sent directly to them. Received a catalog and made a purchase? You've just become a source buyer.

TV and space advertised list names are just as their title implies. Buyers respond to offers seen on TV — commercials or infomercials — or an ad that caught their eye in a newspaper or magazine.

Compiled lists, where you're most likely to find that veterinarian or other professional, are gleaned from public records, surveys and warranty cards.

Alternative media lists are package insert flyers, monthly billing statement stuffers, magazine blow-in cards, card decks or other free standing inserts.

All of the above can be rented directly from the supplier or through a list broker. If you have a list in mind, ask your supplier to send you a rate card. This will include a brief description of the list along

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Faith Popcorn causes an *EVEolution*.

with all available variations and associated costs. Lists can be broken down by what are termed “selects” — age, income, buying habits and many other criteria.

When renting a list, be sure to ask your supplier a few questions about the file. Cost is certainly one of them. Most lists are priced per thousand names (CPM), with minimum pricing for small orders. High-end catalog or magazine lists can run anywhere from \$90/M to \$120/M, with added selects like geography, gender or dollar amount per purchase adding an additional \$5/M to \$40/M.

At \$10/M to \$50/M, alternative media lists are generally less expensive, but usually require higher minimums. Compiled lists can average \$40/M to \$50/M. Again, the more detailed or affluent the request, the higher the cost.

Of recent interest to direct marketers are e-mail marketing lists. You'll find them at the top in terms of cost, pricing out at

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\$200/M to \$250/M. Be sure to ask about minimum costs and quantities — 5,000 is the industry standard these days.

Other questions to ask include the source of the names being provided, and how often the list is updated. Traditionally, direct mail sourced lists will respond better to an offer than compiled lists. And the older the names, the less likely they are to respond. A good list will update a minimum of three to four times a year. Also of value is list usage. Brokers or list managers can identify for you other mailers who have successfully used the list you're considering.

Don't forget to specify how you want your names supplied. All lists should be provided in zip code order and can be sent to you or your lettershop on peel & stick labels, computer diskette, magnetic tape or even via e-mail.

Finally, ask the broker or list owner exactly what you are buying. Will your list include a specific contact name, or simply “Resident” or “Vice President of Marketing”? And unless otherwise specified, all lists are rented for one-time use. Don't be tempted to mail or telemarket more than once unless you have specifically negotiated the right to do so. Misuse of the list can lead to unnecessary legal hassles.

Tracking Your Cyber PRESS

You may be familiar with — or have even used — the traditional clipping services that scan newspapers and magazines for mention of your company or products. But what about the Internet? How can you be sure you're getting the coverage you deserve, or more importantly, not the victim of a cybersmear?

Using proprietary searching, verification and database technologies, WebClipping.com travels the black hole of cyberspace, then sends daily emails to alert you to new “hits.” Mentions are stored in a password-protected database for easy access 24/7. Fees start at \$100 per month depending on the number of names or phrases to be tracked.

WebClipping.com's service lets you track public opinion through usegroup discussions, identify and correct misinformation, and protect the value of your brand. And while you're at it, why not stay alert to industry developments by searching for your competitors' names?

Source: WebClipping.com

HEY, Big Spender...

The longer a shopper's been online, the more he or she tends to spend per transaction, according to a new report by ActivMedia.



Capturing the Online Market: The Definitive Guide to Online Loyalty examined online purchasing patterns of over 2,000 experienced cybershoppers. The findings? Those who've been online five years or more are spending twice as much as recent Internet arrivals.

Also noted was a significant drop in the length of time between going online and making a first purchase. Those coming online in the last year are waiting an average of just four months prior to their first purchase, compared to a 22-month waiting period four short years ago.

P.S. — What's the Hottest Spot in Direct Mail?

The postscript (or "P.S.") has been proven time and again to be one of the most-read lines in direct mail. Not merely an afterthought, the P.S. is one of the last messages your target will absorb before they decide to buy your product or trash your message. How can you use this space most effectively?

1. Identify your goal.

Are you asking for the sale? Reiterating a key selling point? Offering a discount? Decide what's the most critical use for your P.S., then state it briefly and clearly.

2. Play on emotion.

A well-written P.S. creates a compelling sense of urgency that could tip the scales in favor of an immediate sale. Or try

flattery, guilt, or fear — other time-tested sales motivators.

3. Don't forget the design.

Use the layout to visually emphasize these important lines of copy. Tools to try include underscoring, bold or italic, a second color like red or blue, capital letters or a font that looks handwritten.

Webvertising

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And saving the best for last...

- Remember to repurpose your electronic ads. Use the common design elements in your electronic and print advertising to achieve continuity while saving money on design or printing additional efforts. Why not e-mail prospects a hotlink to your ad, or have it pressed onto a CD-ROM for your sales force to use on calls? You can also mail the CD directly to top priority

clients. Point is, once your ad is digital, it can be used in many formats, and it can be updated in an instant for free, so use and reuse it, then use it again!

The way I see it, those of us in the industry right now are the pioneers of a new age of advertising. What fun!! Be brave and bold enough to try new things and be ready for "flack" from the 10-20% of the world who are still trying to avoid jumping on the computer-age bandwagon.

Source: Theresa M. Herbst writes and manages print, web, and CD-ROM advertising for Prentice Hall, a division of Pearson Education. She can be reached at theresa_herbst@prenhall.com.

Have a clever tip, trick or product to share? Email us today!
fahouryink@aol.com

NEED A PROMO...PRONTO? TRY A POSTCARD

Don't have time to write, address, stuff and send personalized letters to your best prospects? You're not alone. But how can you stay in customers' minds without all that work? Postcards! Regular postcard mailings can put you in the right place at the right time — without breaking your budget.

Inexpensive — Single-sheet postcards are cheaper to produce than a letter and a brochure in an envelope. Plus, there are no folding and inserting charges if you use a lettershop. If you stay to a 4 x 6" maximum size, postcards are also cheaper to mail than a first-class letter. Oversized postcards will mail at the letter rate, but you'll still save on printing and stuffing.

Quick — Postcards can still have maximum impact without the time and expense of four-color printing. Pick a bright ink color or an attention-getting stock to stand out from the crowd. If you have a small run, ask your printer to look

through any "remainder" cover stock from other jobs. Often, you can score high-quality paper at bargain rates.

Flexible — Postcards are perfect for a variety of quick messages. Having a special sale? Maybe you've moved your business and need to get the word out. Doing a quick survey? Put a few short questions on a postcard and ask recipients to fax it back to you. Bet you'll have a terrific response rate!

Attention-getting — Postcards have higher readership. There's nothing to open! Once your customer has your postcard in hand, they're reading it.

Double the impact — Double postcards are great as a response vehicle. Customers just tear off the reply half of the card and pop it in the mail.

So the next time you need a fast, flexible promotional vehicle — without spending lots of cash — give postcards a try.





OFF THE BOOKSHELF

The differences between the sexes have long been the subject of many a stand-up routine.

But until now, no one's thought to examine exactly how these differences might manifest themselves from a marketing standpoint.

Exactly how do women want to be treated by your company? According to Faith Popcorn, legendary trend spotter and owner of BrainReserve, women don't just buy brands. They join them. And the easier/faster/more convenient you make it, the quicker they'll become your loyal customers for life.

Popcorn's third book, *EVEolution*, examines what she terms "the eight truths of marketing to women," and how EVEolved businesses hit the jackpot when it comes to sales. Coining the term "perffessional," *EVEolution* addresses the blurring of women's personal and professional lives — and how the companies that speak directly to these

multiple roles will ultimately win big in the battle for market share.

So how do you get started? Popcorn's "marketing truths," in a nutshell, address the almost cliched characteristics and complaints women have been dogged by for centuries:

- The need to connect with others like us.
- Lack of time.
- The overwhelming desire to be (ahhhhh) pampered every once in a while.

EVEolution is a fascinating case study of the companies that get it — and those that don't. Popcorn is quick to offer creative suggestions that are certain to jumpstart readers into thinking about the *EVEolution* of their own companies.

EVEolution: The Eight Truths of Marketing to Women, by Faith Popcorn and Lys Marigold, Hyperion Publishing.

FUN with Statistics...

Every year, three million more Americans reach the age of 50. What product or service can you provide to ease these Baby Boomers' transition into retirement living?

TECH TIP

NOW THAT'S DIRECT MAIL!

Need to get a quick letter out to your customers? Or spot-test a new offer to see how well it pulls? Web-based lettershop eletter.com eliminates the headaches of printing, stuffing, sorting and metering your mailings, from letters and postcards to booklets.

Just upload your document and datafile, and eletter.com does the rest, with turnaround from one to four business days. A handy online estimating guide lets you calculate costs on the fly, including your choice of paper, production costs and postage. You can even earn discounts toward future mailings by providing a link to eletter.com on your company's web site.

For a limited time, eletter is also offering web visitors a bonus — a FREE copy of *Direct Mail for Dummies*, so stop by today.

Source: eletter.com



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