

101 IDEAS

MAKING SENSE OF MARKETING.

Vive la Marketing Revolution!

The world has been turned upside down and, sidetracked by scary headlines, a Marketing Revolution has taken place right under our noses, aided and abetted by hastily slashed budgets. So, did traditional marketing survive the chopping block? And should we be scared by the new digital disciplines?

EXCLUSIVE
Ilan Minter

It's interesting to see how people react to change – many people in the marketing related industry remain slightly aloof from the new way of thinking, while others rush to embrace the new options available.

For example, Sir John Hegarty, the highly respected founder and worldwide creative director of BBH, stands by mainstream advertising and admits that his agency is "very old fashioned".* An interesting comment coming from the man who heads an agency

renowned for award-winning, iconic campaigns. Meanwhile, a rash of digital marketers are telling us that the future is online, where science and information will allow us to connect more credibly with our customers than ever before.

Just to muddy the waters further, the high rating TV commercials that appeared during this year's Superbowl managed to drive website traffic to peak highs. Not many clients can afford to advertise during the Superbowl, but there's a significant point being made here – right now

traditional mediums can work even more effectively when they work with online communications (and vice versa).

What's really happened is that the Revolution has forced us to adopt a new, wider perspective, which means taking advantage of the plethora of new online options, rather than simply adopting default traditional options. So, we have new communications tools to play with, more directions to target and many new, often more affordable ways of communicating with our customers.

But, what if you feel the

Revolution has passed you by? What if you don't understand how Twitter can possibly establish you as a thought leader, how LinkedIn will build your network, how Facebook can build loyalty to your brand, how YouTube can spread your word? What if you don't know SEO from SEM, or a blog from a mini-blog? Yes, the Revolution has created a scary world for the non-digitally inclined, which is exactly why Highway 101 is running free marketing strategy workshops that explain what it all means and how it could work for you.



What we do know is that there's not a new rule book, just a much larger one. Science hasn't replaced creativity and technology hasn't taken over from ingenuity. The winners of

the Revolution are those without blinkers, willing to adapt and understand the new marketing environment. Vive la Revolution!

*Ad News 27th March 09

NEWS FLASH

FREE 'MARKETING REVOLUTION' WORKSHOP
Highway 101 is offering you a free 1 hour 'Marketing Revolution' Workshop.

Together, we'll review your current communications strategy and the methods you use to get your messages across. Then, we'll outline all the options that are available for your business.

This will be an hour of discovery – it may lead to us working together in the future, but if it doesn't and you learn something that can help you, then we consider it time well invested by both parties.

To book your in-house Workshop, call Dana on (02) 9380 4911 or email dana@highway101.com.au

Marketing – an expense or an investment?

LATEST
Dana Minter

Does your company treat marketing as an operating expense, or an asset?

Research shows that, in a period of economic down-turn, increased or maintained advertising expenditures contributed to increased earnings by firms for up to 3 years – the greatest impact occurring the year immediately after recession.

A recent study has examined the results of companies that were able to increase their marketing expenditure during recessions. Roger Graham, Professor of Accounting at Oregon State University and Kristina Frankenberger,

Professor of Marketing at Western Oregon University, examined more than 3,000 companies during five recessionary periods since 1971.

The research showed that companies who increased advertising during recessions are likely to have stronger future earnings (decreasing marketing during a recession can result in immediate loss of earnings).

MAKING A NOISE WHEN IT'S QUIET

A recession is an opportunity to stand out in a quiet market. Investing in your customers, when loyalty is hanging in the balance, means that communicating with them is crucial.



"The greatest mistake you can make now is to mortgage your future by failing to innovate".

In a study by McGraw-Hill Research, businesses that maintained their marketing expenditures during the 81-82 recession averaged higher sales growth both during the downturn – and in the 3 years following.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

In fact, some of the most innovative brands were born during a recession, including the iPod and MTV. And companies such as Burger King, GE, FedEx, Microsoft, Hewlett Packard

were all launched in recessionary times.

Numerous examples of how smart companies innovate during tough times is outlined in a report by Professor Andrew J. Razeghi of the Kellogg School of Management. He says that companies need to "be careful how you cut marketing costs during difficult economic times. Rather than eliminate spending, get creative."

The greatest mistake you can make now is to mortgage your future by failing to innovate".

To read the full report "Innovation Through Recession" by Professor Andrew J. Razeghi of the Kellogg School of Management, email info@highway101.com.au and we will email a copy to you.

60 MINUTES THAT COULD DECIDE WHAT DIRECTION YOUR BUSINESS COULD TAKE FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

Highway 101, a creative marketing agency, would like to offer you a free 1 hour 'Marketing Revolution' workshop.

Together, we'll review your current communications strategy and the methods you use to get your messages across. Then, we'll outline all the options that are now available for your business – including many that you probably haven't thought about before (especially in the area of new media).

We promise it will be an hour of discovery and knowledge exchange, showcasing new options and opportunities.

Book your Free 1 Hour 'Marketing Revolution' Workshop – call Dana on (02) 9380 4911

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LATEST NEWS

Words 101 – launch of professional copywriting service

With companies pulling more marketing services in-house because of budget constraints, the need for ad-hoc services such as professional copywriting has increased. Words 101 is just the service to fill in the gaps. The team covers all skills sets in the area of writing, from brochures to ghost-blogging to public relations to technical writing.

Find out about all the services available (and see recent work) by visiting www.words101.com.au, or call (02) 9380 4911 for a quote.

IN BRIEF

Social Media 101

While Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and much more) might not be for every company, it's not going to go away.

In fact, it's vital that every company understands the power of evolving media and the possibilities that might emerge in the future.

Why not call Dana on (02) 9380 4911. She'll be happy to help dispel the mysteries around how new technologies might assist you and your organisation.

OPINION

Does anyone read your website, other than you?

Sorry, we didn't mean to cause offence. It's just that most websites are written with all the literary flair of a telephone directory.

Now that everyone (bar a few Luddites) appreciates that a website can be a highly effective business tool, it's surprising how uninspiring many are.

They look better and probably have been SEO'd to death (a step forward). The trouble is, the vast majority of company websites lack the vital element that differentiates one business from another: a strategy.

The writing, while conveying the most vital keywords, is invariably dull and repetitive.

A good website should be like a good non-fiction book – engaging, provide valuable information and make you feel positive about the subject matter. If you don't think your website can do that, you're missing out on valuable potential business.

Websites – from novelty to necessity

Remember when you decided it would be a good idea to have a website?

FEATURE

Jacqui Bundy

Corporate websites were once very expensive. They were also either an after-thought or, "our competitor is doing it so I guess we should, too."

How times change. No matter what type of business, a website is one of the most important selling tools that your company can have. And with smaller marketing budgets, thanks to the financial downturn, companies are turning to digital to meet their marketing needs.

Mostly, they are reviewing their website, asking:

- Does my website represent the future of my company (or the past)?
- Is it obvious that my site was last designed a few years ago?
- With all the advances in the area of usability, is my site, frankly, a pain to navigate?
- Is my current website from a 'templated' company (not a unique site designed specifically for my firm)?
- Do I have a CMS that's easy to use – or do I depend on HTML?
- Does my site convey the personality of my company – or mimic everyone else in industry?
- Is my site properly optimised for search



engines (both in build and copywriting)

- Does the copy on my site evoke an emotional response – or is it as dry as a technical whitepaper?

The truth is, everything about websites has changed at a breakneck pace over the past few years. So, chances are, if you haven't had a redesign and redevelopment of your site, you're not utilising your most important selling tool.

IN THE BEGINNING

Corporate websites began with the release of the first browser, Mosaic, in 1993.

"When I started in the industry, corporate websites were the domain of the very large, multi-nationals," says Abby Breakwell, CEO of Sydney-based web company, Digital Garden. "They were limited in their functionality, but cost any-

where up to \$500,000.00!"

In the early days, web companies were more interested in the technical than the design. Then, graphic designers discovered the medium, and websites became the new domain.

The first 'all singing, all dancing' websites came in 1996 from, predictably, rivals Coca-Cola and Pepsi. Games, animated spinning logos, 3D and streaming audio were all revolutionary.

"Websites were still a new phenomenon then," says Abby. "And because it was a designers dream, in time it became a bit too 'look at me', and not enough 'here's what we can do for you.'"

Around 1997, the notion of 'sticky sites' was all the rage. As David Siegel, author of **Creating Killer Websites** said back then, "You must welcome them and make them feel at home in your site... sites

pull visitors through by tantalizing them with something exciting on every page."

There have been many phases of websites to date. 'All Flash' sites soon became SEO unfriendly. Music and sound effects quickly became annoying. Fade to 2009.

WEBSITES TODAY

"Put simply, websites are a window into your company," says Abby Breakwell.

"Today, corporate websites should be all about the visitor, not the company."

Websites should allow a two-way dialogue with customers. Although the technical term is 'interactive', there is also one important aspect of a website that more smart companies are demanding – creative strategy.

"Websites aren't just static anymore" says Abby. "Nor are they just 'words and pictures'. We recommend to every single one of our customers – especially SMEs – that they allow our strategic partners, Highway 101, to ensure that their sites are built on the foundations of a strong marketing and creative strategy."

So ask yourself – is your website working for you? If you invest in one medium this year, the smart money is on making your site sell.

Highway 101 – walking the walk, talking the talk

UPDATE

It's funny, but in an imperfect world, it's almost impossible to find a marketing related business that isn't the best of the best. Modesty isn't an industry forte really, so it's probably hard to choose between 'THE most awarded creative hotshop', 'the global digital specialists', 'the social media experts', 'the best online agency', 'the world's first cross discipline creative company' or, heaven forbid, that ad agency that still calls itself a 'advertising agency' – just so last year.

So, with this in mind, Highway 101 would like to announce that we want to avoid making any grandiose claims. We're a small, very experienced team that loves solving the everyday challenges that our clients bring to us, including finding new ways to make small(er) marketing budgets work harder than ever. Inevitably, that means we're spending a lot of time turning client websites into strategic, optimised selling tools and talking to evolving industries that are excited about new opportunities, despite the GFC.

We're also adapting to the changing world and have introduced new

It's all about changing fast to bring clients the expertise they need at an affordable cost.

disciplines, including the exciting new world of Social Media 101 (see article at left).

Words 101 is also a new division, devoted to copy-writing at any level a client desires, including business documents, brochures, annual reports, newsletters and websites.

The changing needs of clients is very much reflected in the amount of online strategy and writing we're involved in, which has also resulted in another new division – Websites 101.

From a Highway 101 perspective, 2009 has been a year of change. While that's always a challenge, for clients, consumers and us, it's exciting, too. It keeps everyone on their toes, which has to be a good thing.

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Social Media 101 – the business basics

COMMENT

Dana Minter

Social Media. Whether or not it's right for your company, it's not going to go away. The trend towards online marketing continues to grow – and Social Media is already a legitimate marketing strategy.

SOCIAL MEDIA 101

So, what exactly is Social Media? Put simply, it's the online sharing of information, news and opinions.

These connections could be made via internet forms, blogs, podcasts, video posts, email and text/SMS messaging to name a few.

While most people have heard of these platforms,

many are confused. And that's understandable. It's not their job to dissect the ins and outs of Social Media – it's ours.

So, in a nutshell, here are the basics for business:

- **Facebook.** More companies are creating Facebook pages – they can connect with the over 175 million (and growing) active users. If you're a law firm, you might dismiss Facebook. However, if you take Graduate Recruitment and staff retention seriously, look into it.
- **Blogs.** Business blogs can establish your company as thought leaders. "No one listens anymore to sanitized

marketing messages," says Debbie Weil, publisher of WordBiz Report. "If you find the right person in your organization to 'blog' about your products or services you'll brand your company as authentic and knowledgeable."

- **Twitter.** Don't dismiss Twitter – right now, a competitor of yours is on Twitter and building relationships with potential clients. In 6 months time, they'll have the sale, not you.
- **YouTube and Podcasts.** Remember when you needed to have years of experience to be invited to talk to an Open

Forum about your area of expertise? Not any more. Your peers, rivals, existing and potential customers can listen to your words of wisdom online, any time.

BEYOND THE BASICS

These are just a few of the exciting opportunities that await those who are willing to establish themselves as thought leaders.

Make no mistake, Social Media is here to stay. It might take 6-12 months before a company begins to see a return in this area.

Can you afford to fall behind, when all it takes is the willingness to invest time, commitment – and only a small budget?

<http://www.makeyourwebsitereallywork.com.au>

Getting Started Latest Headlines

The most essential element of any website is the one that's usually missing – a marketing strategy. That's why we start by establishing your strategy before we develop a creative concept that's unique to your business. • Only then will we design your site, craft headlines and copy, build in SEO, and produce a website that really WORKS for you.

Websites 101 | T: (02) 9380 4911 | info@websites101.com.au | www.websites101.com.au