

SYNERGY NETWORK PRESENTS:



How do you know if you are on track with your marketing strategy? Here is a collection of useful facts and figures so you can gauge your effectiveness. And, if you decide you want help either charting the course or making sure you are going to end up at your desired destination, please don't hesitate to give Synergy Network a call.

We are a multi-talented, full-service studio specializing in business-to-business marketing communications. Headquartered in Waltham, Massachusetts, Synergy Network provides award-winning design and marketing services. To find out how we can support your efforts, call 781-647-1200 or visit us on-line at [www.synergynet.com](http://www.synergynet.com)



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SMART MARKETING by DESIGN

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# INTRODUCTION

During an economic slowdown, it is common for companies to cut back on marketing and advertising expenditures. In this market climate, it is the company that spends well and spends wisely that will capture an increase in market share and assure itself a strong position when the economy booms again. Still, at a time when marketing dollars must be justified and accounted for, the focus is being placed on Return on Investment (ROI), and how effective marketing turns dollars into leads, leads into customers, and customers into advocates.

We compiled this guide to help clarify some of the marketing methods, marketing media, and marketing mayhem that is circulating around the business world today. We will be looking at some traditional vehicles as well as some cutting edge techniques to examine where money is being spent, how it is being spent, and most importantly: how to tell if it is being spent wisely.

A true marketing campaign is designed to generate leads, not sales. After all, would you buy something substantial from someone you did not know or did not trust? The answer illustrates the importance of lead generation and branding. Establishing yourself as a knowledgeable and trustworthy source of products and information in the eyes of your clients, prospects, and your market is the invaluable first step in bringing potential customers into your fold.

The key to generating leads is a well-planned, well-integrated, and well-executed campaign. The key to running the campaign is metrics. The concept is simple, but the process is hard. Metrics involves gathering the right information, distilling it, analyzing it, interpreting it, and acting on it – each step of which is very involved. Metrics is more than bounce-back cards and web-hits. It's technological sophistication and good old common sense and everything in between – from results measured by logarithms to results that can't be measured by numbers at all.

In the following pages, we will attempt to demystify metric methodology by dissecting the individual facets of a marketing campaign, from print ads to web promotion. In addition, we have also included some helpful background information, insider tips on how to make the most of your marketing budget, and even some clever guerrilla techniques.

# PRINT ADVERTISING

## BACKGROUND

A recent study from Fairfield Research shows that 18 million workers regularly made corporate purchases based on seeing an ad from a trade publication, generating \$110.2 billion in sales revenue for trade publication advertisers in 2000. The study determined that the average return on investment for advertisers was \$12 for every \$1 spent on advertising in trade publications. (*Source: Inquiry Handling Service*)

Print advertising in trade publications is a superb vehicle, capable of producing a range of marketing objectives:

### 1. Make Contact

In studying the buying influences of companies, research shows that most companies make regular sales calls on only a fraction (10%) of their buying influencers. The rest are left unattended. Advertising fills the gap with the other 90% who can't be called upon regularly. Advertising extends the company's reach. It makes regular contact with prospects that sales people may have never reached, and with outstanding cost effectiveness.

Today's typical personal sales call costs about \$259. But the typical advertising sales call cost is only about 15¢. Remember, if there are 150 different potential buyers within a company, and salespeople only call on 15 of them, something has to be done about the 135 who are not called upon personally.

### 2. Generate leads

After six months, 20% of the people who send in an inquiry about an advertised product will have bought that product from someone. 15% more are planning to buy soon. After a year, 45% will have bought the advertised product from someone.

### 3. Create Brand Awareness

McGraw Hill conducted a study several years ago, which tracked over 2,000 different product lines sold through one of their magazines. 600 of the products had been advertised, and 1400 had not. The research showed that product lines that had been advertised had much higher awareness among buyers – over 250% higher – than products that had not been advertised.

### 4. Increase Sales

In a study by Penton, it was found that end-user sales increased when potential customers were exposed to more advertising. Medium exposure (6 times yearly in trade magazines) increased end-user sales over 80%, and high exposure (12 times yearly in trade magazines) increased them by 157%. End-user sales also increased when dealers and distributors were exposed to more advertising, with the "medium" exposure showing a 66% increase and the "high" a 299% increase. The highest sales increase, however, was recorded when both end-users and dealers were exposed to the most advertising. When both of these groups received a "high" level of advertising, corresponding sales increased by 321%.

## METRICS

This worksheet shows you how to use your metrics to analyze an ad campaign and estimate the sales that resulted directly from that advertising. You'll need the following pieces of information:

1. Period of time in which the ad is run. Include only advertisements for a single product or related set of products.
2. Number of advertisements. Use either a single ad or a campaign.
3. Number of reader service inquiries. Provided by the publication.
4. Telephone and FAX inquiries generated by the print advertisements. This comes from your tracking records, or use of a survey of a random sample of inquirers to see what percentage were responding to your ad. Remember this step does not count those who called a local sales office or sales representative directly.
5. Total number of leads generated. Line 3 plus line 4.
6. Percentage of leads followed up. Should be 100% but 6% of inquirers are never contacted and 11% do not receive your information in time.
7. Total number of prospects from leads. Line 5 times line 6.
8. Estimated percentage of these prospects who will buy within one year. 45% is the average. Or estimate from a survey of inquirers.
9. Total number of sales to be made within one year. Line 7 times line 8.
10. Your share of market for the product being advertised. If you don't know your product's share of market, you need to make an estimate -- domestic only if your advertisements run only in U.S. circulated publications. Define your market from your customers' perspective. If another product meets the same need your product attempts to meet, then it is part of the market -- even if technically different from your product. Some publications have brand awareness or preference studies which are a good estimate of market share.
11. Your estimated sales from this advertising. Line 10 times line 9.
12. Average revenue per sales for the product being advertised. This comes from your accounting or marketing records.
13. Estimated revenue by your company from this advertising. Line 12 times line 11. This does not include sales prompted by your advertisements but made directly with your representatives at local sales offices or through distributors.
14. Average revenue per ad. Line 13 divided by line 2.

## Sound Advice

### To cut or not to cut

There are two great misconceptions when it comes to advertising during a period of slow economic growth.

1. "People do not have money, so our advertising would be wasted."
2. "We can afford to slash since competitors are doing the same."

In actuality, when companies start curtailing their purchases, not less but more advertising is required to prevent consumption from eroding, particularly since incomes are holding up relatively well. Intense marketing efforts are called for to generate interest among prospects and move unsold merchandise.

Equally fallacious is the rationale that a company can afford a cutback in advertising because everybody else is cutting back. Rather than wait for business to return to normal, top executives should cash in on the opportunity that the rival companies are creating for them. The company courageous enough to stay in and fight when everyone else is playing safe can bring about a dramatic change in market position.

### Ad Size, Color, and More

- You can't emphasize everything! Every ad should have a dominant element that hooks the reader and steers him or her towards what's most important in the ad. This dominant element, which may include a photo, illustration, or headline should comprise  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the ad. This will only allow  $\frac{1}{3}$  for copy, but the sacrifice will prove worthwhile by attracting more readers.
- A one-half page ad is about two-thirds as effective as a full-page ad.
- Headlines should be engaging and concise (no more than 8 words).
- White space speaks volumes.
- Keep your text and your graphics cohesive and consistent with your overall message.
- Four-color advertising usually increases response 30 to 60% at an increased cost of 20%. On the other hand, adding a second color to a black and white page usually doesn't pay for itself.
- Response devices like coupons used in advertisements increase readership recall by 13%. Business reply cards included in advertisements increased ad recall scores by 29%. Insert advertisements increased recall by 54%. Bind-in cards increase response up to 600%.
- A print ad with a bind-in card will out pull the same ad without a bind-in up to 600%.
- Photographs are more effective than drawings.
- Illustrations showing the product in use are better than static product images.

## Ad Position

For direct response advertisers, position in a publication has a telling effect on response. When it comes to position of an ad within the magazine, here is approximately what you can expect the relative response to be from various page positions as measured against the first right-hand page arbitrarily rated at a pull of 100:

First right-hand page	100
Second right-hand page	95
Third right-hand page	90
Fourth right-hand page	85
Back of front of book (Preceding editorial matter)	70
Back of book (following main body of editorial matter:	50
Back cover	100
Inside third cover	90
Page facing third cover	85

### Sources:

*Cahners Business Information*

*Young & Rubicam Traveling Creative Workshop*

*Dynamic Graphics Magazine – “Design Basics, by Brenn Anderson”*

*Starch Research*

# DIRECT MAIL

## BACKGROUND

### Timeless Direct Marketing Principles

- People buy benefits, not features.
- The longer you keep someone reading your copy, the better your chances of success.
- Maximizing direct mail success depends first upon the lists you use, second upon the copy and graphics you create, and third upon the offers you make.
- Self-mailers are cheaper to produce, but they rarely out-pull envelope-enclosed letter mailings.
- It is easier to increase the average dollar amount of an order than it is to increase percentage of response.
- The closure rate from qualified leads can be from two to four times as effective as cold calls.
- A follow-up to the same list within 30 days will pull 40 to 50 percent of the first mailing.
- A new catalog to a customer base will out pull cold lists by 400 to 600 percent.

## METRICS

According to the DMA, the average response in the US for direct mail is 1.86%. The response rate increase with the following parameters added.

Normal response rate	1.86%
Add return reply envelope	2.12%
Add 800 number	2.54%
Personalize the piece	3.10%

To calculate the return on investment for a direct mail campaign you'll need the following pieces of information:

- (A) The total costs of the campaign
- (B) The total number of direct mail pieces (newsletters)
- (C) The response rate from the newsletters (what percent of the people who got your direct mail, for example, contacted your company).
- (D) The conversion rate (what percent of those who contacted you actually bought something)
- (E) The average amount of sales per person who bought something based on the direct mail. The ROI =  $((B * C * D * E) - A) / A$

You can refine this figure by actually calculating the exact amount of sales from all the people who bought something that came from the direct mail campaign (use this number instead of  $(B * C * D * E)$ ).

## Sound Advice

**Do not drive prospects to your website at the expense of a phone call or a reply card.** The purpose of a well-crafted direct mail piece is to entice the prospect into taking the immediate action of a phone call or returning a reply card, something that gives you direct contact and solid information. Your website is a great place to collect leads, but don't spend the money on a direct mail campaign just to send people there.

**Less is more.** It is very easy to tell your prospect too much about your product or service in a lead generator. You'll get a lot more leads if you sell the benefits not the features. Most lead packages don't even need a brochure. A simple letter and reply device will usually do the trick.

**In most cases, a package works better than a self-mailer.** An envelope with a letter in it is more personal and, thus, more effective. Generally speaking, a well-crafted package can outpull a self-mailer by a ratio of four to one.

**Include a reply card and a phone number.** Some studies have shown that you can potentially double your response if you include a business reply card or other form for written response device. Many people resist calling a unknown business, preferring to learn more before speaking with a salesman.

**Personalize it.** If your budget allows, you should avoid form letters. Computer personalization will get you more response. It will also make your company look better in the process.

**Make it a no risk offer.** Be sure to let your prospect know that they are sending for free information. There is no risk or obligation. You will get to that part in the fulfillment package or sales presentation. In other words, a lead package is an "opener," not a "closer."

**Set a deadline for your offer.** Studies show that people are more likely to respond to direct mail piece that states a deadline.

**Always use business reply postage.** You pay for the return. But, it's well worth it.

Sources: *Young & Rubicam Traveling Creative Workshop*  
*The Direct Mail Idea Exchange*

# PUBLIC RELATIONS

## BACKGROUND

Public Relations can be an extremely powerful tool for a marketer. Word of mouth cannot compete with mass media and online publications, and positive publicity at a minimal cost is something that every company desires. The problem is that PR techniques can be complex and the process is tedious. Often times the return is not what was expected and disappointment can turn into apathy and frustration.

New product releases, strategic alliances, key hirings, interesting technology applications, corporate sponsorships, community involvement – all of these are stories worthy of including in print and on-line trade publications and even local newspapers. But often times, efforts to submit stories are met with apparent indifference.

Truth is, the media needs your story. Print media especially needs a constant stream of usable news, and you can provide it to them in a variety of forms. The three keys are knowing: whether a story is truly newsworthy, how to deliver the story in a form that will get it noticed, and how to gauge whether the effort is worth the payoff.

## METRICS

Starting with the last question first: attempts to quantify the effects of PR can often be difficult. Often publications will list PR stories on their reader response cards, allowing for easy tracking. You can also code your releases to track results, or create a target page on your website and track the hits.

Much of what makes Public Relations articles beneficial cannot be easily quantified. Getting published helps to build your reputation and establish your credentials. It creates a favorable impression of you in the marketplace. It helps to generate inquiries and can even get you invited to speak to groups. With these benefits, it is more difficult to calculate ROI, but generally speaking the goodwill benefits of a solid PR program greatly outweigh the time spent preparing releases and cultivating a relationship with the media.

## Good Advice

### What to write about:

Your story must be something that an editor would consider newsworthy. Writing an ad for your company to be used as a story will be met with a response containing the phone number for the advertising department. Ask yourself if any of these corporate events are in the works for your company:

Have you just done a research study?

Did you win an award recently?

Will you be speaking to a group?

Did you just finish speaking to a group?

Did you recently attend or teach a seminar?

Have you had an article published?

Are you involved in any community service or fund-raising project?

Were you involved in a panel?

Did you volunteer for something?

Were you asked to be on a special task force?

Did you help a client with a special project or marketing promotion?

Have you gained any new clients?

Have you expanded or relocated?

Are you going to be offering some new service or new product?

Did you win some major contract?

Did you just join an association?

**Where to send it:**

Your large daily newspaper is an obvious choice, but if your story is too focused on your particular industry to be of interest to the general public, a more specialized publication would be a better choice. Industry publications have smaller audiences but they are much more targeted. After all, your message does not have to get out to everyone to be effective, it only has to reach your prospects. Be sure to read a publication carefully prior to submitting a story to make sure that the publication is appropriate to your needs and also to get the name of the editor who deals with the most suitable section of the publication. You should also study the editorial calendar to determine an issue where your story would be especially pertinent. This will make your story pitch more effective and increase the likelihood of placement.

**How to package it:**

You can issue press releases in a few different forms, depending on your resources and the content. The standard press release delivers facts in a concise manner and is generally used by editors as part of a larger story or as the framework for a shorter filler piece. Press releases can also be written as a short article, and are often printed just as they are submitted, provided that they are not overly promotional. A third type of press release is intended to produce a feature article on your company. This type of press release provides just enough information to entice an editor into contacting you for an interview.

Once you have a format, your story will need an angle. There are certain topics that Media Managers tend to go for. If you can link your story to one of these topics, you have a good shot at coverage. Trendy topics (education, health care), cherished social themes (underdog triumphs), or community issues (local pollution, economic depression) generally play well. It is also a good idea to focus on a industry magazine's specialization or an editor's pet topic.

It is also to your advantage to present the publication with an image to accompany your press release. Photos and illustrations compliment your story, making the package more attractive to editors. Standard product shots can also be enhanced with digital artistry, creating the visually appealing images that publications find hard to turn down.

**Sources:**

*Keysteps.com* – “Writing a Press Release”

*Pertinent.com* – “What Media Managers Crave;” “Tips from a Newspaper Editor”

# E-MAIL ADVERTISING

## BACKGROUND

Once the black sheep of the direct marketing family, email campaigns have emerged as an invaluable tool for driving sales. Email marketing keeps you visible and connected with your customers. Email allows you to educate your customers and prospects about your accomplishments, which can position you as a knowledgeable and trustworthy source for products and information. And email makes it easy for a prospect to contact you, all they have to do is click reply.

As useful as email campaigns can be, it is important to realize that email marketing is not for sending unsolicited bulk mail (spam). Spam reflects very poorly on your business and will cost you prospects. However, since nearly 80 percent of a company's repeat business tends to come from 20% of its customer base, customer retention and relationship building is where email marketing truly shines.

In 1999, marketers spent \$97 million on over 40 billion permission emails and over 38.5 billion spam emails. Overall, permission-based emails garnered at 11.5% response rate, compared to .55% for banner ads. The cost averaged 25 cents per email, as opposed to print direct mail pieces, which ran from 50 cents to \$2 each. (Business 2.0)

eMarketer forecasts that email marketing expenditures will reach \$2.4 billion by 2003, up from \$24 million in 1999. As the number of marketing emails soars flooded consumers will become less receptive to the general stream of emails. In order to get their message across, marketers will need to be more targeted, relevant, valuable, and consistent with their overall marketing strategy.

## METRICS

### The numbers

When designing metrics for an email campaign, the simplest way to gauge ROI is by creating a target page that deals exclusively with that specific campaign and includes a link to that page in your email. The number of hits received by that page can then be used to calculate ROI. There are also methods of designing emails that can not only tell you the number of people who opened the email, but can also track which persons actually used the link to visit your site.

### Beyond the numbers

Email marketing is not just a broadcast medium, it is a personal and interactive relationship builder. By providing your customers and prospects with valuable information, email marketing done correctly can promote customer satisfaction and brand loyalty, things that cannot easily be measured in statistics.

## Good Advice

### Making Mailing Lists

One good idea is to offer something of value to visitors to your web site over email and get people to sign up for it by providing you with their email address. Personal and phone contact is also a great opportunity to invite a client or a prospect to join your e-newsletter mailing list. Lists can also be purchased from companies that have collected email addresses from people who have consented to receive email on certain topics. Though this method is more expensive, it can be very effective.

### Writing a Subject Line

- Keep it short: the average subject line is between 18 and 25 characters long (count spaces). Any longer and you risk getting cut off in the inbox.
- Choose your words carefully: Your subject line should focus on your audience, not your product. It should identify a need, solve a problem, or ask a question to involve your recipient personally.

### Deciding on Content

- Your email should educate your clients and prospects with technical advice, new product info, or interesting projects that you have worked on. Make it valuable to them and you will slowly build confidence and trust.
- Send one concise and focused idea per email. If you have multiple topics, send multiple messages.
- Your subject should focus on what's new or news: new capabilities, new achievements, new technology, etc.

### The Finer Points

- To avoid looking like spam, remind your recipients that they requested to be added to your mailing list.
- State your confidentiality policy that email addresses will only be used in house – never shared or sold.
- Keep records of each registration.
- Include clear instructions on how to unsubscribe.
- Have a real person to handle problems and inquiries promptly.
- Keep your lists secure and make sure that recipients cannot see each other's email addresses or send replies to the entire group.
- Use your signature file in all of your email messages including your name, company, and marketing slogan.

Sources:

*Business 2.0* – “Winning Customer Approval”

*Keysteps.com* – “10 Tips for Using Email Successfully”

*Promoting On-line*, by Ilise Benum

# WEBSITES

## BACKGROUND

### **Website Activity**

We all know that today's business environment demands a website. For providing technical information, on-line purchases, easy contact, and self-promotion, an effective website can boost sales and streamline operations for companies in almost every industry. However, with more than 5 million websites in existence, intelligent analysis of your website is critical to your survival on-line now more than ever.

Contrary to popular belief, it is once you have a website up and running that the real hard work begins. The challenges are seamlessly integrating your website into your overall marketing strategy, measuring the effectiveness of your site, and fine tuning your site based on the data that you are collecting.

At first glance, web metrics might seem a daunting task. In reality, it's even harder than that. Gathering the right information, analyzing it properly, interpreting the results, and finally implementing the correct changes to your site is an involved process to be undertaken by Internet professionals. Whether tackling these challenges in house or with a contractor, the following are some important and interesting bits of information you should know.

### **Definitions:**

#### PAGEVIEWS:

Pageviews record the number of times the HTML file for your web page is requested from your web server.

#### CLICK-THROUGHS:

Click-throughs are the number of times an on-line advertisement is clicked on by visitors, who are then taken to the advertiser's web page.

#### UNIQUE VISITORS:

Unique visitors are tracked by their IP address (or Internet Protocol address), rather than by files requested from the web server. Unfortunately, dial-up servers can give the same IP address to different users at different times, creating a single profile out of multiple people and providing misleading information.

#### INTERACTIVE VISITORS:

This is a relatively new way of analyzing who your visitors are, where they're coming from, and how they're interacting with your web site. You are not just looking at the quantity of traffic your site receives, you're looking at the quality of visitors as well.

Interactive Visitors measures how long visitors are staying at your site, how many visitors are making a purchase, how many are repeat visitors, and the web sites from which visitors are being referred. This gives you critical information about visitors' likes, dislikes, and behavior at your web site. This is the exact information you need to improve your web site and start capturing more sales.

Your web host should be able to provide you with your server logs. Many hosts will give them to you as part of your hosting fee, while others will charge you for them. In many cases, what you are going to get is raw log data, piles of numbers and symbols that are difficult to interpret. Some web hosts offer log analysis software, which will import your server logs into reports, graphs, and charts. Unfortunately, it still takes substantial web expertise to know how to use this information. Otherwise the data is useless.

## METRICS

Tracking how customers enter your site and how their sales behavior changes over time has become increasingly complicated. It has also become increasingly useful. Streams of data are being collected detailing how your prospects and customers travel through your site. If you're not using that data, really using it, you're throwing away information that can help you market more cost-effectively.

Marketers are using a combination of click through rate and other cost-per-action metrics, including cost-per-lead, cost-per-sale, and cost-per-registration. Metrics are becoming an indispensable tool, allowing marketers to optimize advertising as they become more sophisticated in analyzing data. For example, by studying the way traffic moves through a web site, and seeing which generate the most sales leads, companies can develop creative optimization around which messages work best.

The ultimate goal is to measure the effectiveness of moving people through the customer lifecycle—from suspect, to prospect, to novice customer, to seasoned customer, to company advocate. To measure this information, you should start thinking in terms of concepts. The following concepts are critical to understanding how your website is serving your company.

**REACH:** The percentage of possible audience you are able to touch with your attention-getting promotion. What is the cost per impression and, more important, the cost per lasting impression?

**ACQUISITION:** That point when you engaged a prospective customer in a dialogue as opposed to merely getting his or her attention for the moment. How much do you have to spend to get a qualified prospect on your site?

$$\frac{\text{Advertising and other promotional costs}}{\text{Number of click-throughs}}$$

**CONVERSION:** Refers to the moment customers buy, but it can also refer to signing up for a seminar, joining a discussion, subscribing to a newsletter, etc. Cost per conversion should top your list of important numbers to track.

$$\frac{\text{Advertising and promotional costs}}{\text{Number of sales}}$$

**RETENTION:** You want customers to buy from you again and again. If it costs a lot of money to attract customers, why aren't you tracking what makes current customers leave, and focusing on ways to keep them coming back?

**STICKINESS:** A site feature that appeals to a broad audience, has frequent repeat visitors, and commands users' time. Stickiness is a powerful aggregate metric that allows managers to view multiple facets of user behavior and sit performance.

**FRESHNESS:** Freshness is the rate at which your core customers find new content on your site. Ideally, your key content areas will have a freshness score near 1.0. If your content has a score of 0.5, users are seeing the stale content, and your stickiness numbers will also tend to be low. Remember, not all content has the same shelf life, so be smart about what you measure.

$$\text{Freshness} = \frac{\text{Average content refresh rate}}{\text{Average section visit frequency}}$$

**MIGRATION:** The migration-rate is useful in identifying where visitors are coming from and where they are going within your site. To determine if your site is holding on to visitors or sucking them into oblivion use the migration formula:

$$\text{Migration-rate} = \frac{\text{Average number of exits from content area} \times (100)}{\text{Average number of visits to content area}}$$

## Good Advice

While distilling and analyzing your web traffic data is a crucial element to determining the content and design of your website, there are some general tips that are helpful to know.

### WEBSITE DESIGN TIPS:

#### **Design with Small Monitors in Mind**

The majority of users will have a 14" screen, make sure your header graphics, navigational controls, and content title appear within this space.

#### **Respect Users' Time**

Keep a tight reign on graphic sizes and overall download time. Users quickly exit a graphically bloated site.

#### **Reduce Distractions**

Beware of complex background graphics, blinking text or poorly contrasting text vs. background colors. Let your message come through loud and clear.

#### **Provide Value Added Content**

If possible, offer educational information about your field and a page dedicated to related web links that complement your web site. These strategies give users another reason to come to your site and re-visit.

#### **Reduce Homepage Content**

The first page of your site should be a little more than your splash graphic, navigational controls, and a short statement about your company.

#### **Refresh Content**

Update time sensitive information and consider various short run on-line promotions.

#### **Less is More**

Keep your text content as short and concise as possible on each page, many users do not scroll entire screens before they click to a new topic area.

### WEBSITE CONTENT TIPS

**Tips:** They are usually small pieces of information about the size of a paragraph.

Examples: tips on using a product, tips on doing your taxes.

**News Articles:** They can include news about your industry or company information.

Examples: joint ventures, new product releases, special events, overseas activity.

**Visual Content:** They include visual helpers that help explain, show, or support an example. Examples: charts, photos, graphics, graphs.

**Excerpts:** They include information used from other resources for different purposes, but can also support your business. Examples: journal articles, transcripts of seminars, reprints, speeches, press releases.

**Provide Solutions:** Your web site should demonstrate that you understand the problem and that you can provide the solution.

**Testimonials and Guarantees:** These statements can help build credibility, something that is crucial for a web page. Send out customer feedback surveys to acquire testimonials. A strong, simple, and straightforward guarantee will provide your visitors with greater confidence in purchasing your product.

## **WEBSITE CATALOG TIPS**

Increasingly, companies are attempting to effect a symbiotic marketing relationship where print catalogs drive traffic to the website and the website drives catalog sales. Maintaining consistent branding across all channels is the key. Your on-line catalog must be integrated into your overall marketing strategy. Print ads, direct mail promotions, print catalogs, and even back end service must all be coordinated to send a consistent message that is true to your brand.

## **WEBSITE PROMOTION TIPS**

Promoting your business on the Internet is an ever evolving process that must be pursued religiously. Thankfully, there are several varied methods of driving traffic to your website.

### **Write an Article**

A great way to demonstrate your expertise and to draw people to your web site is to write an article and submit it to various newsletters and trade publications. Allow people to reprint your articles on their web site, in their e-zine, newsletter, magazine, or ebooks. Include your resource box and the option for article reprints at the bottom of each article.

### **Join Newsgroups and Chatrooms**

Post messages to newsgroups or join a chat group to establish yourself as an industry expert. Then you can discreetly plug your product or service in conversation (be sure to stay on topic).

### **Invite Referrals**

Amend your site or add to your e-zine a request that your visitors refer your site to their friends.

### **Develop A Doorway Page**

Spend some time developing a doorway page based on some specific keywords that relate to your site. Once you have done this, submit the page to the search engines to obtain a steady stream of free targeted traffic.

### **Bid On Some Keywords**

There is a new breed of search engine that allows advertisers to bid on certain keywords. The advertiser then pays for the traffic sent to their site.

### **Banner Ads**

Though sagging clickthrough rates have brought recent attacks on banner advertising, it remains the number one on-line advertising vehicle, accounting for 56% of the \$4.6 billion spent on-line. In 2000, \$128.7 billion was spent after seeing an ad on a B2B website. Often times, poor performing banner ads can be traced to flaws in the creative, rather than the medium. Companies that don't vary their designs or account for adequate testing, targeting, and data analysis will never get the results that they are looking for. Companies that constantly evolve their banner advertisements within an integrated media strategy while consistently evaluating the raw data, will find a much higher return on the banner ad investment.

*Sources:*

- Keysteps.com:* "12 High Readership Content Ideas"  
"What Have You Done Today to Help Promote Your Business?"
- Business2.o:* "Making Metrics Count"
- Oms.com:* "Tips for Successful Marketing"
- B2B On-line:* "Study Touts Pub Ads' ROI"

# TRADESHOWS

## BACKGROUND

Tradeshows held during the 4th quarter of 2000 saw an increase in all measuring indexes. Net square footage grew 4.5%, and the number of exhibiting companies rose 3.8%. Attendance, however, was at its lowest since 1998. (Source: Tradeshow Week's Quarterly Report of Tradeshow Statistics.) Despite this fact, tradeshows are still a great marketing vehicle. Here are some stats to check out:

- Closing a sale that begins with contact at an exhibition is nearly half the cost of closing a sale that doesn't have the exhibition advantage: \$550 and 1.4 sales calls compared with \$997 and 3.6 sales calls. (CEIR Report SM17)
- 85% of exhibition attendees are buyers of one or more products or services exhibited. (CEIR Report ACRR 1131)
- More than three-quarters (77%) of the people at exhibitions find at least one new supplier. Most (95%) meet with their current suppliers. (CEIR Report PE 3) 83% of the decision makers who attend exhibitions say they bring them up to date on the latest trends and developments in their industries. 85% are there to save time and money by seeing many vendors at once. (CEIR Report PE 2)
- 91% of business decision makers say exhibitions are "extremely useful" sources of purchasing information. They rank exhibitions #1 for purchasing information among 13 sales and marketing tools. (CEIR Report PE1)

## METRICS

The basis for all trade show measurement is setting realistic and quantifiable goals and strategies to help you measure your success. Calculating the cost effectiveness of lead generation and order writing is a relatively simple procedure. The success of other tradeshow objectives, however, can be harder to measure.

Here are some tips on achieving your tradeshow objectives and how to gauge your success:

- Generating Sales Leads:  $\text{Cost per lead} = \text{total show costs} \div \text{leads generated}$
- Writing Orders:  $\text{Cost per sale} = \text{number of sales generated} \div \text{sales income}$
- Capturing Media/Analyst Exposure: Target specific publications and issue special invitations to your targeted media. Develop press kits and track your interviews with the media and analysts by requesting copies of articles and reports published. Media and analyst coverage, though difficult to measure in financial terms, can have a tremendous affect on sales.

- Meeting Existing Customers: Establish a particular reason why customers should visit you at the show and issue special invitations to them. Design specific lead cards or surveys to keep track of the customers you saw.
- Recruiting Dealers/Distributors: Advertise in trade publications and mail invitations to a targeted group. Develop a lead card for tracking specific information.
- Introducing a New Product/Service: Determine the audience to which you want to introduce your product/service and target them in trade publications and a special mailing. Track visitors by awarding a gift for a completed lead card.
- Conducting Market Research: Decide what information is needed and which competitors should be visited. Produce a survey that captures specific information from competitors and/or visitors. Measure the evaluated results against your set goals.

By spending the time necessary to set up the above measurement systems, you can easily calculate the effectiveness of your efforts by dividing the number of customers, distributors, or visitors by the total cost of the programs implemented to attract them. In this way, you can obtain exactly the kind of specific, quantifiable figures that will produce a more cost effective tradeshow campaign.

(Resource: "The Complete Handbook of Profitable Trade Show Exhibiting" by Christine Christman, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ)

## Good Advice

**Pre-show promo:** Don't underestimate the power of a pre-show campaign. An effective pre-show promotion can deliver increases of 50% in conversions to qualified leads. (CEIR Report PE 2.1)

### Ducks in a row:

- Set specific goals for each show.
- Be totally clear about what it is you want to achieve through your participation at the various shows you attend.
- Design a customized, comprehensive, and user friendly lead card.
- Consistently use a prospect ranking system.
- Plan a questioning strategy to ensure properly prepared follow-ups.
- Develop a system to follow up all show leads, prioritized according to your ranking system. If you don't follow up, your competitors will.
- Measure your results.

**Get Noticed:** Stodgy, cluttered, structure-heavy designs and elaborate theme-park environments are out, replaced with exhibits that deliver a unique, customized look with modular capabilities. Simpler architecture, customized graphics, interactive displays, and smart lighting are becoming the preferred methods of achieving a customized look that is engaging to your visitors. As we approach the tradeshow season, companies are looking to create a hands-on visitor experience with high-tech 3-D animation, virtual-reality, and interactive multimedia kiosks – technology that looks good and also shows off your product.

Sources –

Tradeshow news network: “Why Tradeshows;” “Measuring Exhibit Success”

“The Complete Handbook of Profitable Trade Show Exhibiting” by Christine Christman