



Executive Forum 2007 Talking Points

1. Brand Development and Integrated Marketing

- What role does branding play in your business?
- Just what does “branding” mean for a multi-channel direct marketing business? Does it differ from a traditional retail-based business or a packaged goods business?
- Can brand development help grow your business faster?
- What specific objectives does your company have in the area of brand development and enhancement?
 - *Gains in market share?*
 - *Lower customer acquisition costs?*
 - *Customer Lifetime Value enhancement?*
 - *Other?*
- Which of these objectives is most important to your company?
- Does your company set aside a specific budget for brand development and enhancement programs?
- What is your definition for success in these efforts? What should it be?
- Does the definition of success differ among channels? Among media?
- What metrics do you use to measure the success of these efforts?
- What specific brand development and enhancement strategies are you implementing for your business?
- How do brand development strategies differ among channels within a given business?
- What is the relationship between branding and merchandising in your business?
 - *Do brand requirements dictate your merchandise selection?*
 - *Vice versa?*
- What role does branding play in your creative development?
- How does your company integrate branding objectives into your direct marketing programs?
- Do brand development and enhancement strategies change your traditional online and offline direct marketing initiatives?

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- Can brand development activities be implemented without “breaking the bank?”

2. Online Marketing - Web Development; Search, Email

A. General

- What was your company's most successful online program in 2006? Least successful?
- Has this changed from prior years?
- Has web marketing productivity at your company improved over the past 12 months? In what areas?
- Is your online business still growing?
- What's driving the growth in your online business?
- What are the major issues for your company's online marketing programs? How do you plan to address them?
- What is your company's number one online objective for 2007?
- What will be your company's number one online marketing initiative for 2007?
- What's the next “Big Thing” in online marketing?
- 14 requirements for web site to business systems integration
- How much self serve function will you provide? How does it effect Customer Contact Center operations?
- Build, buy and on-demand options for your web platform

B. Web Design and Development

- Internal Site Search
- Search Engine Optimization (Organic Search)

C. Search Marketing

- Is your Paid Search marketing budget increasing? Decreasing?
- Is productivity increasing? Decreasing?
- What strategies have been most successful for your company?
- How big are the opportunities beyond Google and Yahoo?
- What about buying brand terms?
- Have your financial objectives for Paid Search marketing changed in 2006? Will they change in 2007?

D. Email Marketing

- How has your strategy for email marketing changed year over year?
- Who is responsible for email marketing in your organization?
- Do you look at your email campaign results differently this year than you did last year?
- Are you segmenting your email file and deploying more targeted

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- campaigns to specific segments?
- Are you evaluating your email campaigns based on the source of names? Paid Search? Affiliate Marketing? Catalog Customer? Retail Customer?
- What % of phone purchasers give an email address? Mail purchasers?
- How do you manage changes in email addresses? Online? Phone?
- Do you provide the option of email confirmation of shipping on all orders?
- Are you promoting merchandise on your email order confirmations?
- Are you offering outside companies an opportunity to tag along on your emails?
- Are you tagging along on others email confirmations? Who manages this for you?
- Do you utilize promotional devices to encourage consumers to order via the web instead of the phone? If so, which promotions are you using?
- Do you send the same bounce-back catalog to both online and offline purchasers?
- Do you use the same promotions for your email campaigns as the most current catalog drop or retail offer??
- Do you have different email offers based on customer activity?
- Do you resend emails to those who have opened and didn't buy?
- What marketing opportunities do you offer on your site's order confirmation page?
- Do you send out emails that correspond to your catalog or retail offers (of the same time frame)?
- How many email addresses do you have in Total? By segment?
- How often do you send email campaigns per month? Do you cross-promote if you have multiple titles?
- What are your sales/email?

E. Other Online Marketing Media

- Do you have an affiliate marketing program? If so are you managing this In-house or outsourcing?
- Have you tested renting targeted, opt-In email names?
- Do you participate in an online co-registration program either as an advertiser or a website participant? What kind of success have you seen from this?
- Are you participating in any shopping portals? Which have been the most successful for you?
- Do you manage the shopping portals in house?
- Have you done any type of banner advertising? If so, what was the promotion? What was the outcome?

3. The Changing Role of Offline Marketing

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- What offline marketing media did your company use in 2006?
 - *Direct Mail Catalogs?*
 - *Other Direct Mail?*
 - *Insert Media?*
 - *Space Advertising?*
 - *Radio? DRTV?*
- How has this changed from prior years?
- What new offline media strategies are in your company's plans for 2007?
- What role does catalog advertising play in your company's overall marketing program?
- Have you measured the online impact of your catalogs? How?
- How accurate are catalog/web match-backs in measuring cross-channel impact?
- What other tools are available to increase the accuracy of cross-channel measurement?
- Have you measured relative Lifetime Value of online vs. offline-acquired customers?
- What role will offline direct advertising play in your business in the future?
 - *Direct Customer Acquisition?*
 - *Customer Retention and Development?*
 - *Brand development and enhancement?*
- How do you define success in your offline marketing programs? Has this definition changed over the past few years?
- What changes are you making to your circulation strategies?
 - *Customer*
 - *Prospecting*
- Does your company's catalog play a specific role in your overall branding activities?
- Do you set aside a budget specifically for this objective? Should you?

4. Operations & Customer Service

A. Are your operations a competitive advantage?

- What is your company's single most important operational priority for 2007?
- How has the increase in web business impacted your company's operations and logistics systems?
- How well does operations deliver on the promises of marketing and merchandising?

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- How efficient are your operations? An update on Customer Contact Center, Fulfillment and Inventory Management benchmarks, service levels and cost per contact, call and order
- What are other companies doing to recruit and manage for the seasonal peaks?

B. How are you developing your multichannel business?

- Customer has multiple touch points to peruse, purchase, return and get information about your company and its products. How are you providing consistent customer service across channels?
- How to develop a multi-channel inventory strategy to optimize inventory requirements by channel and serve the customer better
- If you're in retail, are you capturing customer names and purchase information so you can promote to multi-channel customers?
- How is your management implementing cross channel functions for:
 - *Inventory management decisions*
 - *Item pricing (study of 25 retail/direct companies)*
 - *Direct orders picked in stores and shipped directly to the customer or the customer picks up at store (Circuit City is set to do \$1 billion annually)*
 - *Systems which help you increase customer service and control for vendor drop ship products*
 - *Taking returns in any channel and through reverse logistics (returns)*
 - *Developing an IT strategy to implement your systems*
- The systems integration options – to bring together disparate systems together (both legacy and commercial systems on a variety of platforms)
 - *Service Oriented Architecture (SOA)*
 - *Integration layers*
- 10 best practices to implement and gain fulfillment cost reductions, increase service levels and decrease inventory.
- 50 great ways to save money. What has worked for you in the past year?

C. To serve the Internet customer better, how are you transforming your Customer Contact Center? What are the trends?

- “Do more with less”?
- Moving from a cost center to a revenue center
- How is Internet changing your service levels, staffing, etc.?

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- Motivation, incentives and other people topics
- Contact Center expanded into a mini IT help desk to service the customer (Internet browsers, search engine, ISP and instant messaging knowledge)
- Critiquing the best feature, function and community that the web has to offer. What can we learn from them?

D. Companies are finding it's not enough to provide just good customer service. How can you put the WOW factor back in customer service?

- Improving communication with the customer
- 7 commandments to regain a competitive advantage