

New Media Resolutions for a New Year

Placing ads in target-specific e-newsletters

How's your 2009 media planning going? Bet you're in the same boat as a lot of other decision-makers, in big and small companies alike. You have some uncertainties about what the new year will bring (or not bring), and you have less money to invest in advertising. And you may be facing more pressure than ever before to see or prove ROI to management — or to yourself.



Making every ad dollar work harder
Not a new concept by any means. But the stakes are probably at an all-time high. More targeted marketing may already be one of your key strategies, but there's a particular type you may be overlooking or underestimating: e-newsletters.

Very few decision makers think about advertising in other companies' email publications or e-newsletters — the conversation usually revolves around creating and distributing your own. But when you place an ad in an e-newsletter, you're exposing your company or service to an audience that's already pre-qualified and pre-disposed to receive your message.

The less obvious media choice
E-newsletters are content-driven marketing vehicles. There's probably an online newsletter for every industry in the world. Sailing, beverages, real estate, assisted living facilities, pet supplies, medical spas, donuts — you name it, there's an e-newsletter being written about nearly every product and service imaginable, no matter how offbeat.

Gain by association
Recipients choose to receive e-newsletters to stay abreast of what's going on in their industry. Content writers are likely to be experts in their fields, which delivers credibility and value to the reader.

When you advertise in an e-newsletter, those same readers will receive and interpret your company's sales message as an intrinsic part of that value.

The instant gratification factor
When you advertise in an e-newsletter, linking enables prospects to enter your website directly from your ad. You can track the click-throughs to measure effectiveness on a real-time basis, and use the trends to craft response mechanisms to increase opportunities for prospecting.

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Buckle Up for An Interesting 2009

At one point in the cinematic classic *All About Eve*, Bette Davis' character famously says, "Buckle your seat belts, it's going to be a bumpy night." With a very bumpy (and jumpy) 2008 coming to an end, that line seems to capture the way most marketers are looking ahead to 2009.

No one knows what the future will bring, of course, but one way to try to mold the future is by paying attention to trends. What started in 2008 is most likely to continue into 2009 — and beyond.

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3 Questions About... Changing Postal Regs for 2009



This issue's interview with a subject matter expert gives mailers a heads up on imminent address and list update requirements. Dennis Lacognata is managing partner at Staten Island, NY-based Prompt Mailers, a leader in turnkey lettershop, printing, fulfillment, and data processing solutions for direct mailers. Reach him at (718) 447-6206, and be sure to download Prompt's free "Easy Reference Guide for Direct Mail" at promptmailers.com.

Can I really put a repositionable note on the outside of my mailing envelope? Absolutely. Repositionable notes (RPNs) were just made a permanent classification by the Postal Service. They were originally limited to letter-size mail, but can now also be used for flat-size commercial rate first-class mail, standard mail, and periodicals. If you've seen them in action, you know they're real eye catchers. In fact, some studies have shown close to 37% in increased response. By combining creative placement with color, font, and variable data options, RPNs can highlight your call to action or even play an integral part in the design of your mail piece.

How might the new Flats Sequencing System (FSS) affect my mailings? Starting March 29, 2009, the Postal Service is rolling out new address placement and formatting requirements for most flat-size pieces. This affects where you place your delivery address, the size of the font used, and the spacing between the lines. Now's the ideal time to review your layouts for compliance with both the FSS requirements and those of Intelligent Mail barcodes, which go into effect soon after in May 2009. Our advice? Redesign once and save twice by maximizing your postal discounts and speeding delivery of your mail piece.

Have list update standards also changed? Yes, starting November 23, the Move Update standards used for first class will now also apply to standard mail. The minimum frequency to process Move Updates is also changing, from 185 days to 95 days prior to mailing.

Confused? That's why we rely on Prompt to keep Fahoury Ink and its clients on top of changing mail regulations. Their knowledge is priceless and their service even better. ☀

The "Oops" Factor: Legit Mea Culpa or New Stealth Marketing Tool?

Have you been the recipient of one of those "apology marketing" emails? It generally takes one of two forms — either "We sent you an email in error," or "Our site was having technical difficulties," with an accompanying apology and discount offer for your trouble.

Granted, people make honest mistakes, for which an acknowledgement is always appreciated. But the flurry of "Whoops!" communications might lead cynical marketing minds to believe there's something else afoot. ☀



Trendwatch: The Retail Report

DIY Checkout

Impulse purchases by women drop by 32% (men 16%) in self-checkout lanes, according to the latest North American Self-Checkout Systems Market Study by IHL Consulting Group. But 72% of U.S. consumers already hold a positive view of self-checkout, so service-first stores risk little by implementing the technology anyway.

Squeezing Out Savings

Since 2001, shopping trips to super centers, warehouse clubs and dollar stores have grown by 35%, 10%, and 9%, respectively.

Expand the Brand

Women's apparel retailer Dress Barn is putting its own spin on the "home sales party" craze by offering in-store parties with discount benefit for hosts and attendees. The company's VIP party program invites shoppers to throw an in-store shopping party for friends. Attendees receive tips on accessorizing from a Dress Barn associate and a 15% discount on their party purchases.

Shopper Search Stats

A Performics/ROI Research study shows that white Americans lag behind other groups when it comes to using search as part of their shopping. In response to the question, "Whether I purchase online or offline, I always use search as part of the process," just 43% answered yes, compared to nearly 62% of Asian Americans, and more than half of Hispanic/Latino Americans and African and other Black Americans.

“ I find television very educating. Every time somebody turns on the set, I go into the other room and read a book. ”

Groucho Marx

New Media Resolutions...

(from p. 1)

More effort but better return

Unlike magazines and other forms of traditional media, it takes a little more work to find the right e-newsletters in which to advertise. But a few simple steps can evolve into an easy-to-manage process:

1. Identify your target audience. Decision makers or influencers? What industry or department do they work in? For instance, the best customers for your product or service may be owners (decision makers) of bakeries (industry). Another example would be managers (influencers) in technology (department).

2. Find the right vehicle(s). With the target in mind, scout for newsletters in the corresponding industry. Online searches for industry associations, or searches for companies that produce e-newsletters on behalf of different industries, can help you find them.

3. Take a critical look. Subscribe and take a close look at the content of a particular

e-newsletter over several issues before you decide to advertise. You should feel confident that the newsletter is engaging and credible.

4. Measure your return on investment. Keep close tabs on what response is being generated by each e-newsletter (monitor the click-throughs to your website), and increase or decrease your activity accordingly.

5. Start slowly. As with most online media, there's little risk attached to testing the validity of e-newsletters, but you want to make sure you have the back-end operations in place to handle the leads generated (hopefully!) by your ad.

Hassle-free ad development

If you lack the resources to get an ad created, many publishers will do it for you. Ad sizes are usually prescribed in accordance with the newsletter's format, and production rates are extremely reasonable. If you advertise enough, you may even be able to negotiate free production.

Low media costs

The cost of ad space in any medium usually correlates to the size of its distribution and production costs. An e-newsletter typically reaches anywhere from 10,000 to 30,000 readers per issue. You can expect the cost of placing your ad to be in the hundreds of dollars, not in the thousands like printed publications or broadcast media.

When talking to sales representatives, ask whether they offer packages if you advertise on the company's website along with the e-newsletter. Many even offer full publication sponsorship for relatively reasonable rates.

We may be looking at another tough year. But with e-newsletters on your 2009 media plan, your business just might just have it a little less tough than everyone else. ☀



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New staff development workshop! Copywriting 101: Becoming a Marketing Wordsmith

Is your in-house staff — marketing managers, sales reps, and customer service personnel — taking on more promotional writing responsibilities in an effort to maximize your internal resources and keep your business in front of customers and prospects?

"Copywriting 101: Becoming a Marketing Wordsmith" is a 90-minute session designed to boost the basic skills and comfort level of novice writers in crafting targeted, benefit-oriented marketing copy. Here's just a sampling of what attendees will learn:

- The four phases of copy development
- Crafting a compelling USP
- What history's most effective headlines have in common
- Boosting the creativity quotient, and more

From sales letters and direct mail to website content, your staff will gain an understanding of the basics for creating powerful sales copy — and the skills to put that knowledge to work for your organization almost immediately.

For details on bringing "Copywriting 101" to your newly elected corporate wordsmiths in 2009, call Fahoury Ink today at (973) 324-2100. ☀



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Buckle Up... (from p. 1)

Here are five marketing trends to keep your eye on as 2009 unfolds...

The value trend

Brands that communicate extra value consistently perform better than brands that don't. If you have a product or service that can fill more than one need or has an extra benefit attached to it, there's never been a better time to make sure your customers know about it. From extra nutritional value to helping a charity with proceeds from sales, emphasize any additional benefits from your value proposition in all your marketing communications.

The female trend

Similar to what we experienced after 9/11, women are making or influencing the majority of purchase decisions. Women are finding themselves more and more in the role of buyer, saver, or arbiter of purchase

decisions. While it's never a good idea to treat women as ancillary buyers of a product or service, there's never been a better time to aim messages directly at them.

Doing more with less

It seems the word "outsourcing" is most commonly used these days as a euphemism for eliminating jobs. But many managers know outsourcing is a way to fill knowledge gaps and short-term needs, which creates employment opportunities. As long as the extra help can be considered an expense instead of an addition to payroll, there is generally greater flexibility to get additional help. If you're looking at more aggressive goals and objectives but static or diminished resources for 2009, outsourcing could be a viable way to augment internal skill sets.

The search value

Pay attention to what's going on with your website. Make sure you're constantly optimizing key words and phrases to get

prominent positioning in search results. People are doing their "homework" online before making purchase decisions across all product and service categories — and all price ranges — more than ever before.

The social value

Keep an eye on blogs related to your industry, and general consumer satisfaction sites like angieslist.com in general. If you spot a gripe, address it in a way that makes it right for the customer. Contrary to the cliché, there is indeed such a thing as bad PR, and you don't want it, especially in challenging economic times.

Keeping an eye on trends like these can only help you weather whatever challenges 2009 may hold — with or without the seatbelt. ☀