

E-mail Marketing Without All The E-mails?

By Wesley A. Ford

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So much has been made of email marketing, newsletters, etc. Our mailboxes are filled each day. How much of it do you really read? You'll see your options and which are right for you.

Is there an Alternative to E-mail marketing?

The answer is a resounding, "YES!" You now have the ability to create living, breathing Dynamic HTML objects on the desktop. Think of them as little tiny Web pages that can deliver new content from the Internet as often as you like.

Technology is changing rapidly. Some tools offer the same benefits of email marketing, without all the emails. You get the benefits of E-mail and the beauty of web sites all in one tool. Some tools come with specific content management modules. These applications are small, typically 400-600kb. You can email them to your customers and they will download it once. When they do this, your corporate branded icon is on their desktop and allows them a simple direct path to the most critical information your company has to offer. This translates into sales!

Traditional Methods

Many traditional methods such as trade publication ads, yellow-pages and printed collateral are great for building your brand but they are extremely difficult to track their true effectiveness. Granted, using the old tricks of dedicated phone lines, code numbers and office suites work when you get a response, but they are not automated. These will only track who acted upon the content within those traditional approaches. Desktop channels offer you many tracking capabilities.

Considerations:

- Cost per contact increases as you increase circulation
- Lack of tracking ability
- Difficult to effectively manage results

E-Mail

Email lets you focus on your audience and your message to them. Why? Because you know them. You should be able to tell who is reading your messages, what messages are being read and what

those recipients think of your message. The drawback to email is that you receive so many these days, that most people really don't read them all. If they do, it is usually a day or two late.

Forrester Research interviewed 47 top marketing managers in 1999. They ranked "emailing customers" as the most effective tool for driving site traffic (tying for first place was "affiliate programs", an option not appealing to many companies).

Email marketing has become a little more difficult since those marketing managers were interviewed. Federal and state laws governing the use of email marketing are being implemented each month. Many states require a double-opt-in and an opt out procedure to prevent "Spamming." Customers are tired of their mailboxes being cluttered by messages from everyone.

Considerations:

- Relatively low cost
- Limited tracking capabilities
- Inability to rapidly adjust message without resending thousands of emails

Desktop Channel

Desktop channels offer a new look into how companies can market and sell their goods and services. Desktop channels allow you to offer your newsletter, coupons, news releases and much more. This direct path allows you to stream in digital content that is focused to that specific group or class of customer. Talk about target marketing! You can even test your new branding or marketing campaign before you spend thousands or millions of dollars. If your message is good enough, your customers can even email this tool to another making it viral in nature as well. The cost of using a desktop channel decreases the more it is used and it's contagious nature allows that dollar figure to reduce exponentially.

Considerations:

- Create it once
- Easily updateable
- Content streams immediately
- Viral in nature
- Ability to adjust your message on-the-fly
- Excellent tracking mechanisms
- And much more!

So, would you like to learn how you too could benefit from trimming costs, boosting your brand, and earning the highest ROI that translates to your company's Bottom Line? Then give your customers something special, a direct path to your business. Provide them with your new desktop channel. It is less expensive to keep a customer than to obtain a new one.

Wesley A. Ford is co-founder of Immediate Impact, Inc., a multimedia company and much more. For more information how you can make an immediate impact for you or your company, go to <http://www.immediate-impact.com> . To learn more about Desktop Channels, mailto: wes@immediate-impact.com.

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