

# Marketing to Today's Distracted Consumer

By Lee Traupel

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## Marketing to Today's "Distracted" Consumer

The average person today is exposed to a never-ending deluge of 1,700 marketing messages during a single 24-hour period. Look around you, we marketers have pasted, integrated injected and/or overlaid advertising in any possible place imaginable! Case in point, NBC will start to digitally insert commercial "billboards" into advertising content to be broadcast during the winter Olympics – in essence a commercial within a commercial.

Marketing messages and processes must be condensed, hard-hitting and presented in formats that are easy to understand and digest – not MBA-speak or techno-jargon. Long mission statements with flowery prose simply don't cut it in today's "distracted economy" – customers/clients/partners want to understand what products and services your selling, at what price and how they are supported.

A one-page company Facts sheet is an essential component of any marketing campaign – it provides a snapshot of essentials about your company including markets addressed, contact points, core technology, products or services sold and business partners. A well-written Fact sheet should be one page and provide just baseline information, without any hyperbole.

Power Point presentations by their very nature force you to distill your information down into bullets and short sentences. Enabling you to make a presentation in a meeting, or have content ready for viewing on a 24/7 basis via your web site. You can create several iterations of the presentation which can be tailored for customers, partners, investors, etc. – mixing and matching your core 8-12 slides with others that "speak" to different audiences.

I've written several articles on web-enabled marketing and the need for simplicity when designing a web site, with content that is tailored for the online community. Many companies are still spending way too much money on web sites that don't effectively work as an information resource – unfortunately, many of these sites function more as a testament to the designer's ability to use cutting edge software graphics tools.

A great number of web sites still utilize text that is just pulled from other marcom materials, ignoring "rules of the road" for content on the web – the online community wants information presented in short paragraphs comprised of 2-3 sentences, with lots of white space.

A good web site should act solely as an appetizer for a four-course meal – whetting the appetites of the viewers and motivating them to take some action that moves them forward in the marketing

process such as contacting the company or registering via the web site for more information.

Speaking of web site registration – this too should be optimized for today’s “information overloaded” customer. Only basic requirements should be requested (name, contact points, interest level) with a Privacy Statement linked via the registration page clearly stating your marketing policy; which by the way, you should adhere to without any deviation, or risk the wrath of your customers.

Opt-in e-mail has now become today’s marketing methodology du jour – it works and it’s cost effective. Approximately 50% of opt-in e-mail content is done in HTML (graphics inserted) format and the other 50% in text format. We strongly recommend text format to most of our B2B (business to business) clients – and we utilize a standard format that has generated 8-25% response rates from numerous campaigns we’ve created.

We structure the e-mail message so it is in three short paragraphs, with customer referenceability built in to the message and we utilize at least 10% of the media buy to test 2-3 different messages. The subject line is one of the most critical elements – it has to get the recipient’s attention and cut through the clutter of hundreds (typically) of other messages they will be receiving during a 24-hour period.

So, the executive summary for this article can be summarized succinctly – the most precious commodity in business today is attention – getting someone’s attention and then keeping it is directly proportional to how you structure your marketing messages.

Lee Traupel has 20 plus years of marketing experience – he is the co-founder of Intelective Communications, Inc. <http://www.intelective.com> , a marketing services company which provides strategic and tactical marketing services exclusively to small to medium sized companies. His articles on interactive marketing have been widely published via: Internet.com, Europublic, Adventive, Yahoo, SitePoint, WorkZ, Wilson Web, BuyerZone, National Business Association, Traffick, and many other sites and publications. He can be reached at <mailto:Lee@intelective.com>

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