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SUCCESSFULLY INTEGRATING ONLINE AND OFFLINE MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

BY MICHAEL B. STALBAUM

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As most have probably realized by now, there is a clear method to marketing success – especially marketing success in the online arena.

A key factor that should not be overlooked in achieving marketing success is the seamless integration of a company's online and offline campaigns. By utilizing the benefits of the "information super-highway" and using that same information to create well-implemented marketing plans, any company can easily realize an increase in traffic to their Web site as well as a boost in overall sales.

All marketing campaigns (both online and offline) have to use a clear and defined USP (unique selling proposition), which is often designed by the company itself or their traditional ad agency. As you move into the online arena, it is crucial that a company maintain consistency in the copy, color and design across both online and offline advertising schemes. Integrating advertising campaigns is a step in the right direction for a company to secure instant brand recall.

Online marketing's one clear advantage is the ability for an organization to track the results, not to mention the significant cost benefits in the online arena. Using online tactics and working together with traditional agencies has always helped illustrate traceable results. This can often help determine which ads are effective and which are not in both mediums.

Interaction with the consumer through online promotions and marketing enables a company to see the path a consumer uses to research, and eventually buy the products. Dealing with online consumers, an organization can target specific searches that are directly related to the product offering. Once a company has defined this specific area to target, this information provides valuable insight into enhancing offline campaign results

by knowing where to place more of the offline advertisements. This is especially important when doing direct mail drops. Using integrated campaigns will usually catch the reader's eye and draw attention to the product. It is a great way to remind the reader of the previous color schemes and keep consumer recall fresh.

Although consumer sophistication and awareness of marketing is increasing, people are still amused by rich media. Offline advertising cannot offer these options to consumers. Conversion of offline campaigns to a rich media online campaign is sure to draw more attention to your offline promotions as well.

In most cases, clients will come to us with advertising campaigns that have already been launched; we then become responsible for creating the parallel online campaign. In some cases, we will sit down with a company and conceptualize a new advertising campaign that establishes their objectives. Doing this improves our ability to get an accurate impression of the architecture and sentiment the company desires.

Don't get me wrong; offline marketing is valuable and crucial to the success of the campaign as well. In fact, offline marketing tends to drive the online campaign and builds the personality of the brand. It drives users to the site, which allows a company to see the conversion from offline-to-online.

UnREAL's experience with GoPhila.com has been a great example of this. They



Illustration by Berry Villegas

already have such a powerful "local" brand name that it really drives the conversion online and increases the online visibility and performance. However, we have had situations where some of the client's existing campaigns didn't transfer offline to online very easily. At that point, we leave it up to the company to determine their goals and set up the appropriate online campaign from there.

The bottom line is a company should never rule out online advertising because they feel that their offline campaigns are working. As I mentioned, the integration of the two mediums is very important and will help companies achieve their overall goal of increasing online as well as offline sales.

Michael B. Stalbaum is the co-founder and CEO of UnREAL Marketing Solutions, a full-service interactive marketing and advertising agency specializing in search engine marketing, online media planning, Web and multimedia design. Stalbaum is responsible for the strategic direction of the company and its daily business affairs. Stalbaum developed his passion for marketing while earning his J.D. and M.B.A. at Temple University's law and business schools. During that time, he founded UnREAL Marketing to create marketing and advertising campaigns for local restaurants and charitable organizations. In 1999, Stalbaum left his law career and shifted the focus of UnREAL Marketing to offer assistance to companies in the online arena.