

We're seeing glimmers of light at the end of the tunnel of this interminable recession. While companies remain cautious, they are anxious to figure out how to spend precious marketing dollars wisely. Digital needs to move front and center in the conversation, yet many marketers underestimate it because they're grasping at how to integrate interactive communications with traditional media. Digital marketing has been relegated to a separate silo because it's different. Smart marketers are catching on. Here's a checklist with some food for thought:

Digital Marketing Checklist

- 1. Is digital as integrated in your marketing as it is in your customers' lives?**
Consumers don't think about your online marketing, your TV commercials, your print campaign and your in-store promotion as separate—they simply perceive them as different facets of your brand. I can't tell you how many times I've seen marketers make the "silo-ing" mistake and bring digital into the discussion as an afterthought. Even leading industry publications talk about digital as a separate activity. Don't forget, in most cases a customer's first interaction with a brand or company is online.
- 2. Are you maximizing the power of online video?**
YouTube, Hulu, DVRs, tablets and mobile devices mean that advertisers and content providers need to recognize that consumers have taken control of how they interact with video content. It's no longer enough to simply put your 30 second TV ads on your website: you need to customize your video content to the medium.
- 3. Are you taking advantage of the web's ability to target audiences and personalize your messages?**
We recently did a Facebook ad campaign for a smaller client and got over 2 million impressions in less than two weeks with a media cost of \$600. This may not be ideal for all marketers, but there are lots of new opportunities and you should definitely be thinking outside the box.
- 4. Are you harnessing the power of social media—and prepared to deal with the consequences?**
Many marketers are rushing to add social media and consumer-generated content to their mix so they don't get left behind. But be prepared, consumers are quicker to damn than to praise. Social metrics are more than just measuring "Likes". Social media can also be a powerful market research tool. Do it right and you'll have a powerful online destination with exciting content that will keep your audience engaged. Do it wrong, and you could do serious damage to your brand. It's the ultimate empowerment of the consumer, and a real Pandora's Box.

- 5. Are you going the distance to embrace mobile and the internet in your customer's pocket?**
According to Google, mobile web browsing has now surpassed PC or laptop browsing. The internet is in everyone's pocket and its growth has been phenomenal. Most marketers' efforts to "go mobile" are merely attempts to "check off the box" to simply make existing websites work on mobile devices. Almost none go the extra length to take advantage of the tactile, three-dimensional aspects of browsing on iPhones, iPads or other handhelds. Now is the time to leverage this powerful new channel and get ahead of the pack.
- 6. Is your digital strategy on target and do you keep assessing and adjusting?**
You need to ask "Why are we doing this?" and "What are the desired business outcomes?" There are millions of data points to measure online behavior: how many click-throughs, what pages were viewed... But what's actionable? You've got to pick your metrics carefully, with an eye to what can be done with them. It's about quality, not quantity; you've got to keep an eye on the objectives. You also need to be bold in trying new things and be prepared to fail—and learn from the experience. The beauty is that now you can read the data in real time and don't have to wait for focus groups 6 months later. It's no longer "ready, aim, fire". It's "ready, fire, aim, adjust".

The monolithic, top-down approach to marketing no longer works. Marketers have to be more responsive and vigilant than ever. Are you?

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