Maximizing Marketing ROI with Multichannel

Blending print and digital allows marketers to connect with customers in their channel of choice.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rare is the friendly corner store owner who can recall the names of his customers and their children. These days, consumers purchase products and services across a wide array of channels. They may flip through the pages of a print catalog, browse a brand’s website after clicking through an email, gloss over a direct mailer, or snap a QR code. But without the luxury of a personal relationship, today’s marketers need to be where their customers are if they wish to capture their attention and incite them to action.

This is the role of an integrated, cross-media campaign. By diversifying and leveraging multiple channels, from print to digital communications, marketers can better reach customers with consistent, relevant messages when and where they’re most likely to be impactful.

“Cross-media communications is the ability to reach the target audience through multiple media channels, and interact with individuals using consistent messages that are individually relevant in content, presentation, timeliness, and channel,” says Jacob Aizikowitz, president of XMPi.

But timely, targeted one-to-one communications aren’t just about catering to consumers’ preferred communication channels. Rather, delivering the right message, through the right medium, to the right customers, at the right moment can create a significant competitive advantage. Better yet, when marketers combine channels, such as linking an email initiative to a direct mail piece, an integrated campaign, especially when creatively compelling, can be a force multiplier, increasing the probability of a payoff.

In fact, according to a report from consulting firm InfoTrends, cross-media campaigns can significantly increase return on investment. When used together print and Web channels can boost ROI by 19%; print and email by 28%; and print, Web, email, and mobile by 34%. What’s more, many consumers expect disparate channels to overlap; for example, a direct mail piece featuring digital elements such as a QR code.

However, while channel convergence can greatly increase the likelihood of realizing an ROI, many marketers struggle to effectively communicate across multiple channels. That’s because many in the industry oversimplify the task of creating one-on-one, cross-media communication campaigns. Some resort to point solutions that often don’t integrate well. Others turn to trivial, per-personalized content or design. Worse, some come up against organizational silos and abandon their cross-media strategies altogether. The result: a failure to deliver the expected marketing benefits of a holistic, cross-media campaign.

THE PATH TO PERSONALIZED COMMUNICATION TOUCHPOINTS

Fortunately, there are ways for marketers to effectively deliver content through multiple channels, whether relying on the Web, email, extranets, or print. By following these six simple steps, marketers can create campaigns that are innovative for each media channel while delivering a consistent message across multiple channels for the greatest ROI possible. Here’s how.

1. Expand your communication style with interactivity.

Maximizing the value of a cross-media campaign takes more than simply a mix of print, email, Web, and mobile media. Rather, the goal for marketers must be to engage customers in conversations—interactive communications that tell them you know them—and present them with data-driven offers they’re certain to appreciate. Suddenly, fleeting moments can become conversational interactions that extend beyond outbound channels to traverse time and touchpoints for more personalized, interactive communication. Consider the Winston-Salem Dash minor league baseball team, which personalized its season ticket booklets and gift vouchers for season ticket holders. Tickets included photos relevant to fans’ interests and a barcode that allows ticket holders to know whether clients or friends use the tickets they’re given. Additionally, the tickets include season ticket holders’ account numbers, so stadium staff can identify these high-value customers and treat them accordingly.

2. Create a consistent message.

Consumer expectations are higher than ever. No longer is a customer willing to accept a highly targeted direct mail piece one day and then a mass email the next from the very same brand. Rather, these days, consumers demand a personalized, targeted, consistent message, regardless of communication channel. To accomplish this, marketers must develop clear objectives from the start, as well as how they plan to blend channels to reach those goals. Once these objectives have been established, the next step is to determine customers’ preferred communication channels. Then it’s time to design a campaign that has a consistent look, feel, and tone of voice across all points of customer engagement.

It’s a tall order, but one that’s made significantly easier with a robust database that marketers can mine for information on customer preferences and purchasing history. By relying on that core data source for all campaigns, marketers can ensure the delivery of a truly consistent message that reflects the specific messaging, offers, and imagery that are most likely to entice consumers, time and time again.
3. Get up close with personalization.

With more and more consumers expecting personalized offers, items like static direct mailers, letters, and brochures are more likely to generate waste than revenue. Nor are add-on incentives like coupons and contests likely to generate much marketing buzz. Today, the goal is to leverage multiple sources of data—such as demographics, social behavior, and purchase history—to build that core database and then create highly personalized offers based on a consumer’s unique interests.

By selecting and catering to a target audience through personalized communication across multiple channels, marketers can significantly increase the return on a campaign.

In fact, on average, personalized marketing strategies are 10 to 50 times more effective than those that aren’t personalized. Today, more and more people expect one-to-one communications that recognize their individual preferences and cater to their specific likes and dislikes. Fail to create a customized campaign and chances are, they’ll find a company that does.

In fact, personalization has proven itself to be such a critical part of any cross-media campaign that many marketers are taking advantage of “hyper-personalization”—strategies that rely on carefully collected data to produce perfectly timing and targeted campaigns. Consider, for example, a postcard featuring a customer’s demonstrated color preferences, an email link to a prefilled application that simply requires a customer’s quick review for submission, or a website advertising a product that complements a customer’s previous purchases. Through hyper-personalization across multiple channels, marketers can convert bits and bytes into highly profitable marketing campaigns.

4. Collaborate across channels.

Sometimes it takes a village to create a highly effective marketing campaign. Depending on the size of an organization, any number of people can be responsible for a project’s brand, creative, content, and strategic direction. What’s more, many marketers call upon the services of third-party providers, such as outside agencies, print service providers, and Web services firms for assistance. Together, these disparate parties can create an entire ecosystem of moving parts and players—too often a messy hodgepodge of email files, project iterations, and miscommunications. Documents get misplaced, wires become crossed, and campaigns can experience delays that can wind up costing a company both time and money.

To prevent such mishaps, it’s critical that a campaign’s key players understand that they are each one part of a whole that must work in sync to be effective. Only when everyone involved is informed and aligned on how a campaign works and its primary objectives, without

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5 Simple Steps to Marketing Success

Marketers don’t need the vast resources of a worldwide marketing team to create compelling one-to-one, multi-channel campaigns. These few simple rules for communicating across channels will help guide them to success.

- Gather and mine data to create targeted and personalized messages, strengthening the company’s most valuable client/customer relationships.
- Expand the organization’s marketing reach by embracing print, email, Web, and mobile, integrated all in one campaign.
- Provide a positive, holistic customer experience across all touchpoints, making sure to develop a relevant dialog.
- Customize campaigns by using variable data in highly creative ways with images, graphics, and messages to capture target customers’ attention.
- Choose a modular and scalable one-to-one software suite that can satisfy ever-evolving marketing needs.

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The Future of Cross-Media Marketing

Cross-Media Direct Marketing Solutions’ Deliverables Forecast

any gaps in knowledge, can a cross-channel campaign truly run smoothly and effectively.

Campaign collaboration software significantly helps ease this process. For starters, the technology allows multiple players to diagram a campaign, share campaign materials, monitor progress, swap ideas in real time, and observe how a campaign is growing and evolving from concept to execution.

“Collaboration software like XMPie Circle can serve as a central hub where everyone has visibility into what’s happening in a campaign,” says Judy Berlin, XMPie’s VP of marketing. “Transparency like that is an essential element when you’re trying to conduct a campaign efficiently.”

Even more important, by keeping tabs on each stage of a campaign, marketers can more accurately account for costs and determine ROI.

A one-to-one, cross-media campaign is only as effective as the processes supporting it. That’s all the more reason to ensure that the data being leveraged in a project is of the highest quality. Erroneous addresses, out-of-date information, poorly vetted customer preferences, and the like can all stand in the way of designing an accurately targeted campaign. However, data testing and validation processes can ensure that only correct information is being used to customize direct mail pieces and deliver targeted digital communications and offers.

Another critical process that’s key to cross-media marketing success is building a precise understanding of their customers. By selecting communication channels their customers prefer, crafting custom messages for target audiences, and tailoring these messages for specific channels, marketers can build messaging that makes recipients feel unique and that their needs are understood.

The next indispensable process is ensuring that all the elements of a campaign are working together. The right software can help marketers keep track of their campaigns and keep them in sync, as well as measure the effectiveness of every mail piece, email, Web page, social media post, and video. This vital knowledge can help establish which marketing strategies are worthy of further investment, and which ones should be replaced with more cost-effective or impactful ones. Even better is the ability to be able to track these insights in real time, allowing marketers to make modifications on the fly and reshape future marketing endeavors sooner rather than later.

And finally, before a campaign is launched to a full recipient list, it’s often useful to test different messages and creative directions to a subset of the population. This approach allows campaign elements to be measured and modified to ensure the greatest ROI possible when a campaign goes live and is delivered to the entire audience.

6. Make the most of tools and technologies.
A one-to-one, cross-media campaign is little more than an idea without the right set of tools and technologies to bring it to fruition. In fact, powerful software can help marketers execute personalized campaigns that deliver a consistent message and gain the maximum ROI regardless of communication channel. Print, Web, video, email—even supported by state-of-the-art software tools, these channels can be transformed into avenues for customer service, branding, and revenue generation.

For example, XMPie Circle helps marketers document brainstorming sessions, price campaigns, and work with creative agencies using state-of-the-art storyboarding technology. By acting as a highly visual, centralized hub, XMPie Circle provides a holistic view of a one-to-one, multitouch, multichannel campaign, ensuring greater efficiency, faster time to market, smoother delivery, and greater ROI.

Additionally, XMPie PersonalEffect Analytics is designed to allow marketers to manage one-to-one, cross-media marketing campaigns by tracking each phase of a project. The solution serves as a central source for building communications, eliminating silos that develop from managing software programs for each individual channel. The result is a data-infused tool that helps ensure accuracy and a cohesive message across all channels while decreasing production time.

These days, lead nurturing—whether customers or prospects—through scheduled and ongoing drip campaigns is a trend that is increasing in importance. Marketers need to keep customers and prospects engaged and moving steadily forward through the marketing funnel to conversion. Marketing automation like Circle can facilitate this process, helping marketers to connect with customers and prospects at the right moment with the right content, automatically.

CONCLUSION
Using the power of technology to build and support integrated, cross-media campaigns, marketers can re-create the experience of the mom-and-pop shop on a broader scale, emulating that type of personal relationship by delivering relevant, timely communications consistently across customers’ preferred channels.

Marketers should use those communications not just to present offers, but also to engage customers in conversations, creating a more interactive experience that demonstrates that a brand knows and appreciates it customers. A robust database can enable this. It should include data like customer preferences, social behavior, and purchase history and serve as the data source for all campaigns to ensure consistent messaging, correctly targeted offers, and relevant imagery—items that are most likely to drive customers to action. Adding elements to create hyper-personalization of cross-media marketing campaigns will increase their effectiveness.

But it’s more than data that must be united to provide consistency across channels. Marketing teams and their partners must break down silos and build a collaborative environment by ensuring that all parties understand and are aligned around campaign goals. This includes using processes like testing to drive campaign success and creating an environment that allows for continuous improvement.

Marketers who take this cohesive approach will end their struggle to effectively communicate across multiple channels. With the right data, processes, and technology, they can deliver compelling multi-channel marketing campaigns that captivate customers and deliver substantial ROI.