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DIRECT AND PERSONAL WITH Rob Wyers [p.3]

Focus on B2B Direct Marketing [p.13]

Laurene Cihosky is senior vice-president, direct marketing, advertising and publishing business for Canada Post. She has worked in DM industry longer than 20 years. She has worked at Blitz Direct Data and Promotion, Vickers & Bensen Direct and MacLaren McCann Direct.



Facebook sues Canadian porn site for data mining

TORONTO—Popular Web site Facebook is suing a group of people and a Canadian adult Web site publisher, based here, for allegedly trying to mine the social networking site for its users' personal data.

In the case, which was first heard in a San Jose court last June, Facebook contends servers controlled by the defendants used automated scripts "to gain unauthorized access to Facebook's 'friend finder' functionality," to make more than 200,000 requests for personal information stored on Facebook's site.

Facebook amended the complaint in December upon securing court orders to identify who controlled the servers trying to access its site.

Istra Holdings, which controls the porn site SlickCash.com, was named as the defendant. The site offers commissions to Web publishers for referring consumers to its adult sites.

The complaint also names Brian Fabian and Josh Raskin, both of whom the suit says work at Istra in Toronto, Ming Wu of Markham, ON., as well as 14 other unidentified people.

Facebook has been confronting privacy issue controversy since it made its site public early last year. It has asked for a jury trial and seeks to block the defendants from accessing its computer systems in future.

Last November, Facebook introduced Facebook Ads, an ad system that lets consumers recommend products to friends and permits corporate profiles. The three-part set-up aids the viral transmission of messages, provides an interface to track information about people's activity on Facebook and lets businesses make their own Facebook pages.

Business profiles on Facebook interact with the community like normal members. Blockbuster, CBS, Chase, The Coca-Cola Co., Microsoft, Sony Pictures Television and Verizon Wireless are among the new Facebook Ads partners. ■

Firm matches clients, agencies

TORONTO—A matchmaker has emerged on the Canadian advertising landscape. AgencyLink, based here, opened its doors last month as an agency search consultancy that connects companies and other organizations with compatible agencies in various disciplines including direct marketing. It is run by a pair of senior marketing professionals with more than 50 years experience on both the client and agency sides.

AgencyLink founding partners Sheila Corriveau and Stan Didzbalis, are both former agency CEOs and corporate marketers who managed agency relationships. They believe their service is necessary to guide client organizations through a growing maze of marketing agency choice.

According to industry statistics compiled by Dun & Bradstreet's Hoovers, the number of marketing agencies operating in Canada that employ more than one person has grown to 5,644 in 2007, from 3,946 in 1990. Research firm MANTA lists 6,496 marketing companies in Canada. The increased choice for marketers is due to spe-



Stan Didzbalis has 30 years of experience in communications, marketing and in senior organizational leadership positions. Prior to forming AgencyLink, he was founder and CEO of BenchMark Communications, a public relations and marketing agency he grew from a sole proprietorship into a full-service firm with 65 people and offices in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver

cialization, new agency models, demographic shifts and the explosion of digital marketing.

The firm's search and performance services are designed to help corporations, associations, government and non-profits find and optimize the best agency. AgencyLink will also offer client-agency relationship building services, compensation negotiation, conflict resolution and evaluation programs.

AgencyLink will work with clients that use one or a variety of external agencies for direct marketing, public relations, government relations, investor relations, branding, promotions, graphic design, interactive, advertising, writing, photography, video, corporate social marketing, media training and marketing strategy. It will charge fees for its services to clients, not agencies.

Didzbalis emphasizes AgencyLink will not accept any kind of fee or work from agencies. It will also not engage in any kind of marketing work for clients that an agency would normally do. It has posted a code of conduct on its Web site that states as much, he says, in the belief that it is vital to underscore the integrity of its undertakings from the outset.

"The gospel we are looking to spread among corporate marketers is that we want to stamp out churn," he says. "The marketing community as a whole will be elevated if that happens."

The problem is many organizations change their agencies frequently. This high rate of turnover, as evidenced by the number of Requests For Proposals (RFPs) issued daily, is extremely expensive for both companies and agencies

See **FIRM MATCHES CLIENTS**, page 22

DMAT names Cihosky Direct Marketer of Year

TORONTO—The Direct Marketing Association of Toronto (DMAT) has named Laurene Cihosky, who leads the direct marketing unit at Canada Post, as Direct Marketer of the Year for 2007. Given annually to individuals who have made significant contributions to the DM industry, the award was presented at the DMAT annual Christmas Gala dinner in December.

She becomes the seventh woman to receive the honour since DMAT began handing out the award in 1974. Others were Marilyn Stewart in 1985, Barbara Canning-Brown and Kathleen Rowe in 1990, Mona Goldstein in 1995, Linda Trauzzi in 2003 and Beth Horowitz in 2004.

Recipient of the Irv Twilley Award for 2007 was Angela Au of Virgin Mobile. Named after one of the DMAT founders, it has been presented annually since 1984 to a person who has volunteered their time and expertise to assist DMAT.

The President's Choice Award for 2007 went to Carolyn Dickinson, sponsorship director of DMAT. It is awarded to a person or company that brings vision, imagination, and dedication to the association. Marilyn Stewart, a DMAT past president who runs Stewart Consulting Group, won the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Cihosky was hired by Canada Post in August 2006 as senior vice-president, direct marketing, advertising and publishing business. Her immediate task was to spearhead the reorganization that was to see direct marketing emerge as one of the three major lines of business for the corporation. The others are transactional mail and parcels.

She acknowledged at the time it was a "difficult transition for any organization to go through this amount of change. But having gone through it before, I know how rewarding it is when you get an organization and its products aligned, all at the same time as managing a very diverse customer base. Sometimes you have to dig a bit deeper to understand the core issues and resolve them." ■

InfoUSA buys Direct Media Inc.

OMAHA, NB—Giant list and marketing services provider infoUSA, based here, is buying Direct Media Inc. (DMI), Greenwich CT, the largest list management-brokerage firm in the U.S. The sale price was not disclosed on the deal that was scheduled to close at the end of last month.

Among the most venerable of list companies, employee-owned DMI has been in business for longer than 40 years. It has managed and supplied a lot of Canadian lists and Canadian selects in American lists. It is also engaged in analytics, database marketing and data processing services.

DMI is the latest in a string of similar acquisitions by infoUSA. It

InfoUSA CEO and chairman Vin Gupta states the purchase of Direct Media Inc. was a continuation of his company's strategy to consolidate the direct marketing industry.



See **INFOUSA BUYS DMI INC** page 6

Corrections for DM Sourcebook

There were mistakes in the listings for Pitney Bowes Canada in the 2008 DM Industry Sourcebook.

The Web site is wrong on page 21 and should read www.pitneybowes.ca

On page 54, the Web site address is missing and the contact information is wrong. It should have read: Pitney Bowes, 5500 Explorer Drive, Mississauga, ON L4W 5C7 www.pitneybowes.ca

Contact Darren Gornall, Vice President & General Manager, Document Messaging Technologies & Enterprise Solutions, phone 905-219-3055, email Darren.gornall@pb.com.

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Rob Wyers

Sacrificial Spirit

He fits Winston Churchill's saying, "We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give."

Rob Wyers, who runs Wyers Direct, has been giving for a long, long time. In fact, he has devoted much of his life and career to the non-profit segment of the business of direct marketing.

One of the things he said when we met was, "I sacrificed a marriage, unknowingly – and so hope that anyone who is reading this will understand...we come up with a plan we put our heads down and work at it... But I have no regrets; I am pleased that it has worked out this way...ummm...at least this far..."

He also added, "I don't know of any other job that is as enjoyable – with the added benefit of doing some good along the way."

Man of many facets

Like a diamond in the rough there are many sides to Rob's character. One such side is what I like to refer to as "LIVE WYERS" because he is truly a dynamic personality—spirited but controlled—typical of most creative people.

He believes in Chinese astrology. His birth sign according to the Chinese calendar is the 'Dragon', while according to the English horoscope he is a 'Cancer'.

He displays the traits of Fire and Water. One of his lady friends described him as, 'The John Wayne of boy scouts'.

I first met Rob many years ago when I got an assignment to work on a job for a charity. Not being experienced at that time with fundraising, I looked for someone who was and called him up.

He was quick to respond to my call and I have never forgotten how helpful he was. Recently I called him again; he remembered me and readily agreed to be interviewed.

Clarity of vision

Rob has always been a strong advocate for the use of direct marketing in the charitable sector and views it as a business first and foremost. He is fiercely committed and passionate about his work and has managed to

is also in your face.

"As always, emotion-based episodic stories of real people will continue to reach people and motivate them to give. We will always find that humanity and humane moments will be the best way to touch people's hearts."

"Sure, some things will change and others will not."

Cutting into the business

How did Rob get into the business? He says that he took 'Social Marketing' in school.

"I really didn't go to class much. As a young man I was more interested in interacting socially with others in my class."

As a youth he did the usual odd jobs - shovelling driveways, cutting lawns, working on gardens, etc.

"My first 'grown-up' jobs were teaching sailing and skiing, which left a lot of time in the spring and fall for a number of ventures – all doomed to failure because of their menial nature."

"I remember my mother telling me, 'Use your brain, not your hands.' There were almost 40 jobs in about eight years and when I analyze that in retrospect, I realize I was searching for something that engaged me, something that felt right," he reminisced.

"When I was 18, my mother worked as the controller for Mailings Unlimited, a pioneer mailing company. I was painting their office when my mom commented in frustration, unable to balance the postage account, 'Son, don't ever work for a direct mail company.' That sealed my fate. I did what every 18 year old does — the opposite of what my mother told me to do."

"After a successful sales job at Texcom, I wanted to offer my fundraising clients something more, so I started Wyers Direct in 1983."

Today his office is housed in an old Victorian mansion, built in 1824, which he has fully renovated. Again he embraces those two extremes—an old outer exterior with the most



Direct & personal

with Billy Sharma

President and creative director of Designers Inc., Toronto.

couple of Ontario and North American Championships along the way in a variety of classes of sailboats. After the sailboat racing I became a competitive wind-surfer and when I was 34 years old I became the Canadian Masters Champion.

"In the winter I skied and taught skiing locally and in Quebec. After tiring of the teaching of skiing, I became Southern Ontario's Head Judge for Freestyle Canada for a number of years."

"My passion still remains free skiing, sailing and now I have discovered a new sport – kite-boarding."

"Add to this a penchant for reading, cooking and music – currently I am also learning to play the piano"

There is also a stubborn side of Rob. "I remember that my mom once advised: Don't ever work for a direct mail company. I am."

"Never jump off a cliff with your skis on. I did, and now I have bad knees to show for it."

Parental influences

"I know a different path was not meant for me. Fundraising was in my blood. My parents were huge philanthropists with their time – it's all they loved to do. Five nights a week they volunteered and on weekends my dad was a scout leader and my mom a CGIT and girl-guide leader."

So it should come as no surprise that the biggest impact in his life were his parents.

"My parents influenced my decision to do what I do today – I just didn't know it at the time. They enrolled me in a sailing school. Being surrounded by people who had made themselves, against the odds, was an enormous plus for me. In particular one man, Kurt Pedersen, took me under his wing and lovingly showed me the way to be better than the rest. I will never forget him."

Kurt was 30 years his senior when he met Rob and they became more than just sailing buddies."

"Kurt was my mentor, my best friend, a boss and my girlfriend's father but he handled each relationship with dignity, honour and respect for both of us. The great man will always be missed."

As we ended the interview I asked Rob if he had any

final words of advice for the readers.

He obliged with these two: "The customer is always right – even when wrong and do a favour every day. You'll have peace of mind."

Things we can all aspire to, because as Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." ■

Billy Sharma is president and creative director of Designers Inc., Toronto. He can be reached at 416.203.9787.

"I don't know of any other job that is as enjoyable."—Wyers

foster closer relationships with his clients than many other agencies do.

As he proudly proclaimed, "We have developed more long-term relationships with our clients than I could have hoped to in the last 25 years, partly due to our innovative approach to a combination of program and event-based DM which has become a model for many clients to follow."

"We also brought an innovative production-billing model to the marketplace – unheard of before... This model has now become far more commonplace – due to its competitive aspect and the complete absence of any potential monetary abuse or conflict."

"We have raised well in excess of \$100 million dollars for our clients since we opened our doors in 1983, certainly a feel-good aspect of what we do now."

As for the future Rob believes: "Direct marketing in the field of fundraising will be a full contact sport... by this I mean that only a completely integrated approach will yield the best results. A contact strategy that includes mail, personal telemarketing, not the type being practiced today but innovative ephilanthropy solutions, and Web-based information that will help drive the future engine of DM."

With all the huge pull and push towards viral marketing he feels that the prediction of the 'death of direct-mail' is greatly exaggerated. In fact, he feels this claim has surfaced every seven years as far back as 1993 when he was perhaps mailing close to a million pieces for his clients. Seven years later it was nearly 8 million. Today he estimates that it will be close to 12 million pieces that he could be mailing.

Rob is a fervent believer that this medium is still the most powerful way of moving people to respond, because it is not only tactile but it

modern trappings inside.

What else is new?

Rob has decided that he wants Wyers Direct to be much more than just Rob Wyers.

"I wanted the best team in the business and I found a way to surround myself with talented and respected team members – in short – I may be making myself obsolete. However, I found a new niche for myself in this excellent team. I have stepped away from the tactical to the strategic vision and creative direction on a holistic scale"

So, after 25 years in the business Rob confesses that although he always knew that he wanted to be an entrepreneur and in total control he has slowly learned to let go.

"I have experienced all the highs and lows of business, even the dark years, and sure there were a couple, but always the set backs were met with determination to succeed and rebuild."

"I believe that the only barriers I have encountered are the ones I set in my own way."

The personal side

"Being around people makes me happy," he said. "However, while I do spend a fair amount of time alone, I enjoy being around people who have something new to say. I have learned that there is far more to be gained from listening."

Rob confessed that he is once again single, but is looking. While waiting, he continues to indulge his love of sports.

"I grew up in sports. My first experience was bob sledding off the roof of my parent's garage – but I quickly realized that sheer drops are not a great idea – unless you have a lot of snow."

"I excelled in sailboat racing, earning a



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Reader FORUM

What was one of your most effective direct marketing campaigns in 2007 and why?

We posed the above question to marketers at many companies and a few agencies. Some of their replies appear here. Others will run in the March issue.

'Dummies' program gets big response across all channels

EDC's [Export Development Corporation] most successful direct marketing campaign in 2007 featured the well known "Dummies" brand. The campaign offered recipients (in French and English) a custom published book entitled "Canadian Exporting for Dummies".

This was the first time EDC had partnered with a popular brand to create the 120-page guide. Targeting the exporting community through DM, eDM and magazine inserts, recipients simply had to visit a unique landing page or call a toll-free telephone number to request a free copy (valued at \$12.99). This campaign yielded a high response rate across all channels and positioned EDC as an excellent resource for Canadian exporters of all sizes.

Dawn Murray, director, direct marketing and promotion/directeur de groupe, marketing direct et promotion, Export Development Canada/Exportation et développement Canada, Ottawa.

Program pitches report on Canadian marketing trends

Our best campaign in 2007 was easily the launch of a program called 'The View from the Mezzanine'. We published a report on trends in Canadian marketing and market intelligence based on the most popular projects we delivered in the year, for clients ranging from RIM to Capital One to Bell Mobility. We then invited a select group of marketing leaders to review our findings on trends in marketing innovation and effectiveness.

The campaign was simple. We sent email invitations to 30 individuals, both existing clients and those we wanted to work with. The call to action was to schedule a coffee-meeting with one of our subject matter experts to review and discuss the report.

It was an unparalleled success with a 70 percent response rate. The coffee chats lead to two large projects and the establishment of new relationships that continue to grow. We were also asked to include The View from the Mezzanine in the CMA's 2007 Fact Book.

This campaign worked because of its simplicity and high value. The invitation was a three-line text email outlining the report and why it would be of interest to our audience. The content we were offering to share was unique and highly valuable because of its focus.

This year we'll expand The View from the Mezzanine, again engaging a select group of individuals with a high-touch approach. Later in the year we'll make the content available to a broader audience via our Web site.

Katelyn Taylor, office and marketing coordinator, Mezzanine Consulting, Toronto

listWATCH

BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS FILES

Cornerstone creates B2B version of Universe Canada file

TORONTO – The Cornerstone Group of Companies, based here, recently launched a business-to-business version of its Universe Canada consumer database. The Universe Canada B2B database was created by combining a number of the largest business lists available in the Canadian marketplace. This database provides a universe of more than four million unique business individuals, more than half are from Ontario and Quebec. Data is derived from both public and private Canadian companies.

The full database is available for list rental with one-time use, or as a data license, allowing the user a one-year term for limitless prospecting, research and specific business-targeted searches. Base rate is \$150/M. Selections include number of employees, job function/title, industry, one per company, phone numbers, recency, sales volume, secondary phone number, unique company/individual, FSALDU.

For more information, contact your list broker or call Cornerstone at 416.932.9555 or visit www.cstonecanada.com

Training firm file has engineers, technicians, electricians, others

TORONTO—Imperial Automation Technologies Inc. offers a list of 148,643, 0-24 month Canadian responders and inquirers. Resolve Corporation, based here, manages it.

Imperial Automation Technologies Inc. is a prominent provider of customized automation training, courseware, authoring/deployment and training simulation approaches. It furnishes customized training for engineers, technicians, electricians and operators in the areas of technology, operations, maintenance & safety.

The company supplies "life cycle" automation training techniques that are focused on clients installed technologies and equipment. It is recognized as a centre of training expertise.

Selects available are gender, province, FSAs, home/business, language, SIC codes, phone numbers, employee size and title/job function.

Base rate is \$165/M. Email addresses are also available.

For more information, contact your list broker or call Jacqueline Collymore of Resolve Corporation at 416.503.4000 Ext 2275 or email list.management@resolve.com.

File has 63,000+ Canadian small and medium size enterprises

PLAINSBORO, NJ—Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's) in Canada with fewer than 500 employees are provided in this file. Kroll Direct Marketing, based here, manages it. Although there are more than two million SME's in Canada, this file is comprised of only those businesses that are registered with the Public Works and Government Services Canada. It has in excess of 63,000 Canadian businesses.

Base rate is US\$75/M. Selects include phone numbers, industry, employee size, language spoken, and type of business ownership.

For more information, contact your list broker or call Gwen Coryell of Kroll Direct at 609.275.2900 ext. 118 or email gwen@krolldirect.com.

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Direct, interactive forecast as hot spots in 2008

The outlook for advertising growth has grown murkier as the U.S. economy teeters on the brink of a recession propelled by home foreclosures and a sub-prime mortgage market in disarray. The year begins with **President George Bush** talking about a \$145 billion tax relief program for the ever more wary consumers, suggesting the Iraq war hasn't completely drained the coffers. It's folly to believe the U.S. economic travails will not have spilled over the border in a big way well before 2008 ends. So what lies in store for ad spending then? Even last October, media buyer **Zenith Optimedia** noticed ad spending slowing in the U.S. and Canada. It lowered U.S. ad spending growth projections for 2007 from 3.3 to 2.5 percent and in Canada from 4.7 to no more than 4 percent. Overall ad spending was forecast to grow by just 3.5 percent in 2008 in Canada. But there are parts of the advertising landscape that are expected to continue flourishing in 2008, most notably the Internet/interactive scene and offline direct marketing. The former is cheap, fast, effective and still emerging from relative infancy. The latter with its highly-targeted approach and often high ROI has served as a haven for advertisers in the past when times turn tough. In its latest annual forecast the **Direct Marketing Association (DMA)** in the U.S. says that direct marketing accounts for more than half of total ad expenditures in the U.S. and is growing at a higher rate than total advertising spending in the U.S. economy as a whole. The DMA's Research Strategy and Platforms Vice-President **Dr. Peter Johnson**, who was lead author of the report, says: "Marketers are moving dollars into direct marketing because of its higher ROI relative to other forms of advertising. This makes DM a more reliable engine for sustaining sales, incomes, and jobs at a time when the mortgage and energy markets are heightening economic uncertainty." The DMA estimates marketers spent \$173.2 billion on their DM advertising in 2007, representing a modest 4.4 percent increase over the \$166 billion that was actually spent in 2006. However, it sees the growth rate for DM expenditures in 2008 bouncing back to 5.7 percent, or \$183.1 billion with above-average spending growth in commercial email, Internet marketing, direct response TV and direct mail. The current 2008 DM revenue forecast is even more optimistic. The DMA's report predicts a growth of 6.6 percent with total U.S. DM sales surpassing \$2.158 trillion. The biggest improvements are expected in financial services, transportation, and utilities with natural resources, construction, and government revenues from DM growing at the slowest pace. In its economic impact assessment for 2007, an investment of \$1 in direct marketing ad expenditures returned an average of \$11.69 in incremental revenue across all industries. The recent **Canadian Marketing Association** study conducted by **Global Insight** estimates every dollar spent on advertising in Canada yields almost \$9 in economic activity [see DMN, January 2007, front page "Study sees Web sales soaring."]. ■

Rise seen in marketing to social networking sites

Consultant Rick Spence in a recent column in the *Financial Post* presents a number of predictions for 2008. He foresees more business owners taking advantage of Web-marketing tools to target niche markets more efficiently than ever. Also flourishing will be pay-per-click ad services such as **Google's AdSense** and **Yahoo's Search Marketing** to reach only people who are actively looking for products companies are selling. Similarly, search-engine optimization helps qualified prospects find a company's site faster. "These are the sorts of direct-marketing techniques entrepreneurs could only dream about 10 years ago," he says. Spence also believes entrepreneurs will make greater use of social networking sites such as **Linked-In** or **Facebook**. He cites digital-marketing firm **eMarketer** reporting 37 percent of online adults in the U.S. used Internet social-networking tools at least once a month in 2007. He anticipates that number will only grow and notes those sites a year ago were thought to be mainly for teenagers. "If you're not on Facebook by the end of 2008, you'll be sending out the signal you're not serious about building your business," he warns...Despite all the recession jitters, the **Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) Council** in the U.S. says most marketing budgets will either hold steady or increase this year. According to a CMO Council survey of 800 senior marketers, 37.6 percent of annual budgets will not change in 2008, while 33.1 percent of budgets will increase up to five percent. Almost 10 percent of marketing budgets will grow between six and 10 percent. Last year most global marketers at 52.6 percent had budgets that equalled less than four percent of revenue and 35.4 percent indicated they spent the equivalent of four to 10 percent of revenue on marketing. With regard to marketing automation the top areas for planned investment are email campaign management, customer relationship management, marketing performance measurement, customer intelligence, search engine marketing and tools for sales and marketing integration...Despite its ubiquity and bad reputation, spam is still surprisingly effective at getting people to buy, according to a survey from online advertising firm **Endai Worldwide**. Half the people polled say they made a purchase as a result of opening a marketing email solicitation during the past 12 month period. More than 50 percent of respondents say they can't resist and check their junk mail folders daily and 16 percent admit to making a purchase from messages found in their spam folders. More than 40 percent cite "a good offer or deal" as the most important factor in their decision to buy online. One quarter was most drawn to buy because the product offering was of interest to them...*DMNews* reports **Governor M. Jodi Rell** of Connecticut is developing legislation to create an opt-out registry for online personal data. Similar to the Do-Not-Call registry, it would establish a centralized, one-time process for Connecticut residents to remove some or all of their private information from Internet search sites, credit card solicitations, direct mail lists and email lists. "Anyone who goes to WhitePages.com or 411.com will find personal information published that many people may want protected," says Governor Rell in a statement. "With a few clicks of the keyboard, anyone can find the age and gender of a person, where they live, where they work, birthdates and other identifying information. This is a safety and security issue, particularly for our elderly citizens."...U.S. Direct marketers face more hardships this quarter, according to the latest employment survey by **Bernhart Associates**. Fifty eight percent of responding companies plan to add staff during the first quarter of 2008, down two percent from the previous October survey. Twelve percent plan to reduce payroll up from nine percent and 13 percent have imposed a hiring freeze up from nine percent. ■

DMPeople

After 10 years at Scotiabank, **Michael Seaton** has left to join public relations and communications firm **Thornley Fallis** in its Toronto office. Seaton had been director of digital marketing with Scotiabank. He moved to Thornley Fallis last month as vice-president of digital marketing, expressing a desire to try the agency side of the business. His role is to help build the marketing practice and expand the range of services offered with meaningful and profitable digital programs for a diverse range of clients. He was attracted to Thornley Fallis because of the strength the PR agency has shown in the social media arena. He hopes his marketer experience—particularly his database and relationship marketing expertise—will benefit his new employer. During his tenure at Scotiabank, Seaton oversaw various media initiatives including the podcast series *The Money Clip*, which he hosted. He also has a personal blog called the *ClientSideBlog.com*. He currently serves as chairman of the digital marketing council of the Canadian Marketing Association. ... **DMTISpatial (DMTI)** last year appointed **John Sorrell** as director of marketing. As a member of DMTI's senior management team, he became responsible for leading the company's marketing efforts to enhance formal customer communications processes such as satisfaction input, increase the profitability of existing product lines, identify new product opportunities for emerging market needs and quantify lead generation ROI for the company. Prior to this appointment, he had held the positions of manager of product development and marketing manager at DMTI. **Chris Thomas** has been appointed director of strategic alliances. As a new member of the senior management team, he is responsible for the development of strategic alliances with a specific focus on the company's most important current and potential partners. During the past 10 years, he has held various positions at DMTISpatial including strategic account manager, manager of sales, and senior sales engineer...**Chris Spencer** has joined call centre service bureau **Beautyrock** as president and chief executive officer. He has 16 years experience successfully managing multi-site call centres with a combined expertise in organizational leadership, business development, and operations. He has a proven track record in analyzing existing operations and implementing the strategies, process and technologies to increase sales, efficiency, and customer experience. His strengths include initiating successful business partnerships, profitably growing call centre / business process outsourcing companies, and managing complex client relationships. He started his telemarketing career with Unitel / AT&T as telemarketing sales manager and has held increasingly senior management positions with Blue Ocean, Stream, and most recently with Harte-Hanks...**Nora Ahern** has been promoted to vice-president, group business director in **DDB Canada's Vancouver office**. In her new role, Ahern is responsible for the strategic development and management of integrated communication plans for the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC). Providing leadership through creative thinking, she works closely with the entire CTC team and is the driver of key strategic insights and the generation of new marketing ideas. Ahern takes over the CTC account from Yvonne van Dinther, who now heads up DDB Canada's social media catalyst Radar DDB. Since April 2007, Ahern has been an integral member of the CTC team, spearheading the development of the CTC brand plan and providing overall strategic direction. She recently moved to Canada from Ireland, and brings a unique perspective to the CTC team with first-hand experience on what visitors to Canada will appreciate. Ahern joined the marketing communications industry 12 years ago and has extensive experience in managing the communication requirements for high-profile brands in a wide range of industries including, automotive, technology and commercial property. Prior to joining DDB, Ahern provided marketing management counsel to the Nissan Group, which incorporates The Windsor Motor Group, Chevrolet and SsangYong Ireland...**Simon Jennings** has been appointed president of **Olive Canada Network (OCN)**. Jennings joined Torstar Digital as general manager of Olive Canada Network and LiveDeal in January 2006, played the lead role in the launch of OCN in July 2006 and has been invaluable in shaping the successful development of the firm's



MICHAEL SEATON



SIMON JENNINGS



NORA AHERN



CHRIS SPENCER

presence in the online advertising market. OCN has since grown from five to more than 50 employees, including many of the most experienced and brightest minds in the industry. During the past decade, Jennings has been a key leader in the Canadian Internet marketing and advertising industries. He joined Torstar Digital from five years at Yahoo! Canada as national sales director. Prior to joining Yahoo! Canada, he spent five years at DoubleClick Canada, leading the media sales business as national sales director. Jennings also developed and launched ClickThrough Interactive, Canada's first online advertising network in the early 1990s. He recently stepped down from the board of the IAB after six years of service, where he held the positions of chairman (2003) and vice-president, publisher council (2002). In addition, Simon has represented the Internet on the board of the Advertising Club of Toronto, and has been a member of Association of Internet Marketing and Sales (AIMS) since the mid 1990s...**Lesley McKeever** has joined the **Food & Consumer Products of Canada (FCPC)**, Canada's largest national association representing food, beverage and consumer goods manufacturers, as senior vice-president, industry affairs & membership. McKeever's addition to FCPC's leadership team will enable FCPC to continue to drive forward supply chain best practices for Canadian-privately owned and multinational enterprises and support the growth of one of Canada's most important industries. McKeever joins FCPC following a successful 25 years at FCPC member company Kimberly-Clark where as vice-president, Canada, she gained cross-country and cross-functional experience in customer service, logistics, sales and marketing. In this capacity, she also represented Kimberly-Clark, on the FCPC Board of Governors as well as the association's Industry Affairs Policy Committee. McKeever will continue to foster collaboration with retail trading partners and will work with FCPC member companies on priority issues including the environment and supply chain efficiencies. She will also oversee the association's member services...**Kevin C. O'Rourke**, a senior marketing manager with more than 14 years experience in the automotive and marine industries, has joined **Mitsubishi Motor Sales of Canada (MMSCAN)** as its new manager of customer relations management (CRM). O'Rourke, 35, was selected after an extensive search to find a sales and marketing manager with just the right blend of traditional and cutting-edge marketing and CRM expertise. He will report directly to Larry Futers, MMSCAN's director of marketing. O'Rourke comes to the company from Yamaha Motor Canada, where he served as national manager, parts and accessories, and was in charge of marketing, promotion and sales coordination of recreational and leisure products and services to Yamaha's national dealer network. Prior to Yamaha, he served in management positions of ever-increasing responsibility with Mercury Marine. David Sherrard has been appointed marketing analyst. In this new position, he will be responsible for handling market research, database analytics, product planning and pricing support, as well as providing budget coordination for the dealer tactical advertising program...The U.S. **Direct Marketing Association (DMA)** has inducted **Ronald L. Bliwas**, president/CEO of direct response television agency A. Eicoff & Company; and **Charles D. Morgan**, chairman of the board and company leader of Axiom Corp. into its DMA Hall of Fame. Bliwas led A. Eicoff & Co. for 27 years and served as an employee for 37 years. Under his leadership, Eicoff became one of the top 10 agencies in Chicago, expanding its client base over the years to include companies such as Sears, Bose Electronics, New York Life, and Ameritrade. Bliwas writes and speaks frequently about television advertising. His 2007 book, "The C Student's Guide to Success," was named a Book-of-the-Month Club selection. He has been interviewed by Mike Wallace to provide "60 Minutes" viewers with an overview of the DRTV business. In 2005, Bliwas served as DMA's chairman of the board. He currently is a member of the DMA board. He also serves on Taylor Capital Group, Inc.'s board of directors, the University of Arizona national board of advisors, and the board of Friends of Prentice (Northwestern Memorial Hospital Foundation).

inBrief

Indusblue moves into more spacious facilities

TORONTO—Interactive marketing agency Indusblue, based here, has moved into new 4700 square foot office space in Toronto's newest design district, Liberty Village, on King Street West. Indusblue's new space includes a state-of-the-art recording studio, a shooting gallery for photography and video productions as well as more room for its expanding 12-member team of new media artists, designers, developers and producers.

Indusblue clients include AOL, Alliance Atlantis, CBC, Home Depot, the CFL and many others. It is also the interactive partner for some of the worlds' foremost advertising agencies, such as Euro RSCG, John Street, MacLaren McCann, Lowe Roche, Ogilvy, Taxi, Tribal DDB, among others.

Publicis scores with sports shorts account win

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Corection Products Ltd., a Canadian company committed to the research, development and design of garments, supports and braces that enhance athletic performance and injury prevention, has selected Publicis Vancouver without a review to handle its national marketing and communications.

The mandate entails developing a one-to-three year marketing and communications plan for the company's Coreshorts, which are patented athletic compression shorts providing support and stability. Professional and high-profile amateur athletes from around the world wear them including Dominik Hasek, Detroit Red Wings' goalie and Roger Clemens, New York Yankees' pitcher, among others, although Coreshorts also benefit those engaged in recreational sports activities.

Blockbuster Canada launches loyalty scheme

TORONTO--Blockbuster Canada has launched Movie Buyers Bonus, a free national loyalty program rewarding members with a \$5 ecoupon for each \$50 spent on new or pre-viewed movies, usable for the next purchase on select new and pre-viewed titles. Movie Buyers Bonus members also receive monthly surprise offers by email.

"As Canada's largest home entertainment retailer, Blockbuster is always looking for new and innovative ways to maximize value for its customers," says Abelardo Conde, vice-president, merchandise, Blockbuster Canada.

Ecoupans can be used on titles in the "Movie Buyers Bonus Now Featuring" section, in Blockbuster stores across Canada. An indirect subsidiary of Blockbuster Inc., Blockbuster Canada has 447 stores across Canada.

Latest CMA Marketing Facts book contains more facts

TORONTO--The latest compendium of marketing facts, figures, trending and benchmarking information is now available from the Canadian Marketing Association. *Marketing Facts 2008* has more information about marketing channels, industries, media and marketing expenditures, online marketing and social media, youth and other market segments.

New this year is sections on business issues and human resources, featuring insights into internal business challenges and in communicating with today's consumers. Information is derived from more than 35 sources.

Revolver 3 lands cell service Fido as national account

MONTREAL--Agency Revolver 3, based here, has secured cellular service Fido as a national account and will be responsible for Fido's Web conception and development. It recently conceptualized three projects for Fido, one in partnership with Toronto agency Bos.

Revolver 3 is an independent agency which specializes in interactive marketing, communication and advertising. Its executions span Web sites, mobile marketing, advergaming and social networking.

Komunik revenues rise steeply in second fiscal quarter

MONTREAL—Communication resource management purveyor Komunik Corporation, based here, reported about a 12-fold rise in revenues for its second fiscal quarter ending October 31, 2007. Consolidated revenues were \$30.5 million compared to \$2.3 million in the same period the previous year.

Earnings before income tax, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) almost quadrupled from \$0.60 million to \$2.25 million over the similar periods. Consolidated revenues for the six months ending October 31, 2007 were \$45 million compared to \$3.9 million for the same six months in 2006.

These results include operations for the Komunik Konversation business unit (former Komunik) for the entire six months. But they include only four months and 18 days of Datamark operations since the transaction whereby Komunik purchased Datamark occurred on June 12, 2007.

INFOUSA BUYS DMI INC Cont'd from cover

has also purchased Walter Karl, Edith Roman, Rubin Response, Millard, Mokrynskidirect, American Church Lists and Jami. A few have been absorbed into the other brands. But most continue to operate autonomously under their original names, which appears the fate that awaits DMI within the InfoUSA Services Group.

According to reports, the DMI management team including president and CEO Larry May and CFO Rick Sarli will stay in place. DMI founder Dave Florence will also have an unspecified role. There are no plans to move the Direct Media office from its Greenwich location.

On the acquisition, May states: "Our shareholders have voted unanimously to take this exciting step forward, ensuring our strength and growth in the years ahead."

InfoUSA CEO and chairman Vin Gupta states the purchase was a continuation of his company's strategy to consolidate the direct marketing industry.

Purchase price

Direct Newsline speculates the purchase price is in the range of US\$20-25 million. This is based on what infoUSA paid for some of the

other firms. It paid US\$12.4 million for Millard Group, US\$12 million for Edith Roman, and US\$6.6 million for Mokrynskidirect. The latter included US\$4.8 million in "goodwill."

This marks the second time DMI has been acquired. It was bought by big data management firm Acxiom in 1996. It was repurchased in 2000 by the management of DMI.

InfoUSA acquisitions haven't all been confined to the U.S. In the fall of 2006, for example, it purchased Digital Connexions, Oakville, ON, an innovative email marketing services purveyor. It was folded into the Yesmail email marketing services unit of infoUSA [see *DMN*, November 2006 issue, front page "InfoUSA buys Digital Connexions."].

It appears infoUSA was not the only DMI suitor. May revealed as much in a recent memo circulated to employees divulging the merger with infoUSA.

"During the past year, we were approached by two leading companies with offers to purchase DMI," he wrote. "Our board believed it was our obligation to explore these offers, and others for comparison. Over the coming months, we had discussions with several major firms including some competitors. By far the most compelling offer came from InfoUSA." ■

Plan Canada partners with Northern Lights

TORONTO-- After a formal agency review, Plan Canada, founded in 1937 as Foster Parents Plan, awarded its creative, production and media account for its 2008 direct response television



Shot in Benin, West Africa, DRTV campaign features Philippe, a five-year-old boy suffering from severe malnutrition with TV personality Rod Black, a sportscaster and long-time Plan sponsor and spokesperson.

(DRTV) campaign to Northern Lights Direct Response Television, based here.

Plan Canada is looking to Northern Lights to build on its current DRTV campaign and assist with its brand-building efforts. Northern Lights will create both long- and short-form commercials.

"Raising awareness for significant causes, such as improving the quality of life for children, their families and communities in developing countries, brings great meaning and pride to the team at Northern Lights," says Ian French, president and executive creative director of Northern Lights. "We're absolutely thrilled to have a role in helping Plan Canada carry out their mandate." Plan Canada works to help improve the lives of children and their communities in more than 45 of the world's poorest countries and aims to assist people in breaking out of the cycle of poverty. It has no religious, political or governmental affiliation.

Becky Crampton, director of marketing for Plan Canada, says the charity selected Northern Lights because of its blend of DRTV expertise, production and media buying, and strong understanding of brand-building.

Plan Canada, founded in 1937 as Foster Parents Plan, rolled out a short-form DRTV campaign created by Northern Lights late last year. Media buying was also handled by Northern Lights.

At the centre of the 120- and 60-second DRTV commercials shot in Benin, West Africa was Philippe, a five-year-old boy suffering from severe malnutrition. Campaign host Rod Black—news broadcaster and long-time Plan sponsor and spokesperson—shares with viewers the sad and harsh reality of Philippe's life.

The emotionally compelling campaign, however, conveyed hope by explaining how

child sponsorship could transform the lives of children like Philippe through Plan's extraordinary work in communities throughout the developing world. Viewers were asked to sponsor a child by calling Plan's 1-800 number or visiting www.sponsorachild.ca.

"Despite the heartbreaking story of Philippe, this DRTV campaign is about hope, and how easily it can be brought to underprivileged children and their communities through child sponsorship," says Crampton.

"Plan Canada wanted to more accurately explain that what it does is community development-based," says French. "By building a well, school, or health clinic, the entire community can benefit. It's not isolated to just one child."

The 60- and 120-second ads depicted stories of children living in developing countries and how their lives would be different if they had sponsors. Six versions of the spots featured different children from various countries.

The advertisements also informed viewers that they would receive photos and a document about their sponsored child. This was followed by a call to action to sponsor a child for \$35 a month. According to French, the target demographic for these advertisements was generally 35-65 year-olds with an above average income and with a primarily, but not exclusively, female skew.

In February, Plan Canada will unveil 30- and 60-minute programs that also incorporate its new brand positioning.

Northern Lights has also created a new DRTV campaign for Manulife Financial's Flexcare individual health and dental insurance product. It rolled out last month.

The latest in a series of DRTV campaigns Northern Lights has created for Flexcare in the past six years, the 120- and 60-second commercials explain why Flexcare will appeal to anyone who is concerned about unexpected healthcare and dental costs that are not covered by government plans.

"DRTV has proven to be highly effective at delivering a measurable ROI for the Flexcare brand over the years," says Bob Doyle, director, strategic marketings, affinity markets for Manulife Financial.

"Many people don't have the security of health and dental insurance—Flexcare fulfills that need," French says. "We address that need in the DRTV campaigns we create for Flexcare, while incorporating fundamental DRTV principles and Manulife Financial's high-quality brand standards."

Northern Lights is one of the foremost brand-based direct response agencies in North America. It offers full turnkey strategy, media, creative and production services in the U.S. and Canada for direct response TV, radio and online campaigns. Other clients include BMG Columbia House, Lavalife, Sports Illustrated, Bell, TD Bank Financial Group, DIRECTV, Scholastic and Yves Rocher. ■

DMA alters direct mail, catalogue opt-out scheme

NEW YORK--The U.S. Direct Marketing Association (DMA) has revised its DMA Choice program, discarding the \$1 online verification fee and letting consumers opt out of receiving catalogues on a brand-by-brand basis without cost. As well, through the program's Web site at www.dmachoice.org consumers will have the option of electing to receive catalogues. "DMA's Mail Preference Service, part of DMA Choice, is now the most effective and secure way for consumers to receive only the mail they want and to express their preferences for mailings they do not want -- it's all about relevance," says DMA President and CEO John A. Greco, Jr. "DMA Choice is the portal for consumer choice. It is where consumers can go to modify their mail and email preferences. Our long-term



DMA President and CEO John A. Greco, Jr. contends association's Mail Preference Service, part of DMA Choice, is the most effective and secure way for consumers to receive only the mail they want.

vision is to build a community where consumers can interact with marketers -- learn about opportunities, offers, coupons, and special events marketers develop for consumers." The move follows independent "stop junk mail" programs, such as GreenDimes and

Catalogue Choice, which have recently attracted significant amounts of media notice. Like DMA Choice, Catalogue Choice is free. GreenDimes charges a \$20 fee for its service. "The elimination of the \$1 verification fee online is a positive next step by DMA to support its commitment to consumer choice and ensure privacy on behalf of consumers," says Steven K. Berry, the DMA's executive vice-president of government affairs. The DMA's actions were lauded by Steve Cole, president and CEO of the Council of Better Business Bureaus. "Elimination of the 'all or nothing' opt-out procedure demonstrates DMA's readiness to take action on issues

that matter to consumers; in this case, the reality that many of us want some catalogues and not others," he says.



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Online threat from U.S. rivals grows for Canadian retailers

TORONTO -- Despite the online ecommerce and retail growth in Canada, U.S. online retailers are snaring the lion's share of the increase. That is the opinion of a number of Web measurement and performance experts who will be gathering here at the end of March to share insights and perspectives with Canadian marketers on the state of ecommerce in Canada.

The eMetrics Marketing Optimization Summit will take place from March 31st until April 2 at the Toronto Marriott Eaton Centre. It is one of a series of five annual summits organized worldwide by eMetrics.

Evidence of a disparity in capitalizing on growth online can be seen in recent reports from such organizations as J.C. Williams that have identified a two to four year lag in the growth of Web commerce in Canada com-



Jim Sterne, founder of the Web Analytics Association and chairman of the eMetrics Marketing Optimization Summit, says if U.S. retailers overcome delivery issues in the Canadian market, they could leap frog Canadian retailing in its own back yard.

pared to the U.S. This comes at a time when the recent rise of the Canadian dollar has led to increased online business from US retailers such as L.L. Bean and others who are starting to see their Canadian market growth numbers make Canada a priority market. At the same time, with few exceptions, Canadian retailers have been slow to take a more aggressive and importantly, more effective path to ramping up their online presence.

"Many retailers in Canada haven't exactly

raced to provide extensive online shopping," says Jeffrey Grau, senior analyst at eMarketer, who wrote the report on Canadian ecommerce. "They're content to sell through their stores and don't want the technical headaches of running a Web site. They don't want the costly challenges of marketing in two languages and shipping to geographically dispersed customers."

The combined effect of increased online consumer activity and the continuing slow pace of adoption by Canadian retailers are fuelling suggestions Canadian etailing may grow opportunities for US retailers to take over market share left vacant by hesitant Canadian players.

"It is stunning to see the contrast between the two markets and the hesitancy of many Canadian retailers to employ simple and proven steps to protect and grow their market share and prospects for growth online," says Jim Sterne, founder of the Web Analytics Association and chairman of the eMetrics Marketing Optimization Summit. "When tied to Web analytics tools and strategies, Web sites can become one of the most effective and flexible channels to allow retailers to give their customers exactly what they want."

Sterne notes that global ecommerce leaders such as Dell are sending the signal to the markets that the Internet is the most important element in their marketing mix. Dell recently created a joint venture with WPP to co-found a Web marketing firm that will set the standard for tying marketing planning, strategy and spending to audit and tracking of performance against ROI.

"As leading online retailers become even more dedicated to the Web channel and using it strategically to measure, analyze and direct their marketing outreach, it would appear Canadian retailers are still waiting to take the most basic steps of using analytics to track their Web performance," says Sterne. "If U.S. retailers address their delivery issues in the Canadian market, they could potentially leap frog Canadian retailing in their back yard and displace them with their forward looking customer base in Canada." ♦

Canoe, Yahoo! Canada forge strategic alliance

TORONTO -- Web network Canoe.ca and Yahoo! Canada, based here, two of the country's foremost Internet destinations, last month forged a strategic alliance that promises to enhance the online experience of more than 18 million Canadians, who account for almost 80 percent of Canada's monthly online population. The pact teams up Yahoo!'s search functionality with Canoe's extensive Canadian content.

As a result of the alliance, Canoe.ca and SUN Media will provide Yahoo! Canada with Canadian content in English and French, in addition to the extensive Canoe.ca classified services leveraging SUN Media's 300 daily and weekly holdings. In return, Yahoo! Canada will provide the Canoe.ca and SUN Media online holdings with the Yahoo! search engine to improve their sites' search functionality and give Canoe.ca content and classified services broader exposure across Canada.

"It's a natural fit for both our organizations," says Kerry Munro, general manager, Yahoo! Canada. "Canoe.ca and SUN Media are recognized as leading providers of online Canadian content, and this alliance will provide Yahoo! Canada users with even more riveting and comprehensive information on topics that

matter to Canadians while further extending our search tools and technology to more Canadians via the Canoe.ca network."

"Through this alliance, we are pleased to be offering Yahoo!'s leading-edge search engine to Canoe.ca users, which will in turn make our comprehensive Canadian content easier to search and more accessible," says Patrick Lauzon, executive vice-president of Canoe.ca. "By co-branding and sharing our mutual expertise, Canoe.ca and Yahoo! Canada will now be able to offer Canadian advertisers and Internet users an online experience more optimized than ever before."

Canadians can now take advantage of the Yahoo! search functionality when they visit Canoe.ca or access classifieds powered by vitevite.ca on Yahoo! Quebec or classifiedextra.ca on Yahoo! Canada.

The integration of Canoe.ca content and other classified services into Yahoo! Canada and Yahoo! Quebec is slated for completion by the end of the first quarter of this year. It will include personals powered by Reseaucontact.com, autos powered by Autonet.ca and real estate powered by Micasa.ca. ♦

Kerry Munro, general manager, Yahoo! Canada, says alliance will provide Yahoo! Canada users with more comprehensive information while further extending Yahoo! search tools and technology.



Email advisor

with Chris Carder

Chief Executive Officer of ThinData

The new privacy: A secret too valuable to keep

Here are three steps that marketers can take to gain optimal advantage of the newest changes and trends in privacy law and privacy practices

A few weeks ago a prominent retail client called me. He had heard rumours of potential changes to Canada's privacy legislation, and wanted to know how these changes would affect his online marketing initiatives.

"Chris, you know the privacy landscape and you understand the challenges retailers face. What's on the horizon?"

The following week, I received an email from a major financing service client wanting to know how she could refine her messages and email deployments with regard to her customers' evolving privacy expectations.

"Chris, how can we continue to target effectively while respecting our customers' most important asset -- their personal information?"

As a long-time advocate of marketing programs built on customer consent, I am encouraged to hear that privacy is fast becoming a primary concern for serious marketers from leading industries.

When Canada originally passed its federal Privacy Legislation -- called PIPEDA for *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* -- in 2001, many marketers were caught off-guard. In a shift that seemed to happen overnight, marketers were asked to comply with untested legislation and, as a result, were

unfamiliar with how to best leverage it. For the next few years, surveys revealed companies were struggling to recognize the critical role that privacy played in successful and profitable marketing campaigns.

However, as online marketing programs have become increasingly effective, marketers have developed a greater appreciation for the importance that customers place on privacy and permission. As a result, leading marketers have developed cost-effective ways to use permission-based programs to build strong, long-lasting customer relationships. At the same time, provincial and federal governments have been reviewing their privacy laws with an eye toward harmonizing laws across jurisdictions, responding to technological innovations and encouraging responsible commerce.

To make sense of this new and evolving privacy backdrop, I gathered some additional insights from Terry McQuay, president at Nymity (www.nymity.com). Based in Toronto, Nymity is Canada's largest privacy research firm, dedicated to minimizing corporate privacy risks. Terry has a unique perspective because Nymity supports hundreds of privacy officers throughout Canada.

In short, marketers -- across all industries and

media -- should take the following three steps:

1) Prepare for privacy breaches

According to Terry, the key challenge for marketers will come about because of a new stringency in the legislation requiring companies to divulge breaches of privacy to the public where notification had not previously been required. The 'hit' companies take to their reputations from announcements that private information has been lost, stolen or misused has broad and dramatic implications across the business including reductions in current and future sales and drops in stock prices.

Marketers will need to deal with the short- and long-term consequences of this negative publicity. As a result, marketers should hone their skills in anticipating, planning for and addressing reputation management.

2. Apply permission-based practices

For customers, privacy is almost always equated with consent. In other words, as long as customers have provided their permission in some way, they feel as if their privacy is being respected. As such, it is essential for marketers to apply practices built on actively gathering and confirming permission, including:

- **Using closed-loop email.** Online, marketers can take full advantage of email's unique capacity to gather permission by using closed-loop (also known as "double-opt-in") practices. In fact, closed-loop emails -- where customers actively provide their consent and then confirm it -- ensure compliance with PIPEDA and provide a further opportunity to respond quickly and definitively to customer inquiries.
- **Providing only the most relevant information to your customers.** By confirming and re-confirming the types of information customers have requested, you can be certain you are providing content your customers actually want and need.

- **Rewarding permission.** When someone opts-in to your lists provide them with exclusive offers or perks.
- **Sharing control.** Ultimately, your customers are in control of how close they want their relationship with you to be. So, be bold; give them the options and tools to strengthen that bond.

3. Use marketer-friendly compliance tools

Marketers are thoughtful practitioners who want to demonstrate a good return on investment. The potential drawback to that orientation is a tendency towards steering clear of risks of non-compliance.

As a result, marketers have not been taking advantage of opportunities of sharing information in instances where they could quite legitimately do so -- while still respecting their customers' expectations and desires for privacy. To overcome some of the understandable hesitation, marketers can take advantage of easy-to-use tools available to help ensure they are complying with the most current version of Canada's stringent privacy laws.

One set of tools has just been updated to help marketers successfully navigate these evolving complexities. The Marketer's PIPEDA Checklists were developed by leaders in online marketing, privacy, privacy law and privacy-related accounting. They are available at: <http://www.thindata.com/PIPEDAchecklist/>.

In light of these new developments, marketers can take steps to implement responsible privacy practices -- steps that will help them successfully launch and reinforce their offerings to customers who have developed a growing and insatiable appetite for privacy. ♦

Chris Carder is chief executive officer of email service provider ThinData (www.thindata.com), Canada's leading authority and supplier of email marketing technology, strategy and creative services. He can be reached at ceo@thindata.com.

Parents erect site for babies

MIAMI, FL -- With the birth of a child came the birth of one of the Internet's big ideas. Babyspot.com is a site erected recently by a company of the same name, based here, where parents can post blogs, videos, pictures, comment features and parenting content about their babies.

The Internet now offers many social networking sites. But none exist quite like the one created by co-founders James Rivera and Zameer Upadhyia.



Babyspot.com is a site where parents can post blogs, videos, pictures, comment features and parenting content about their babies for friends and family members who live far away.

Shortly after welcoming their first child Danny into the world, James and Monica Rivera became bombarded with requests for news, pictures and videos of their little bundle of joy. Seeking to quell the mob that demanded to see the new family member, the parents logged onto the Internet and started posting pictures here and there and sending scattered emails that were sometimes filtered by spam-screeners.

Frustrated by their need to act as technical support for the newborn's various online profiles and photo sites, the parents turned to long-time friend Zameer Upadhyia who, as it turns out, was experiencing equal chagrin at how challenging it had become to receive news about his distant baby cousins. Together, they hatched a plan to create an entirely new breed of social networking site that would forever change the lives of parents the world over.

They created Babyspot.com, a site that lets users -- specifically parents -- create profiles that give them the ability to post news and pictures of their children for fellow parents and family members to see. The prevailing sentiment is that not everyone can completely appreciate the sublime joy of becoming a parent, but Babyspot.com brings together the people who do.

Delving into the site, users can see it offers as many (if not more) features as most social profile sites. With the ability to write biographies and blogs, and update pictures and videos, parents can create an immersing baby-centric experience for the viewing pleasure of their families and friends. The simplicity of the site eliminates the need for tired newborn parents to spend what little energy they have left bouncing from site to site and writing countless emails to relatives, over and over.

The site is user-friendly, and has thus far been successful at keeping families in touch and creating friendships between parents living in cities and countries far apart. The creators of the site even understood that not all parents want the world to see their children. So they added an option that permits parents to block their child's profile from anyone who was not personally invited to view it.

With the recent explosion in popularity of networking sites, one thing is for certain. It's worth keeping an eye on Babyspot.com to see what it'll be when it grows up. ♦

Does your business need a boost? Consider blogs and podcasts

Blogs and podcasts have emerged as arguably the most explosive marketing vehicles since the Internet itself. Here's an overview of each and the important points to ponder.
BY PETER KOEPEL

Just when you think you have it all figured out in terms of marketing your business, along come some new technologies that revolutionize your company's ability to promote itself to prospects and existing customers. And while most people have heard of these technologies by now, namely blogs and podcasts, few are taking full advantage of what these marketing mediums can offer their businesses.

Remarkably, as little as two years ago, blogs and podcasts were viewed as nothing more than places for opinionated people to rant and rave or assert their viewpoint. But today, the tide has changed, and both blogs and podcasts are the most explosive marketing vehicles to emerge since the Internet itself.

Consider the facts. *BusinessWeek* reports more than 40,000 new blogs are popping up every day. And in 2006, the number of podcast feeds exceeded the number of radio stations worldwide, says the *CIA World Factbook*.

What does all this mean for your business? Namely, that you have a wealth of marketing opportunities that require little to no out-of-pocket expense. Use the following suggestions to make the most of your blogging and podcasting efforts.

- Blogs**
- Blogs are short for "Web logs." They are easy to use and simple to set up, and they are a great format for promoting businesses.
- Think of a blog as a mini-Web site that you post comments to on a regular basis. Blogs are a powerful medium for delivering information, because when they're done correctly, the information on a blog comes across as informational and less biased. Consider the following key points.
- Blogs enable you to get consumer feedback in an unfiltered environment. Sure, that can create some challenges, but if you get negative feedback on your blog at least now you can address the issue and be aware of it. So in a sense, a blog is often like an instant focus group. Being receptive to getting customer feedback on your blog positions your company as being accessible and interested in customer concerns. That's a great selling point in today's environment.
 - Because blogs are updated regularly, search engines like blogs and display them at the top of the search results. Construct your blog properly by using keywords the search engines will pick up within your blog entries. That way, when someone keys in a particular term about your business into a search engine, your blog will come up naturally in the results. This not only helps promote your business, but it also helps position your company as an industry leader.
 - Blogs are almost like an online community. Therefore, it's a great way to talk about your company, its culture, and any industry trends. Blogs provide an easy forum for delivering information to customers about new products or offers, and for building relationships with customers. Likewise, if there were some sort of crisis occurring in the company, it's a way to get the facts out there so you can deal with the situation quickly.
 - To make your blog more relevant and non-biased, reach out to people who will contribute to your blog. In other words, you can have people from within your company post entries, as well as outside experts or customers. Be careful, though, as a blog makes it easy for a disgruntled employee to post information that should not be public knowledge, such as proprietary information or trade secrets. Therefore, if you allow employees to post entries, establish some controls over the content.
 - Whatever you do, don't create fake blog entries, where you pose as a customer or outsider and say wonderful things about the company. That approach usually backfires because people see through that. Be honest in all your entries.
 - You can find a number of inexpensive blogging services online that can help you set up and maintain your blog.



Podcasts

A podcast is essentially your own radio show on the Web. It's an extension of a blog, whereby you make your entry more personal because you're actually speaking the words, not just typing them. Before you dismiss podcasts as something only kids listen to, take note. According to a comScore study, people between the ages of 35-54 make up about half of the podcast listeners, and they are more likely than average to download podcasts.

As such, podcasts are a great choice for small businesses because they can help boost the company's credibility and sales without having to invest much. Consider the following key points.

- The first step to developing a podcast is to think of a unique concept or angle for your show. Since this is essentially a radio show dedicated to your business, you'll want to give information that relates to your industry or company that your prospects and listeners would find informative and entertaining. So if you're a financial planner, for example, you could do a podcast about wealth or investment strategies. If you own a catering business, you could do segments about easy entertaining secrets. Address the challenges your customers or prospects have and they'll tune into your podcast.
- Podcasts also allow you to appeal to niche audiences, because you can cover certain topics in more depth. You can make your

- podcast any length (30 minutes to an hour is common), and you can address specific or even obscure topics that you know your customers will find interesting.
- To actually create the podcast, all you need are recording/mixing software and a microphone. Both of these items are installed on your computer, so there's no need to go to a recording studio. With the software you can edit your podcast and include intro music. You can even put commercials into your podcast to sell your own products, or sell air space to others and include their commercials.
 - The beauty of podcasts is that people can listen to your show over and over, whenever they want. All listeners need to tune in is an mp3 player. And according to recent surveys, more than 65 million people worldwide have mp3 players.
 - By creating podcasts and being informative, you can quickly become a leader in your industry. Prospects and existing customers who listen to your podcast will likely think of you when they are in need of what you offer or your area of expertise.
 - Make it easy for people to find your podcast. You can do that by submitting your podcast to different feed directories, such as FeedBurner or PodcastValley.

Paths to profits

When it comes to blogs and podcasts, the key to success is to be informational. You need to give people lots of relevant information in order to keep them reading or listening. Yes, maintaining a blog or doing a regular podcast takes time and discipline. But when you consider the amount of credibility and exposure to new customers these technologies give you, no company can afford not to use these tools as a vital part of their online marketing mix. ♦

Peter Koepel is founder and president of Koepel Direct, a leader in direct response television (DRTV), online, print and radio media buying. He is a Wharton MBA, with more than 25 years of marketing and advertising experience. Koepel has helped Fortune 1000 businesses; small businesses and entrepreneurs develop direct marketing campaigns to increase profits. For more information on his company, visit: <http://www.koepeldirect.com> or call: 972-732-6110.

ADVERTORIAL

As eMail ROI gains strength, advertisers get more creative with it

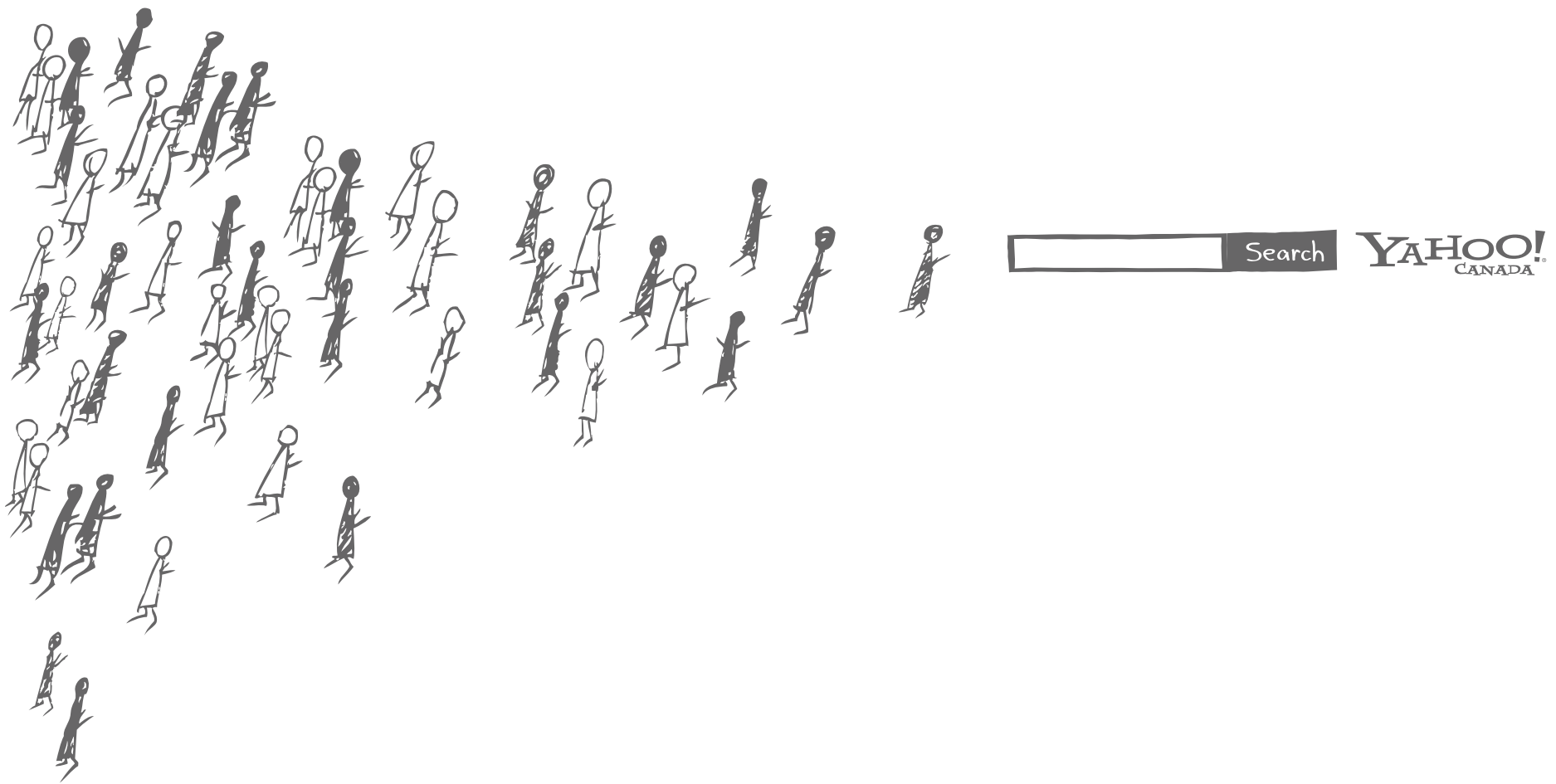
It's official: Email is now a key part of any online marketing campaign -- and marketers know this. According to a survey by Datran Media, 80% of marketers send targeted email campaigns. And why wouldn't they? A recent report from the Direct Marketing Association says that email ROI is twice that of other online channels such as Search and Display. For this reason, it's no surprise that 82% of respondents to Datran's survey also said that they plan to increase their email marketing budgets.

Now that email is viewed as an essential part of any online marketing mix, how are marketers using it to achieve their objectives? "From my experience working with a range of clients, marketers are getting much more sophisticated when it comes to their email campaigns," says Stephanie Wilson Chapin, Associate Director of Direct Marketing at Sympatico / MSN. "More and more, we're challenged to deliver on more sophisticated campaigns. For example, marketers are often using our lists for split tests focused on the creative or the offer itself," Wilson Chapin says. "This is likely because eliminating postage and printing costs means it's much less expensive to test online than it is with

traditional mail." This observation is backed up by the Datran survey -- almost three-quarters (74.1%) of the 2,000 marketers surveyed plan to use email as a testing vehicle.

Besides testing, marketers are also using email to build brand awareness (65%), reactivate dormant customers (53%) and upsell or crosssell products (67%). The versatility and power of email is endless because if it's enormous reach (91% in 2008 according to an eMarketer.com study) and ease of use. Plus, marketers are impressed with the speed of the results they get from email. In many cases, it takes at least three months for marketers to understand how a traditional direct marketing campaign has performed. "With email, you see initial results within 48 hours and full results within a week," says Wilson Chapin. "This allows marketers to make decisions quickly and alter strategy almost in real time."

To learn more about how you can take advantage of email as part of your marketing campaigns, consider contacting Sympatico / MSN, a market leader which offers some of Canada's biggest e-mail lists. Call 877-842-7821 for more information.



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Better marketing? Better build a blog.



Blogs may form the foundation for social networking, but they also serve as alternative way for marketers to perform important tasks like conveying expertise, reaching target markets, building brand awareness, and testing ideas or products. Here's how. BY DAVE LIVINGSTON

With the growth of the Internet, blogs have evolved from being personal online

diaries to virtual communities that are fuelled by the public through comments and two-way conversation. This development has given larger groups like businesses the opportunity to join the rising trend, and companies today have been able to greatly profit from publishing a corporate blog, proving blogging's successful shift from the private to professional world.

As an affordable and time-efficient way to stimulate sales, blogs can influence an audience and provide valuable solutions as an effective marketing tool. A blog allows marketers to execute their job in the following ways.

Become the expert

With a blog, executives can establish themselves as the thought leaders in their fields and position their company as a reliable source in the industry. Businesses can publish their latest news and provide an easy way for readers to find what

they want through automatic archiving and searching features.

For example, innovative uses of RSS feeds found in software like Blogfusion allow users to receive RSS updates by individual posts, a community or category, and even specific keywords. Marketers can also use a blog to drive the conversation about products or services.

Keeping blogs updated and well-written can help create a following of devoted readers and potentially loyal customers. In addition, a credible blog helps to promote a corporate reputation of being transparent and trustworthy.

Reach your target market

Today's consumers are intelligent and cyber-savvy. Blogs provide them with a smart and convenient forum to become informed about a business and talk about important issues, all accessible at the touch of a button. For marketers, this means a fast way to interact with the key public by joining customer discussion, providing tips and insight and receiving feedback.

The advantage of a blog over an intranet or extranet is that individuals can leave comments and get their voices heard directly on the site without having to go through a Webmaster or

administrator. Companies can involve a larger audience through a blog without limiting who can participate, forming a more personal relationship with consumers, vendors and employees. The two-way communication that blogging offers is essential for businesses as it builds stronger connections with important target groups.

Build brand awareness

Brand awareness is a key element in any corporate marketing plan. Unlike advertising campaigns that can include high production costs and only a few media spots, a blog gets a brand name out on the Internet where users everywhere can see it at any time of the day.

Continually updating a blog and publishing current information will promote the business and build credibility with consumers. More importantly, a blog can generate high visitor traffic to the corporate Web site as well as gain a high ranking within Internet search engines like Yahoo! and Google.

Search engines escalate sites that are updated often, as well as ones that link to other sites or contain inbound links. This means that individuals searching for information relating to a business or product have a higher chance of seeing a company with a blog before any others.

Test ideas or products

Don't waste time guessing at what the public wants from the company, simply ask them! Blogging is a resourceful way to post an idea and see if it generates interest before spending time and money to implement it.

The public can log on, read the latest updates about future products and plans, and comment directly on the site. From there, marketers are able to see what the responses are and adjust their strategy accordingly.

Many times, companies use surveys, focus groups and questionnaires to measure the success of a product or determine corporate value, but these tactics keep the business at a distance from the consumer and are more costly. Blogs provide a relaxed environment for consumers to make evaluations in an informal, conversational manner directly with executives.

Building credibility, communicating with the public, testing ideas and new product acceptance, and promoting your brand name are important ways in which marketing professionals can use blogs to promote business and increasing sales. As innovative, cutting-edge technology to expand marketing work, blogs are becoming successful additions to corporations worldwide. ♦

Dave Livingston, co-founder and chief technology officer of Brainband Technology Services, is an experienced professional who brings a strong background in all areas of Information Technology. In his position at Brainband, he is responsible for the management of the company's production team, networks, servers and infrastructure, as well as the development of technology including Blogfusion, next generation blog software that builds communities around a central theme, congregating multiple blogs on one site. He can be contacted via email at dave@brainband.com.



WebInsight

with Jay Aber

President of The Aber Group

What's ahead for 2008?

Here are predictions by several industry pundits of what lies in store for marketing on the Web this year. They are all Canadian experts with impressive Internet marketing credentials.

During my 20-year career, I've had the pleasure of working with many of Canada's top marketers. To kick off my first column of the year, I've asked several of them for their opinions about what Internet marketing trends to expect in 2008.

Already, 2008 promises to be an interesting year, marked by huge turmoil in the financial markets, concerns about slowdowns and recessions in Canada and around the world. But as you will see, there is plenty of optimism and excitement about Internet marketing this year.

» **Kerry Munro,**
general manager, Yahoo! Canada

Growth, rationalization, integration

I would classify 2008 as a year of growth (it is the Internet, after all), rationalization and integration. Growth is obvious; this is a medium that has not yet reached its potential and there is clearly a buzz in the air about increased spend and new brands entering digital like never before.

As for rationalization I believe that the experimentation that we saw in 2007 (and what will likely always be there as people test the limits) will shift somewhat as smart marketers decide that it is better to lay out a well thought-through plan couched in a solid marketing framework than to reactively throw unproven (or perhaps duplicit) concepts at the latest buzz product. Sometimes simple, smart and straightforward perform better than sexy and audacious. I'm for both in the right ratio.

Finally I believe (or hope) this is the year we see more integration of efforts between clients, agencies and publishers. All too often we are reticent to share the ideation stage for fear of being disintermediated somewhere in the process. There's simply too much to know, too much demand and too little time for conversations to take place at the 11th hour.

We're seeing some brands and agency partners bring us in at concept development stage and we're seeing greater results on the back end. I hope we see more as this truly is an opportunity to perform better for clients, deliver a solution that can scale for the long term and demonstrate the power of the medium when all

parties work to a common goal.
And isn't that what it's all about?

» **Ken Headrick,** product and
marketing director, MSN Canada

Advertising on mobile

Various tests and rollouts of mobile advertising will come to market in Canada in 2008. This will be a year where advertisers, Telcos and other industry players will get real feedback on what types of advertising, what kinds of response rates and what kind of user reaction we will get when this new form of advertising actually makes it to cell phones in Canada in a broad way. With data rates loosening up with the carriers this will help boost Internet use on mobile devices. This may include location based targeting of advertising to a mobile phone as well.

Search engine marketing adoption

Canada still lags significantly behind the U.S. and U.K. in how many agencies and advertisers understand and invest in search despite the fact that Canadians are among the world's most active users of search engines. In 2007, many major advertisers were testing and dabbling, and we will see broader and deeper investments in 2008. Agencies with specialized dedicated teams focusing on search will dominate the agency side given the specialized skills and focus required to be successful.

User generated content

This has already grown substantially in relation to photos, videos, blogging etc. with strong growth from YouTube, Flickr, Facebook, Blogger and new offerings such as MSN Soapbox in 2007 as it has gone mainstream. Overall, user generated content (UGC) is a component of all major media properties but increasingly all of the major corporate sites are using it as a way to interact intimately with users. However, involving UGC in corporate online advertising campaigns has become so common that it may become overused as a tactic before the end of the year.

Video

Given that Canadian broadband penetration is hitting 71 percent, more mainstream TV video

content will come online in 2008. More advertisers will come online bringing TV advertising dollars with them based on the ad units being similar to TV-style advertising. There will be continued experimentation with ad units on video to optimize the viewing experience and advertising ROI.

Behavioural targeting

As Internet marketing continues to get more sophisticated, more behavioural targeting offerings from more properties will come to market in Canada in 2008 to give advertisers new targeting options across more properties.

Privacy issues

As online targeting becomes more sophisticated, consumers and governments will become more active in controlling what will be reasonable to protect consumer privacy when online.

» **Chris Carder,** CEO
of email service provider ThinData

As a critical component of Internet marketing, email marketing is poised to grow in 2008 and beyond because consumers truly value email. In fact, more than 90 percent of Canadians surveyed in the 2007 CRTC New Media Report said they used the Internet for email, making it the most preferred online activity. As a result, marketers have embraced email and have demonstrated its importance as a business tool, yielding a return, according to the Direct Marketing Association, of up to \$48 for every dollar spent. Because of the power of email, 2008 will see the following.

Focus on metrics. Marketers, across all industries, are increasingly expected to demonstrate quick results that are clearly attributable to each marketing initiative. This heightened emphasis on immediate returns will see marketers build on their skills at gathering and interpreting online metrics as well as conducting email tests.

Focus on integration

Built into corporate Web sites, CRM programs and social networking applications, email has become the 'glue' that holds online marketing initiatives together. Because of this common platform, marketers will increase their efforts to integrate key learning about customers gathered through email and apply them to other online and offline initiatives.

Focus on relevance.

Marketers determined to increase revenues have historically focused on the 'selling cycle' of their products/services. As a result, email campaigns have had a "batch and blast" approach. In 2008, marketers will increasingly use what they have learned about their customers gathered through email campaigns to deliver relevant content that truly speaks to customers' needs and reflects where they are in the 'buying cycle'.

» **Jason Sikora,** vice-president
customer acquisition Lavalife

Niche opportunities

I expect to see continued growth in behavioural targeting and other, similar niche targeting opportunities. Not just based on immediate behaviour or action, which could be random or even by accident, but based on a series of actions over a specified time frame. Yahoo has been a leader in this area for a while and I'm seeing the rest of the industry playing catch-up—because it works and advertisers are demanding it.

I would also expect to see this targeting included in the CPM or whatever ad rate is being charged, and not be considered a premium. Behavioural targeting is better for everyone - advertisers get better response, media suppliers get repeat advertisers based on this success, and consumers see ads that are relevant and are not annoyed by getting bombarded with messages that are not relevant.

» **Sam Parent,** chef de groupe Internet,
Corus Québec Interactif & regional director,
Quebec Council, IAB Canada

Surpassing traditional media

The reality that online surpassed total radio media spending in Quebec in 2007 was met with much scepticism initially, but is now gaining credibility with news out of the U.K. that online will surpass TV there in 2009. Closer to home, analysis by Rob Young for IAB Canada forecasts media spending on online will surpass radio in 2008, be neck and neck with newspapers in 2010 and surpass TV by 2015.

Online media sales consolidation

Watch for consolidation of online media sales. It remains relatively simple for a media buyer to execute a "standard" plan in a single medium. In Quebec for example, 4-5 phone calls will cover your TV or newspaper buy, 3-4 calls will handle magazines, radio, or out of home and 2 calls is all it takes for community weeklies.

However in the online world, there are so many choices, plus many of the players have separate online operations, lengthening the "negotiations and booking" processes. Consolidation is inevitable to simplify agencies' and advertisers' lives.

» **Parth Shukla,** director interactive and multi-channel marketing, Bell Canada

Return of engagement

Engagement will be back in style. Remember those old metrics—time spent on a page, eyeballs on branded / sponsored content. These will be resurrected and be in vogue this year.

It has become more difficult than ever to get any attention from your consumers. So when they do volunteer their time and choose to spend time with your site / content -- grab them by the horns and give them stuff they will enjoy and learn. Let them spend time interacting with your brand and if you make it relevant and fun they might just remember you...

Marketers will be all engrossed to increase these metrics. With the cost of producing interactive and

See **WebInsight**, page 23

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PART 1 Can you “divide and conquer” the B2B market?



Analyzing and segmenting your audience is far different in the business-to-business sector than in business-to-consumer marketing. The first of a two-part series, this article traces the obstacles to learning more about your business customers. The second part in March will provide examples of strategies that have worked well in this market. **BY EMMA WARRILLOW,**

Customer segmentation is a well-established and well-accepted activity in consumer marketing. Organizations regularly segment their customers on behavioural, demographic and profit dimensions to increase the return on their marketing investment.

The tactics they take vary, but the basic premise is the same. By understanding distinct groups, specific marketing and servicing activities lead to better results.

But does the same hold true in the B2B world? B2B marketers struggle with this question because dealing with business customers poses some interesting challenges.

Data availability

Any segmentation of the customer base requires up-to-date clean data about customers. This has traditionally been a huge challenge in B2B.

Data collection typically falls to the sales person dealing directly with the customer. This is not an activity for which they are paid (not directly anyway) or enjoy. Often outside sales people don't feel the need to input the correct address (when an intersection or street number is enough) and often write free-form notes on client interests or family matters.

This can be adequate for them to prepare for client meetings, but not so useful for head office to analyze. The good news is that companies are getting better at collecting data, CRM and SFA applications have often created a more structured format for inputting information (pull-down menus, for example) and more scrutiny over what is collected.

Overall, even when data is reliable and clean, the extent of customer information for B2B is typically much smaller than in the consumer world. Long purchase cycles for many products mean transactional data can be very sparse. In addition, individual contacts change frequently rendering fields like email addresses invalid.

Many organizations augment their databases with third party external information. In B2B this tends to be limited to firmographics such as industry classification code (SIC, NAICS), number of employees and revenue.

This data can be very helpful but is much less extensive than consumer overlay data and is not typically available for all customers. The one advantage it does have over the consumer overlay files, however, is that it is typically at the customer, *not* the postal code, level.

Isolating customer behaviour

Consumer segmentation systems typically place considerable weight on how customers behave - the channels they use, the frequency of shopping, whether they respond to offers and discounts, for example. The challenge in B2B is that the customer is neither one individual nor an inorganic entity, but rather a collection of individuals with different triggers, interests,

and relationships to the products the firm is trying to sell.

This is particularly true when customers are large organizations. The users of products or services may cross a number of departments and may be distinct from the decision makers or buyers (who may be from strategic sourcing departments or the executive ranks). This makes drawing inferences from customer behaviour difficult.

In addition, dramatic differences in size and product usage between customers may over-

shadow all other dimensions of segmentation. A computer hardware manufacturer whose customers include Royal Bank of Canada and Joe's Dry Cleaning will likely find that any segmentation will have to be driven by customer size.

Conversely, for some companies there truly is very little variability in the client portfolio. Consider, for example, a firm selling specialized dental equipment to root canal specialists.

Applying segmentation

B2C companies typically use their segmentation to create distinct marketing and product offerings for their customers. In their book *Angel Customers and Demon Customers*, authors

Larry Selden and Geoffrey Colvin state that, "A customer segment is a group of customers with sufficiently homogeneous needs that the segment members can be won with a common value proposition and common marketing."

Implementation can be somewhat more difficult in B2B. Often in these organizations, marketing acts as a support to sales by providing Web sites, brochures and trade magazine advertising.

Most communication with customers comes through the sales channel. Marketing may have limited control over the value propositions and messages being delivered.

When each of a number of segments has different offers, it can be difficult for front-line personnel to keep track. Furthermore it is almost impossible to keep them from offering the "better offer" to customers in the wrong segment.

So is there any point?

Despite these challenges, segmentation *can* be very effective in the business market. B2B marketers do, however, need to be realistic about the complexity of the segmentation that they can implement. They need to consider the state and availability of data on customers and their behaviour, and their ability to implement.

The realities of their often diverse customer bases can make even fairly simple segmentation very impactful. In our next article, we'll provide some examples of successful strategies for this market. ■

Emma Warrillow runs Emma Warrillow & Associates Inc. (www.emmawarrillow.com) and helps companies articulate their analytic strategies and make the most of their customer data. She can be reached at emma@emmawarrillow.com

A method for the B2B madness

There are all kinds of chaotic elements to confront when trying to do business-to-business direct mailings. Here is an overview of the list landscape and a method for bringing much needed structure into play. **BY DANIEL LEMIRE**

The direct marketing industry relies upon the availability of consumer lists. By subscribing to various publications, using the Internet, doing business with direct sales companies and making donations to charities, consumers enable list managers to compile not only their postal co-ordinates or email addresses, but also their preferences, aspirations, dreams and passions.

The foregoing is assembled in different lists that are then made available to companies that wish to promote their products or services to these consumers. Theoretically, these consumers will bear characteristics making it more likely they will positively respond to a direct marketing offer than your average randomly-selected man in the street.

But what about business-to-business (B2B) marketing?

Indeed, the creation of lists for the purpose of prospecting companies with which to do business is a sales strategy that is as old as the travelling salesman profession itself. In the past, a travelling salesman from Montreal who arrived in Toronto had no other choice but to look up the local newspaper or telephone directory and try to identify the companies that might potentially have a need for his products.

(Standard Industrial Classification) code.

Initially covering all manufacturing industries, the code's original goal was to enable various government departments to collect information about American companies and classify this data in a logical and comparable fashion, which would provide the means for conducting longitudinal studies. Modified and improved on four different occasions, this

This method begins with an exhaustive analysis of a company's customers. To begin with, one needs to have the complete mailing addresses and at least the sales figures for one complete year. If possible, one should add sales by product category.

The painstaking task of cleaning up all the data must first be done. In contrast to popular belief, most companies' corporate customer

“Most companies’ corporate customer database is seldom in an acceptable state.”

industry classification system in 1967 took on its definitive shape.

Since then, any self-respecting list of companies is enriched by containing said industrial code. Over the years, various suppliers have compiled lists of companies in a steady and serious fashion, and have improved the information available; number of employees, approximate sales figures, number of years in business, credit rating, secondary industrial codes, key business executives, email addresses, fax numbers, private or publicly-owned corporations, a single head office or having several establishments, a franchisee or franchisor. The list is never-ending.

So, how can one use all this information in a relevant fashion so as to maximize the return on any given direct marketing initiative?

‘Reverse append’ method

Over the years, I have developed a structured and comprehensive approach. I call it the “reverse append” method. Over the years, this method has been applied on numerous occasions and on behalf of a multitude of companies and each time, it's been worth its weight in gold.

database is seldom in an acceptable state: the postal code is often seven characters, instead of six, it's frequently incomplete or otherwise flawed; the province is more often than not missing. Civic addresses are rarely standardized, the numbers of the suites or offices may sometimes be at the beginning of the address, sometimes at the end. The names of the streets leave much to be desired, boul. / Blvd / bd might be used instead of Boulevard; Ave / Av. instead of Avenue, the telephone numbers use dashes or parentheses; the area code is often missing, etc.

Once the records have been cleansed and harmonized, they can then be sent to a company list supplier (InfoCANADA or Dun & Bradstreet). The latter will then try to match the greatest number of your customers with its own database. Usually, a success rate between 65 and 80 percent is possible.

Typically, the unmatched records are micro-businesses, self-employed workers, consumers, or unlisted new companies. In return, you will receive added to your customer records, the industrial code for each matched company, the number of employees, the sales figures, the number of years in business and the top company officer.

First shock

This is where you'll experience your first shock. You do not necessarily know your customers as well as you thought you did.

Added to the patently obvious customer base that one might imagine (painter-entrepreneurs for paint manufacturers; garage operators for an auto parts distributor; electrician-entrepreneurs for an electrical parts distributor), there will be a host of customers that you could not have imagined, which all together might account for 30, 40 and even 50 percent of the sales volume. They may be government bodies, delivery companies, farms, factories, etc.

This is the point where we will compile a matrix that tabulates and associates industrial codes and company size. Depending upon the number of matched customers (a few hundred to several thousand), we will create a matrix that uses the SIC code's first two digits (major industries), first four digits (more than 700 codes) or first six digits (more than 7,000 codes) and the size of the company in terms of its employees (1 to 4, 5 to 9, 10 to 15, 16 to 25, 25 to 50, etc.)

Each cell, which corresponds to an industry and a company size, will be populated by your current customers where we will know the level of consumption of your product. One may thus determine if a sector is particularly worthwhile for your business.

Next, with the help of a list supplier, we will determine the number of potential customers that exist in this cell. If the number is interesting and the profitability certain, we have thus discovered a promising cell.

Now, we would turn our attention to developing an offer. The strength of such an approach lies in the fact that for each cell, which reveals significant potential, we're in a position to analyze our existing customers and note their average level of consumption, the leading products, seasonality, and thereby shape a direct marketing offer that will be able to respond to the needs of this particular cohort. ■

Daniel Lemire is president of Indicia Inc., a database and geomarketing firm with customers in Canada and the U.S. He has been involved in more than 800 projects during the past 15 years. Indicia is at www.indicia.ca.



SIC code creation

With time, the information available became more refined. In 1937, the US government established the SIC



Unlock *your* data

with Rick Brough

Consulting Services Director, Transcontinental Database Marketing, Toronto

B2B DM presents challenges, rewards

The same fundamental direct marketing principles apply in both business-to-consumer and business-to-business marketing. But there are substantial differences with business-to-business programs that once understood and overcome can yield fruitful results.

The same direct-marketing methods that work with individual consumers should also work with business customers, right? It's true that the approach is identical—except for the parts that are much more complex.

That's not as contradictory as it sounds. As a general rule, many of the *principles* of marketing to consumers (business-to-consumers, or B2C) are similar to those for marketing business-to-business, or B2B. What differs are the targeting *techniques*, especially with respect to prospect lists.

In B2C, lists usually contain names of individuals at residential addresses about whom enough analysis has (hopefully) been done on the available geodemographic data to determine the likelihood of success. The pitch is usually aimed at a single person or at a household.

But in B2B targeting is very different. Imagine, for example, pitching personal computers to ACME Widgets Inc. You might want to reach the head of the company's IT

department, its head of purchasing, its office manager, and maybe even its chief operating officer. One of these might be the sole decision-maker, or they may all decide together in committee.

That's just for the people who *decide* upon purchases. What about those who *influence* the decision-makers—those in-house people consulted before such purchases are made? A B2B pitch to one address necessarily means pitching to many more people than in B2C.

In addition to key targets, direct marketers have to know something about corporate structure and decision making hierarchy, such as *where* decisions are made. Is it corporate head office or divisional headquarters? Is it regional offices or local branches?

List issues

Successful marketers deal with these issues by acquiring lists from a variety of external suppliers, each of whom collects information in different ways from different sources. But

there are a couple of caveats.

List providers rarely offer net-list arrangements. Instead, they require you to buy the entire list. And it's always good to ask suppliers about the timeliness of the information because key contacts can change as a business grows and reorganizes, and as employees leave and are replaced.

Specialized lists cost more, which make it necessary to do campaign post-mortems that analyze which lists yielded the best results. Those failing to produce sales commensurate with their cost can be dropped.

There are also questions to ask about self-reported firmographic information (a high-level description of a company that includes size, financial and business metrics, and geography, is often estimated, or self-reported). Does it include information about the entire corporation, just regional and local operations, or a combination of both? Knowing the answer will make analysis and comparison a lot simpler and more reliable.

In addition to external lists, there is the data that companies themselves collect about their customers—what they buy and how often they buy it. Analyzing that information can be a vital component of any direct-marketing plan. And it can be indispensable in marketing to one sector that has been the subject of much buzz lately: the burgeoning small office/home office (SOHO) market, which offers unique challenges of its own.

Elusive SOHOs

For starters, how do direct marketers even find these prospects? Many SOHOs don't advertise, while many others straddle a grey zone, functioning some days as businesses and others as consumers. Should we pitch to them as busi-

nesses, or appeal to them as consumers?

A good place to start—and this principle also works well in B2C—is in-house customer data. If, for example, a stationery supplier finds its selling lots of paper and printer ink to some individuals who buy at consumer points-of-sale, chances are these buyers can safely be pitched as SOHOs.

When buying SOHO prospect lists, there are some important questions to ask. How current is the information? When was it last updated? How reliable are the firmographics?

As with B2C, successful B2B marketing requires measurements, tests and control discipline, and attention to detail to answer some key questions.

For example, how can you be sure that the person responding to the pitch is the one you contacted? Watch out, too, for different operating and legal names for the same businesses. Unless you're paying attention, you might not realize that 123456 Ontario Ltd. is not a walk-in but, instead, responding to material you sent to its wholly owned unit ACME Widgets.

One way to track such details is through bar-coded offers keyed to each prospect, while another is to collect information by inviting respondents to register online. It is also possible to gather information at the point-of-sale by asking customers to self-identify.

Overall, the work of B2B marketing is considerably more demanding. But take the time to really understand your target, align your list purchases and track your campaigns and the rewards can be more lucrative, too. ■

Rick Brough is director, consulting services for Transcontinental Database Marketing. He can be reached at rick.brough@transcontinental.ca. The firm conducts data mining, database analysis,



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understanding of the true return-on-invest-

Hefty forensics toolbox lifts turnout to Petro-Canada event

A 'CSI meets ROI' campaign solved the mystery of interesting consumer package goods company executives enough to attend an event where Petro-Canada could detail its little-known retail initiatives and benefits to them. Here's how it was done in this imaginative B2B pitch. BY SUSAN MACLEAN

Bringing your business partners along when you decide to steer your company down a different route can be quite a challenge, especially if they don't yet know that those new horizons offer them profitable opportunities. Petro-Canada is making such a move—shifting from just a gas retailer to what it describes as a "pre-eminent convenience retailer"—and needed to let its vendors know.

The company has 700,000 retail transactions a day which makes it an attractive retail channel. Companies that participate in the Petro Points reward program can leverage that program's database to build awareness of their products.

But how could Petro-Canada effectively reach the senior marketing and sales executives from Canada's biggest consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies to deliver this little known information?

Petro-Canada decided to host these busy executives from companies like Kraft Canada and Effem Foods Ltd. at a luncheon where the new direction and its impact on them could best be explained. Inspiring at least 40 or 50 of these vendor executives to come to the luncheon was the challenge that agency TBWA\Toronto accepted.

The agency saw that beyond just getting the vendors' attention, they needed to be motivated to attend the exclusive luncheon. TBWA\Toronto decided to do this by building intrigue around Petro-Canada's capabilities and expertise within the ever-changing convenience store channel.

Recognizing that CPG marketers had little

ment (ROI) potential within this convenience channel and that Petro-Canada wanted to be seen as the secret weapon for improving their business results, the agency took advantage of the popularity and familiarity of the various detective and forensics shows currently on television. The result was *CSI meets ROI*.

Five-pound package

A five-pound direct mail piece was delivered to 143 executives selected from a list of vendors generated by Petro-Canada. It was designed for impact.

The package was a silver-coloured aluminum toolbox. It measured 11.5 by 7.5 inches and 5.5 inches deep, and sported a personalized ID badge urging the recipient to "unlock your unique marketing potential."

"The packaging was kept simple and clean to maximize immediate open rates and promote a greater sense of curiosity," notes Leslie Kross, TBWA\Toronto managing director.

The toolbox contained forensic-type tools and a personalized ID badge. They were packaged in the red and white Petro-Canada colours.

Inside the lid was written: "To identify the consumer, we must first understand them.

Now you're invited to work with us and do both." Each carefully selected tool was used to draw the audience's attention to a specific and corresponding marketing message.

Tools and messages

"Re-Look at Petro-Canada" was the message beside the magnifying glass. The copy read: "Our focus is on re-inventing the convenience store experience. Our knowledge can help you maximize your bottom line."

Beside the mini-flashlight, it read: "Re-energize your ROI. Combine our unique insights with your marketing knowledge to uncover new opportunities. Together, we will create a customized marketing approach for a bright business future."

The copy by the fingerprinting kit was: "Re-think your consumer touch points. Everyday, we see 700,000 consumers with powerful profiles to drive your growth strategies. We also see a business opportunity for you in each one."

Inside the case, below the fully functioning microscope was the message: "Share our vision. See results."

"With Petro-Canada already being one of Canada's top brands, the 'CSI meets ROI' concept allowed

Petro-Canada to market its unique and relatively lesser known capabilities to a discerning

an attendance level of 20 to 30 would be acceptable, 30 to 40 would be good and 40 to 50 would be exceptional," Kross recalls.

RSVP response

The campaign exceeded even the 'exceptional' expectations of Petro-Canada with a 'yes' RSVP response rate of nearly 60 percent and a total of 83 people attending the luncheon. That includes more than 91 per cent of the 'yes' RSVP's in addition to five 'unexpected' attendees who previously responded 'no', didn't respond at all or were guests of other attendees.

Those results came from "the way we communicated our key messages," says Melanie Schmarje, Petro-Canada's manager of communications. "TBWA\Toronto has been our agency for some time and because they have worked with us so long, they could take our brief and create a highly impactful piece."

She says Petro-Canada is seeing enhanced vendor participation in the company's retail promotions with vendors working in a collaborative way.

Kross attributes the campaign's success to the creative which "came out of a strong strategy that was based on the insight that CPG marketing execs do not understand the potential of the channel. They don't understand at all how consumers shop this channel—but Petro-Canada has the insights behind the consumer behaviour, and they want to work with the CPGs to mine the opportunities. Petro-Canada needed to signal change, and our theme, which was 'James Bond meets the C-Store' positioned Petro-Canada

clearly as their secret weapon to unlock the potential of this emerging channel.

"So, we addressed the target's hot buttons, demonstrated business value and so captured their attention on both the rational and emotional level, which I think is the key to success in B2B marketing," she concludes.

It may also have been the key to this campaign winning gold in the Business Products & Services category of the 2007 CMA awards. ■

Five-pound toolbox contains forensic instruments like magnifying glass, flashlight, fingerprint kit and fully-functional microscope. Each was accompanied with appropriate marketing message.

Susan Maclean is a freelance writer and editor of "Contact Management" Magazine. She can be

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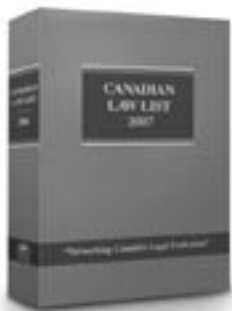
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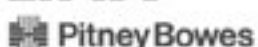


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FIRM MATCHES CLIENTS, Cont'd from cover

and frequently stems from their being incompatible from the start.

Cultural misfits

"Often there is a misfit from day one," says Didzbalis. "Sometimes, it is a misfit culturally between the client and agency."

A corporation exuding a culture that is process-oriented and deadline-driven might hire an agency that is more focused on creative, he says. Deadlines are farther down on the agency totem pole of priorities. Eventually those cultures will clash.

"The first response from many corporations to what they want from an agency is someone really creative," says Corriveau. "But perhaps their culture and CEO is very button down and they are looking for more of a conservative approach from their marketing agency."

AgencyLink has engaged a couple of industrial psychologists and a management consultant to draft what it calls CultureLink, a process of matching cultures. Both clients and companies will fill out surveys designed in part to uncover their cultural DNA.

Clients like consistency in agency personnel, says Corriveau. A lot of agencies are anxious about retaining their good talent. High agency turnover is another contributing factor to agency churn.

From his days on the agency side, Didzbalis found many clients were unfocused in their objectives and strategy. They thought just hiring an agency would solve all their problems. They put no real thought into how to go about it.

"What we are trying to do is put more discipline into the process so that you have longer lasting relationships. And that is a win for the client, and for the agency. It costs DM agencies a lot of money in both hard costs and staff time to prepare their pitches. The longer tenure they can

have with a client is in their interest as well."

For companies the cost of finding agencies, working with them, being disappointed, ditching them, and doing it all over again is exorbitant, he says. But if they do it right the first time, the cost including the AgencyLink fee will amount to a fraction of their overall marketing expenditures.

AgencyLink will assist clients on RFPs and in composing them if so desired, he says. It will provide insights and advice on existing RFP processes and how to improve them. Once an agency shortlist is compiled, it will bring CultureLink and other tools into play for the selection. It also offers help in the actual contract negotiation.

Finding DM agency

For a company hunting for a DM agency, Corriveau says AgencyLink would first learn exactly what the client was looking for in DM services. It would scour through a robust database it is developing that will span freelancers to multinational agencies. If necessary, it would recruit a seasoned DM professional to be part of the team at an associate level.

"It depends on the size and complexity of the work," says Didzbalis. "But the key part when firms approach us will be really understanding what they are looking for, what their objectives are, what their budget is, and whether it is a regional or national initiative. Then we do some due diligence

on what the corporate marketers need."

AgencyLink will be delving into the strengths and weaknesses of various DM agencies and assessing whether they are more effective in direct mail, interactive marketing or other media, he says. It will be a mutual judgement with the client who will ultimately make the choice.

"We are a facilitator to take them down that path. And the path can and should take some time. A good search can take anywhere from six to eight weeks and probably 200 hours worth of time."

That 200 hours is the industry average, says Corriveau. People often don't have the time, knowledge or resources to expend that kind of effort.

"There are also organizations out there like associations, government agencies in particular, that are concerned about the perception of a transparent search. AgencyLink will be a great service to them."

"Publicly-traded companies are under considerable scrutiny now on issues of compliance," says Didzbalis. "The days are over where a marketer in a public company can just say 'Oh I'll call my buddy who has an agency. That doesn't pass mustard any more.'"

Similar U.S., European firms

The partners know of no other organization in



Sheila Corriveau boasts solid international business acumen with a proven track record in corporate, agency, not-for-profit and association environments. As partner, president and CEO, she grew the Canadian operations of Porter Novelli to one of the top PR firms in the country.



LoyaltyLandscape

with Rick Ferguson

COLLOQUIY Editorial Director

The soft side of loyalty

Soft benefits are critical to retaining your most valuable customers, but they also cost money. While hard benefits are relatively easy to deliver, soft benefits often require special attention, training and procedures to deliver consistently. Here are all the things to assess.

Last month we talked about the yin and yang of hard and soft benefits in loyalty marketing value propositions. If hard benefits represent the rational, tangible side of the value exchange in the eyes of your customers, then what about the benefits that appeal to the emotional, personal side of the relationship? Do soft benefits matter?

Hard benefits are rewards that let customers know they're getting something free in exchange for their continued patronage. Everybody likes to think they're getting a deal. This is the rational side of the customer brain at work: *I'm getting my money's worth.*

But recognition is equally important. Soft benefits are recognition elements that tell customers you know they're important.

Soft benefits help differentiate you from your competitors, particularly in the eyes of your best customers. By offering them privilege, access, special treatment and other amenities that only program members can obtain, you appeal to the emotional side of the customer brain: *they know I'm important.*

Soft benefits are important for another reason. Customers, after all, can only spend so much money with you. They only need so many tanks of gas each month. They can only spend so much money on apparel.

Top earners

Whatever your business, if your most valuable, highest-spending customers are earning hard benefits in your loyalty program, then they'll reach a point when additional currency or economic reward will cease to motivate them. Think of the million-miler in an airline frequent-flyer program—you may be one yourself.

Once you've earned a million miles, does the prospect of earning additional mileage in a promotion turn you on? Probably not.

Chances are you don't even have the time to spend the miles already languishing in your account. When you've reached that rarefied level, what motivates you are the perks: the

upgrades to first class, the priority check-in and the drinks in the Crown Room. At that point, you couldn't care less about the miles.

Soft benefits can take a myriad of forms. You're really limited only by your budget and imagination. However, in general terms we can group them into three broad categories—exclusive access, special privileges, and special pricing.

Exclusive access

Customers love it when you offer them something special—especially when they feel that the benefit makes them part of an exclusive or select group. Offering members special access to certain times, events and offers at your facility is one of the easiest and least expensive ways to offer soft benefits in your loyalty program.

American Express's *Membership Rewards* program, for example, offers its Gold Card members access to exclusive Gold Card events such as tickets to Broadway shows, dinners at fine restaurants and entertainment options around the country. The operative word here is *access*—if you don't play at the Gold Card level, then you're left out. Other ideas could include:

- Access to a members-only Web site where members can find exclusive offers or personalized benefits.
- Members-only parties and events.
- Advanced notification of in-store events.
- Celebrity meet-and-greets.
- Anything that your imagination can conceive—provided that you follow through with your delivery.

Special access doesn't have to come at reduced price. You aren't providing members with extended economic benefits; you're merely giving them opportunities unavailable to the general public.

Special access allows you to deliver personalized, emotionally rewarding treatment to your best customers that consistently reminds them

that you value their business more than your competitors do. The onus is on you, however, to deliver what you promise, consistently.

Special privileges

The companion to special access is exclusive privilege. If you allow your loyalty program members privileges unavailable to regular customers, then you make a powerful statement of recognition that your competitors will have trouble duplicating.

The idea of granting certain customers special privileges is counterintuitive to some marketers—particularly in the retail space, where the mantra of "We treat every customer the same!" is repeated *ad nauseum*. Marketers worry that customers who see other customers treated differently will grow jealous and take their business elsewhere.

But that's really a cop-out. After all, we're used to seeing Platinum-level frequent-flyers treated preferentially at airports, and jealousy seldom enters into the equation—instead, we're all trying to figure out how we can take enough flights to earn Platinum status ourselves.

If the rules of the game are transparent, special privileges become strong beacons that will encourage high-potential customers to consolidate their spending with your brand. And there are certainly plenty of opportunities for the imaginative marketer to implement privileges for valuable customers. Examples include:

- Members-only service desks.
- Service guarantees.
- Advance notice of sales and new products.
- A members-only newsletter or magazine.
- Personalized gifts.
- Preferential in-store treatment.

Because they're hard to duplicate, special privileges create a barrier to exit and keep members engaged with your brand. Remember to extend access and privilege only to those members who carry the highest seasonal or lifetime value.

Members earn privileges because of repeated patronage; once they experience privilege, they won't want to give it up. The long-term retention benefit will be substantial.

The problem, of course, is that you can't extend special privileges to everybody. If your bucket of "elite" customers becomes too large, then the privileges cease to be special, and you'll have a tougher time delivering them. And again, be prepared to consistently deliver on your promises.

Special pricing

Last month, we looked at why discounts alone aren't a sustainable loyalty strategy. When viewed as soft benefits, however, special members-only pricing carries substantial merit.

Canada that performs the same kind of intensive matching of clients with agencies. But the model is not unknown elsewhere. They estimate there are more than a dozen similar agency search consultancies in the U.S. and a few in Europe.

Corriveau discovered 11 such U.S. consultancies online, one of which has been in business for longer than 20 years. She believes there are more that have chosen not to advertise.

AgencyLink is not modeled after any existing U.S. agency search consultancy. But Didzbalis says the partners are studying a few of them with the possibility of partnering on cross border or cross continent searches in future.

The idea of forming a search agency consultancy first germinated with Didzbalis eight years ago while working with an agency and responding to an RFP issued by a Canadian bank, which had engaged a U.S. consultant to help find an agency in Canada. He thought it ironic and misplaced to recruit a U.S. consultancy to find an agency in this country.

His idea came to fruition when he met with Corriveau last fall and presented her with the concept of forming AgencyLink. They had worked together for eight years at Porter Novelli Canada, a PR and marketing agency. She thought it was brilliant and they agreed to become partners in the new venture.

They immediately began laying the foundation and preparing for launch early in 2008. Among the steps they took was to poll a number of people in Canadian ad agencies to get their views on the viability of such a consultancy.

The response was all positive, says Corriveau. People recognized it would save them time and curb agency churn.

A day after they opened for business, they had already received 30 registrations on the agency update section of their newly erected Web site. ■

Special pricing is most effective when highly targeted to a select group comprised of high actual- or potential-value customers. You can offer special pricing when and where you like. You can communicate the benefits in a highly selective fashion, and focus discounts where you're most likely to receive a return on your investment.

You can offer special rates on virtually anything that you sell—gasoline, groceries, clothing, cellular minutes—you name it. It's important to focus your discounts on those goods and service that carry the highest *perceived* value to your customers. And don't forget to leverage your suppliers and partners, who may be willing to help foot the cost of the discount if they can foresee a reasonable return.

Special pricing is a great way to generate increased yield from your members. While frequency and retention metrics are important, increased spending per visit makes an immediate impact on your bottom line.

Common mistake

The most common mistake that marketers make is to deliver discounts to *all* of their customers, regardless of their value to the enterprise. To have the greatest impact, special pricing must be selectively applied. Offer discounts too liberally, and less valuable customers will come to view them as an entitlement.

Soft benefits are therefore critical to retaining your most valuable customers. But they also cost money. While hard benefits typically represent the bulk of your program budget, you'll also need to budget for the recognition elements. Hard benefits are relatively easy to deliver. Soft benefits, on the other hand, often require special attention, training and procedures in order to deliver them consistently.

The result, however, is well worth it. The best loyalty programs in the world blend both hard and soft benefits to create a compelling customer value proposition. While some successful programs offer only one or the other side of the equation, they are rare; most programs that fail to balance the reward equation fall by the wayside. By combining rewards with recognition, you put forth a compelling, highly differentiated offer that appeals to both sides of the customer brain.

Who wouldn't do more business with you if you consistently gave them their money's worth while making them feel important and privileged? It's the simplest formula for marketing success. ■

Rick Ferguson is the editorial director of COLLOQUIY, provider of loyalty marketing publishing, research, educational and consulting services. He can be reached by email at info@colloquy.com.

WebInsight, Cont'd from page 11

imaginative (video/flash/games) content going down, marketers should take advantage and spend resources to get their consumers to spend more time interacting with their brand online—all in an attempt to engage them.

» **Derek Szeto**,
president RedFlagDeals.com

Internet reliance, retailer groups

With an economic slowdown, marketers will be more demanding and lean more heavily on media like the Internet that can clearly demonstrate ROI. In many cases, impressions and clicks won't be enough anymore as we move towards rewarding transactions and interactions. Google launched AdWords pay-per-action Campaigns in 2007 and I expect it will start catching on in 2008.

Picking up on the idea of interactivity, retailer communities are another interesting trend from 2007 that should see evolution in 2008. Chapters.Indigo.ca and FutureShop.ca both launched consumer communities last year.

While they aren't as 'open' as many other communities, I am curious to see how effective they will be in building traffic and driving sales. I expect that if they truly want to build a true community, they will have to let go of the reins a little bit.

» **John Sclapari**, director of sales & business development, 24/7 Real Media Canada

Local online media spend

Local online media spending will gain momentum in 2008. In a maturing Canadian Internet market we should see substantial development in the local online marketplace in 2008, driven by increases in advertising on local newspaper Web sites and classified ad inventory. For example, Réseau Select, one of Quebec's leading local weekly newspaper networks, recently announced the launch of reseauselect.com, a Web advertising network that allows advertisers to reach consumers by region, municipality and postal code.

Also, I expect to see growing popularity and use of marketplace services found on most of the major social networking sites. Initially, local online media spending growth will be driven by auto and real estate advertisers.

Also, watch for niche social media sites like pouchons.com and fuzzter.com to become more interesting to advertisers. Likewise, advertisers will test emerging media opportunities like podcasts, wikis, virtual worlds and ad placement on widgets.

» **John Filippetto**, Dashboard in conjunction with media buying firm PHD

Attention fragmentation

Attention fragmentation means that surf patterns are increasingly unpredictable and there is hardly any loyalty to traditional media outlets. Only relevant advertising has a realistic chance of earning attention.

The implication is that behavioural targeting rather than demographic targeting is gaining importance. Social acceptance of an advertiser is becoming a basic requirement for success and relevancy is becoming the KPI to attain.

Video content

Traffic on emerging video content portals is sky rocketing. Online video advertising revenues are the fastest growing segment and are expected to double in 2008.

But Canada is far behind. As the Internet has evolved from an information source to an entertainment hub, eyeballs are increasing but there is little control over content. Measurement and technical standards have difficulty keeping up and delivering.

SEO//SEM//SMO= ROI

As relevancy becomes the single most important click generator, Social Media Optimisation (SMO), the digital form of word of mouth is enjoying the same high credibility. Striking the right balance between SEO, SEM and SMO can save thousands of dollars.

SEM should become a key component of any digital media strategy. The need for specialists in these areas will increase and will provide ROI.

P2P Infotainment (peer to peer)

The social Web provides for the relentless fluidity of exchange of information. It is highly time consuming and becomes itself a new form of entertainment.

While the high traffic and long exposure

times offer interesting branding and awareness opportunities, it is difficult for a brand to engage with consumers. Applications with high entertainment value will stay the most promising approach. Standards for "engagement metrics" remain a challenge.

Citizen journalism

The year 2008 will be the breakthrough of blogs as a trusted source of information. Canadians love blogs as we have the highest percentage of blog visitors in the world. Relevance and contextual sensibility will be increasingly important.

Micropayment

Micropayment is the increasing allowance, respect and credibility for everyone's 'two cents' in the digital space. Blogging will become a profession and honest, opinionated product reviews will become advertising and an outlet. Virtually everybody can become a transactional outlet of your product as shopping baskets will be added to a favourable review of your product—obviously with a revenue share model.

The long trail

Unrestrained by shelf space scarcity and brick & mortar overhead costs, the Internet allows for offers to continue infinitely. The impact is a decreasing dependency on main stream media dictating what's hot and what's not.

Crowdsourcing

This is the act of taking a task traditionally performed by an employee or contractor, and outsourcing it to an undefined, generally large group of people, in the form of an open call. Loyal consumers become brand advocates creating consumer generated ads. Share of heart and acceptance disproportionately increases with open invitation to consumers and so does the risk factor.

Rating systems

Allowing consumers to give instant feedback on their appreciation will become a democratic habit of the modern Web citizen. Online rating could be a tool for pre-launch tests and a major part of advertising campaigns.

Geo tagging

Cell phones and PDAs allow you to geo locate all users at any given time (as long as the device is on). "Opportunistic beaming" technologies will allow relevant promotional messages (permission based) and multiple digital POS media will create new opportunities for relevant cross-channel communications.

» **Jay Aber**
of The Aber Group

Delivering business objectives

So what do I think about Internet marketing in 2008?

Perhaps it is the direct marketing traditionalist in me speaking, but I believe that in a year marked by economic uncertainty, there will be an even greater focus on proving that all marketing strategies and tactics deliver on business objectives. As a result, Internet marketing will become even more popular with its proven ability to show ROI on spending. Traditional media will be put under the microscope to prove that marketing dollars spent in TV, radio and print, are as cost effective as Internet.

As well, I continue to be amazed at the uptake in user generated content, community and social networking. And while many of you reading this article are thinking to yourselves that type of content is only for kids and young adults, think again – Wikipedia, Linked In, YouTube and Facebook have large numbers of users who are older than 25.

Marketers will grapple with finding the right balance between allowing a community to be open and free flowing, with the need to protect brands by heavily moderating user generated content. But no one should deny that user generated content is an incredibly powerful medium that is here to stay.

Finally, for those of us whose businesses are primarily Internet marketing – 2008 should be a great year. Online audiences in Canada will approach 80 percent reach of all adults per month while traditional media audiences erode, and direct mail response rates drift steadily downward.

Businesses are clamouring for clear ROI on marketing spend. And Internet marketing - be it search, banners, email, video, widgets, podcasts – deliver results with clear return on spending.

What more could marketers ask for in 2008? ♦

Jay Aber is the founder of The Aber Group – Canada's only direct marketing agency focused exclusively on the Internet. For more information, you can reach him at 416-322-2909 or jay@abergroup.com.

EVENTS Calendar

February 21 DO NOT CALL – A NEW REALITY FOR CANADIAN MARKETERS

This morning session is an executive intelligence briefing put on by the Association for the Advancement of Relationship Marketing (AARM). It delves into Do-Not-Call (DNC) legislation and the upcoming DNC registry and its impact on Canadian marketers. Location is Park Hyatt Hotel, Toronto. For more information, contact AARM at 905.833.5497 or email registration@aarm.org

February 26-28 SMX WEST

This three-day event is Search Marketing Expo—SMX West, a search marketing conference programmed by renowned search authorities. Third Door Media produces it. Corporate marketers, advertising and marketing agency executives, public relations and communication professionals as well as search planners, buyers and specialists will attend. Location is Santa Clara Convention Centre, Santa Clara, CA. For more information or to register, visit www.smxwest.com/register.

February 28 CMA B2B MARKETING CONFERENCE

This one day event is the Business-to-Business Marketing Conference put on by the Canadian Marketing Association. There will be case studies and presentations by Gord Dyer of McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Guylaine Lavoie of Air Canada, Brian Meagher of Purolator, Heather Nairn-Rand of ADP Canada, and Andy Pilkington of Amex Bank of Canada. Location is InterContinental Toronto Centre, Toronto. For more information, contact Sue LeClerc at 416.645.3281, sleclerc@the-cma.org or Andra Thurton at 416.644.3748, athurton@the-cma.org

March 3-6 ON DEMAND CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION

This event is billed as the world's leading digital printing conference and exposition, encompassing all the technologies used to create, manage, personalize, print and deliver content. Location is Boston Convention & Exposition Centre, Boston. For more information or to register, visit www.ondemandexpo.com or call 888.824.3004.

March 5-6 THE INTELLIGENT ENTERPRISE EXPEDITION 2008

The Intelligent Enterprise Expedition (IEE 08) is described as a groundbreaking two-day event with its exclusive focus on location intelligence at the enterprise level. DMTI Spatial is hosting it. The conference promises to showcase industry-leading experts and compelling customer stories. Location is Le Royal Meridien King Edward Hotel, Toronto. For more information, contact Lisa Lamm of DMTI Spatial at 905.948.2027 or email llamm@dmtpatial.com

March 31- April 2 EMETRICS MARKETING OPTIMIZATION SUMMIT

Leading Web marketers, Web analysts, directors of ecommerce and communications managers are expected to attend what is described as the premiere national conference dedicated to optimizing online marketing value and Web analytics. Industry thought leaders from Canada, the U.S. and Europe will share successes, challenges and best practices. Location is the Marriott Eaton Centre Hotel, Toronto. For more information, go to www.eMetrics.org / Toronto or call 604.985.0205.



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STAFF

PRESIDENT

Steve Lloyd - steve@dmn.ca

PUBLISHER

Mark Henry - mark@dmn.ca

EDITOR

Ron Glen - ron@dmn.ca

MARKETING INFORMATION COORDINATOR

Adam Lloyd - adam@dmn.ca

ART/PRODUCTION

Michael Demi - michael@dmn.ca

SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER

Peter O'Desse - peter@dmn.ca**CONTRIBUTING
WRITERS**

Jay Aber

Rick Brough

Chris Carder

Rick Furguson

Peter Koeppel

Daniel Lemire

Dave Livingston

Susan Maclean

Billy Sharma

Emma Warrilow

LLOYDMEDIA, INC.

HEAD OFFICE / SUBSCRIPTIONS / PRODUCTION:

302-137 Main Street North, Markham ON L3P 1Y2

Phone: 905.201.6600 • Fax: 905.201.6601

Toll-free: 800.668.1838 • Email: home@dmn.caWeb site: www.dmn.ca

EDITORIAL CONTACT:

Phone: 416.461.9647 / Email: ron@dmn.ca

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Be prepared for the National Do Not Call List



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Get the inside scoop on Canada’s new National Do Not Call List and how it will apply to any organization that uses the telephone to market their goods or services beginning this fall. Whether your focus is outbound prospecting or telemarketing to existing customers, you will want to take in this review of the new requirements as well as other new regulations that will affect all telemarketing in Canada.

Be prepared – with fines of up to \$15,000 per infraction in addition to the bad publicity, these are rules that you want to understand and follow! Find out what you need to do to comply and how other organizations are preparing for the new telemarketing environment.

SPEAKERS

WALLY HILL
Vice-President
Public Affairs and Communications
Canadian Marketing Association

NANCY WEBSTER COLE
Senior Manager, Telemarketing Regulations
*Canadian Radio-television and
Telecommunications Commission*

TORONTO.....February 27

CALGARY.....March 5

VANCOUVER.....March 7

OTTAWA.....March 18

MONTREAL.....March 19

HALIFAX.....April 1

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