

CREATIVE COMPOST



Where Great Marketing Ideas Grow

Vol. V, No. 11

Event-based **MARKETING** Ensures Steady Web Sales Stream..Automatically

Large-scale email campaigns may be wonderful sales tools, but they're not gearing to addressing the changing needs or interests of individual customers.

So, what about event-based marketing (EBM)? It puts you in the right place at the right time based on a customer's own actions. Event-based marketing systems automatically trigger pre-determined email messages based on a customer's activity on your site. For example, a buyer purchases a business suit. Your event-based email follows up with a special offer for a coordinating piece — a shirt, tie, or even a snappy new briefcase.

Many marketers use a purchase threshold as a simple EBM trigger. Customers who spend more than \$250 in a single visit, for example, receive a "thanks for your business" email with a coupon good for their next purchase.

The secret? Allowing enough time between the transaction and the follow-up so customers feel flattered, not stalked.

Because it focuses on timing, EBM excels at promoting consumables, add-ons like extended warranties, and opportunities for cross-selling related products. Best of all, all messaging is automated. Once you outline the possibilities and create the messages themselves, technology takes over to deliver them.

EBM can also be used to showcase content. When a customer registers at your site and indicates a particular area of interest — technology, for example — your "thanks for registering" follow-up could include a link to a relevant article from your site. Content can also be used to support previous purchases and encourage new ones. If your product warrants it, consider providing creative tips for its use in a subsequent email.

From keeping in touch with relevant content to encouraging repeat sales, EBM offers endless — and nearly effortless — possibilities for increasing web ROI.

Pick the Low-Hanging Fruit

Most businesses don't have a fortune to spend on boosting sales. What now? Pick the low-hanging fruit, according to Mark Stevens, author of *Your Marketing Sucks*. By taking the easy way out, such as selling more to people who are already your customers, you should get a solid return on your marketing investment.

Why is cross-selling such a powerful concept? Because it's relatively easy to turn opportunity into results. The vast majority of businesses have a dusty database of people who have purchased their products and services in the past. And

while few will challenge the axiom that it's easier to sell to an existing customer than it is to acquire a new one, the reality is that hardly any actually act on that truism. Too often, they spend virtually all their effort — and their marketing dollars — trying to generate new business relationships while the easy pickings die on the vine.

Why don't companies do more cross selling? Three foolish reasons, according to Stevens:

They just don't think of it. What are you doing with all the customer data you've got lying around? If your efforts consist of sending out the occasional generic postcard or no-news newsletter, that's just plain lazy.

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DM Resources

MARKETERS EVERYWHERE who used to rely on telemarketing for turnkey sales or leads are now venturing into an intimidating new arena: direct mail. Those unfamiliar with print vendors or pricing can turn to a convenient online source for bids: directmailquotes.com. The site allows you to electronically submit project specs to multiple printers and lettershops in your geographic area.

In addition to vendor resources, the site also offers access to mailing lists, postal updates, and a bunch of how-to articles. A free e-zine, the *Direct Mail Informer*, delivers quick mailing tips to your in-box each month.

Printers can make or break your direct mail efforts. A good vendor's knowledge can be invaluable on everything from paper weight and postal regs to the size of your piece. Though nothing can replace a face-to-face vendor relationship, directmailquotes.com makes it convenient to initiate contact with a number of local vendors...and start building those relationships for the future.

Source: directmailquotes.com

WANT TO LEARN MORE about your prospects and customers? American FactFinder offers a broad compilation of information gleaned from Census Bureau data sets, plus interactive tools to help you extract just the information you need.

American FactFinder allows users to create tables and prospecting maps by industry, geography, or income, and to access preformatted data sets all the way down to the block level. Overall, it's a useful tool for developing a marketing plan or gauging the potential audience before rolling out a new product.

Source: factfinder.census.gov

Low-Hanging Fruit (from p. 1)

It's too pushy. If this is your excuse, then maybe you're selling too hard. Use a simple-but-targeted postcard to offer a discount on a related item, or to welcome back an old customer.

It's not professional. Again, it's all in the approach. We're not talking about, "Do you want fries with that?" If a customer expresses a need, how can it be wrong to help them meet it? A graphic designer who develops a new brochure should by all means suggest a quick review of the client's website to confirm the consistency of their marketing message across all channels.

Consider these possibilities when developing your cross-selling efforts:

- Can you turn a one-time sale into an annuity? Consider offering service contracts, regular updates, or annual maintenance agreements.
- Can you customize an existing product to a vertical industry or two so it commands a higher price?
- Don't ignore the power of gift certificates. The gift giver's implied endorsement of your product or service is worth its weight in gold.

Cross-selling doesn't have to be time-consuming or costly...just enormously profitable when done well.

The INVISIBLE benefit of the press release

When you write a press release, no doubt your goal is to have it picked up by as many media outlets as humanly possible.

But an often-overlooked benefit of the press release may be its most valuable. Posting releases on your website can exponentially increase your visibility and boost your marketing efforts by making the site more attractive to search engine spiders.

How? Press releases, by nature, incorporate all the elements used in good search engine copywriting: they have a narrow focus on a specific topic, use keyword-filled headlines, and incorporate key phrases throughout the text, which make them the perfect addition to your site.

So, the next time you create a release, write with a nod to the search engines. Choose a variety of keywords based on how prospects might search for you, and incorporate them into both the headline and body copy of the release.

A few simple tweaks to your site structure might also be in order:

If it's not already there, add a link from your home page to a press release directory. On the directory page, list releases with a

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brief summary and a link to a page that contains the entire text. Write a title and description tag for each page, making sure to incorporate the keywords.

With just a little forethought, the same lowly press release can now do double duty — captivating media outlets, while driving traffic to your site and improving your search engine positioning. It's the ultimate in content repurposing.

Giveaways: The Finishing Touch

Do you have a high-profile event looming and just can't think of the perfect giveaway? "Clients are always asking us for unique, imprintable items that will help the recipient remember their company," says Alex Lieberman of All-Ways Advertising, a promotional products agency located in Bloomfield, NJ. All-Ways is constantly on the hunt for the latest and greatest for clients to use at events like trade shows, sales meetings, and golf outings.

However, don't over-reach when it comes to clever. Ad specialties aren't special, cautions Lieberman, unless they are relevant, so All-Ways urges clients to choose items that clearly embrace their marketing strategy.

Publishers might consider a tongue-in-cheek magnifying glass to help older subscribers read their newspaper or magazine, while a beverage company could distribute a logoed t-shirt compressed into a plastic replica of their bottle.

Technology companies, such as software vendors or service providers, can take advantage of several high-tech toys that support their cutting-edge message while also being useful to their customer base.

Here are three innovative products suggested by Lieberman that fall into different price points depending on your budget, and can be imprinted with a company logo, tagline, or contact info:

- **Under \$1** — The MemoACT® adhesive strip sticks to your computer screen and lets you attach and re-attach memos, photographs, or other lightweight materials. You'll get maximum exposure, since most people face the computer screen almost nonstop while sitting at their desks.
- **Around \$10** — The Mini 4-Port USB Hub is perfect for laptop users to connect to their PDA, printer, mouse, or an external drive while on the road.
- **Above \$20** — Why not try a USB flash drive memory stick? With this product, you can move files between PCs in a snap. It's also ideal for backing up data or transporting presentation files, and it's small enough to fit in your pocket.

Regardless of your industry, imprinted premiums should always reinforce your core brand attributes or marketing message to get the most bang for your buck.

Source: Alex Lieberman of All-Ways Advertising helps companies find the perfect complement to their next event or promotion. Contact him at (973) 338-0700 ext. 282 or ajl@awadv.com.



THE PLUS-SIZE APPAREL MARKET has grown from \$24 billion in 1996 to a projected \$47 billion next year. Overall, women's sizes now account for 20% of the total apparel market, and is by far its fastest-growing segment.

Source: Packaged Facts

IT SEEMS CONSUMERS are becoming increasingly comfortable paying for online content. Spending grew to \$748 million last year, a year-over-year increase of 23%. No word on how much of that is porn.

Source: Online Publishers Association

CLOSE TO 100 MILLION ADULTS in the U.S. on average read a daily newspaper, including slightly more than half of all men (51%) and 46% of women.

Readership increases steadily with higher earnings. Among adults with household incomes of \$75,000+, readership stands at 57% on weekdays versus the national average of 48%.

Source: Mediemark Research Inc. and Interactive Market Systems Inc.



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See page 2 for the
unexpected benefits
of a simple press
release...



Off the Bookshelf

In developing a new marketing seminar (see description at right), we recently had the opportunity to examine a slew of resources on the creative process. Here continues our ongoing look at some of the more notable:

Guerrilla Creativity, by Jay Conrad Levinson, Houghton Mifflin Co.

Imagine having a symbol that explains everything your product stands for at a glance. That's the core concept behind *Guerrilla Creativity*. Not the strongest publication in the Guerrilla arsenal, but it does offer a solid recommendation for

brand-building: creating a "meme" or simple icon that represents a complex idea about your brand.

How to Think Like da Vinci, by Michael J. Gelb, Dell Publishing

Not just a business book, but a blueprint for approaching everyday life like a genius. Gelb introduces seven principles for success in any endeavor, including curiosity, heightened senses, and a willingness to embrace paradox and uncertainty, then discusses each in relation to the accomplishments of Leonardo da Vinci.

One favorite: learning from "anti-role models." Gelb says one of the most efficient ways to learn from mistakes is to let someone else make them for you. Want to be an excellent presenter? Take a lesson from the most boring instructors and trade show panelists to learn what *not* to do when you take center stage.

ABOUT THE SEMINAR

Who couldn't use an invigorating burst of creativity to refresh their mindset and help their business grow? **Think Like a Fish: Develop Your Creativity and Jump-Start Your BusinessSM** is a 90-minute presentation that helps business people tap into their innate creativity. Hands-on exercises, practical tools, and entertaining examples invigorate participants and elevate their thinking to new levels of creative problem solving.

For details on bringing **Think Like a Fish** to your company or networking group, drop us an email at fish@fahouryink.com or call (973) 324-2100.

Why **Think Like a Fish**? A famous tournament-winning fisherman was once asked to explain his amazing success. "Simple," he said. "I don't think like a fisherman. I think like a fish."