

Panel Discussion: Game Changing Trends in Advertising and Public Relations

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While making advertising and PR decisions, always consider an engaged audience, across a multi-channel integrated platform on a continual basis.

- **Print**- A variety of creative display advertising options are available to reach ECPs including run of book ads, pre-printed inserts, white papers/technical papers, cover-tips, outserts, and other collateral materials that can ride along with publication
 - *67% of optometrists and 80% of ophthalmologists ranked professional print journals their 2nd most important source of information (meetings/conferences were #1) to stay abreast of industry developments, business ideas, and new products and services.
 - *Journals – across all platforms – are the most important, highest reach, and one of the highest exposure information sources for physicians
- **Online** – targeted banner ads on well-respected branded journal Web sites and e-newsletters along with custom online advertising with your ad message surrounded by related contextual content continues to perform well. Credible websites leverage their network of trusted users through text ads, e-newsletters, e-blasts, and internal and external search optimization to drive traffic to custom online content/programs.
 - **Google’s double-click benchmark report’s average banner CTR is .1%.
 - ***Advanstar Eye Health’s banner CTR is .25% - .5%
- **Mobile** - Online and app advertising is increasing rapidly, potentially doubling every two years. Apps can take your mobile promotional messages directly to your targeted audience. ECP’s utilize tablets to access the internet for personal and professional use, e-mail, and read articles from healthcare/medical publications.
 - ***33.1% increase vs. previous quarter in mobile app downloads
- **Social Media** – Leverage trusted publisher and other credible content providers’ social media outlets with advertising packages. Expect a modest increase in healthcare/pharmaceutical ads on social media as a result of a new FDA draft guidance document just issued easing rules on ads in social media.
 - ***Facebook likes have increased 167% for the year 2013.
 - ***Twitter followers had double digit increases for the 2013 calendar year averaging 14.7%

*Kantar Sources & Media Interactions 2013, **Google double-click benchmark, ***Publisher Data: Adobe SiteCatalyst & AppFigures

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- Beware of the commodification of quality writing & information...Wikimedia in its ugliest form is mis-information built around hidden agendas: "January 6 is the most depressing day of the year!" Bull-news at its best!
- Has the explosion of access been valuable to the media? What threatens quality journalism is not "an excess of information but an excess of insignificance."
- Everyone with a digital tool has become "the media." Who are the future story-tellers?
- Content Marketing and Native Advertising are the two current key trends to understand and watch. The supplier community in the ophthalmic industry is behind the curve when it comes to these two trends.
- The next key trend: Convergence—the integration of commerce and community using advanced technology solutions to create more effective predictive analytics. This Convergence is leading to/will lead to: a proliferation of wearable devices, an overload of data and a ubiquitous internet raising significant discussions about privacy and marketing's effectiveness, while at the same time creating huge opportunities for both the media and marketers.
- The most successful advertising and public relations initiatives will be built around the effective use of integrated media platforms, something our industry is only starting to embrace.

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Business-to-business marketing communications was at one time nothing more than a forum for playing to people's vanity. I originally joined the optical industry as a magazine editor and moved into the sales function which suited my personality. In studying up on B2B advertising approaches, I learned that most publishers, regardless of industry, found it easier to appeal to the vanity of the advertiser than to specifically market products, services and ideas. While that mindset still exists today, buyers have become more sophisticated and the effective advertiser/marketer has to take into account human behavior as never before. Here then are seven guidelines for achieving best MarCom practices:

1. It's About Them So Make Your Proposition About Them

- You have to offer the buyer a remedy, an opportunity, a way for them to become emotionally invested. Focus on the buyer's needs, not your ego. Make them feel positive about you because you care about them.

2. Don't Talk At Them, Talk With Them

- In this new era of social media, etc., your MarCom should come in the form of a dialogue as opposed to a diatribe. Make your audience part of the process and get them involved in a discussion. The more you close the communications gap between you and the customer, the more precise your message impact can be.

3. Regardless Of The Medium Used Or The Product Advertised, Craft A Message That Owns One Word Or Idea In The Prospect's Mind

- When you think of luxury cars, you think of Mercedes Benz; when you think of tech innovation you think of Apple...these brands are so powerful that just their logos can stimulate consumer emotion. No matter what product, it's imperative that you reinforce that one word or one phrase message in your prospect's mind.

4. Attract Customers, But More Importantly Create Fans

- Customers are great, but customers are fickle. Fans, on the other hand, are defined by their loyalty, which is built from a sense of belonging to something, an invitation that must be conveyed through your marketing...why else would middle aged guys put Harley Davidson tattoos on their forearms? Also, fans make the best brand missionaries while customers often make the best brand critics.

5. Big Headlines Convey Big Ideas—And Big Ideas Are the Simplest Ones

- The headline is the most important element of any form of communication as it's often the only thing the prospect reads, hears or sees. Most people don't read, they scan. The headline needs to be big, bold, simple to understand and very compelling. MAKE MORE MONEY, SEE MORE PATIENTS, IMPROVE YOUR GOLF GAME. Roughly eighty cents out of every dollar spent on MarCom can be found in the headline.

6. You Have to Get Sales Onboard

- Whatever MarCom effort you make you need to make sure the sales team 1) is aware of it; 2) understands it and reinforces the message; 3) supports it. It's terribly easy to have an unengaged sales team flush your MarCom investment down the toilet at the point of sale.

7. Whatever You Do, Do it Consistently

- Many companies will make a huge marketing splash around key sales seasons (e.g., trade shows) and then go dark for months afterward. While this may spike customer responsiveness for a short time, it is quick fix stuff and contributes nothing to your efforts to build a brand. It's like making a resolution to go to the gym in the new year and then quitting on Feb. 1. Whatever effort you've made is lost.

Conclusion: B2B MarCom is actually a bargain when viewed from a cost vs. value perspective. But the money's wasted unless it's invested with a well-planned intent.

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Technology is changing every aspect of twenty-first century business and personal life - including marketing and media usage.

This trend will accelerate, but the ability to understand how to identify important and relevant technologies from the proliferation of technologies that will have little or no impact is essential to today's successful CEO.

Relevant Technologies with the ability to positively change business performance over the next two years for vision care marketers are virtual events/proprietary webcasts and mobility in the business-to-business space.

In the consumer market Social Media Business Intelligence BI is a powerful, widely-adopted alternative to traditional consumer market research.

Email Tom Wilson at Thomas.wilson@pentavisionmedia.com for a copy of "Social Media and Business Intelligence, a thirty-five page research report underwritten by IBM and Marist College, and conducted by Unisphere Research.