

A VIEW FROM THE TOP

Marketing professionals from winning companies share their best practices and strategies.

by Carol Katarsky

EFFECTIVELY USING INTEGRATED promotional campaigns is not as simple as just having print and digital versions of the same content. Besides aligning content across formats, marketers also have to fine-tune that content based on often-subtle differences in the audience, as well as deciding which platforms should be used and how best to leverage them.

The ability to reach customers through the digital platform of their preference is a huge benefit of integrated campaigns. But digital marketing is a fast-evolving field, and what worked last year—or even a few months ago—may be waning by the time the next campaign launches.

Jim Dunn, executive vice president of Warshauer Electric Supply, Tinton Falls, N.J., noted that mobile marketing will play a bigger role—and change—how integrated campaigns treat their digital portions.

“As we progress on a digital campaign, it becomes ‘less is more,’” he explained. “Digitally, the vast majority will be done on smartphones and, to a

lesser degree, tablets. It’s vital [for a campaign] to be mobile optimized.

“But the digital world is so convoluted and there are so many outlets, [it’s difficult] to make sure you hit

them all and have it reflect the unique flavor of each platform,” he added. “It’s a moving target just to keep up with what the platform of choice is at the moment.”

One strategy Evan Berglund, a senior partner at Gonzberg Agency, recommended for making sure the right content is on the right platform—and maximizing ROI in the process—is to essentially reverse-engineer the purchase process.

“Examine the purchase process backward—starting with how the actual purchase is made, then moving back to the phase of the process that involves evaluation and forming intent, then the phase in which the prospect does research, and then on to the beginning of the process where prospects start to feel the need,” Berglund explained.

“The final examination of the process should be what is going on postpurchase, as repeat business is

an important aspect of most B2B relationships.” The more marketing can learn about how users evaluate information at each stage, the more narrowly they can target the information a prospective buyer is looking for to the platform they’re using at that stage.

A Maze of Metrics

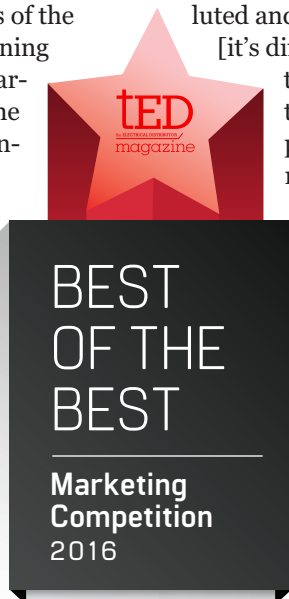
Integrated campaigns have another hidden challenge: It is not always easy to determine the ROI of a campaign or to know which portion of the campaign delivered which results.

“What is the ROI? That’s the question I always get asked,” said Dunn. “It can be hard to quantify. A quick poll on the web can be done, but it’s hard to do for some other campaigns. We try to get as much data as we can, but most of the time it’s very difficult. When we’re doing things over so many different types of media, we can’t always know which one, if any, brought in more business.”

Dunn noted that the lack of transparency can keep companies, especially smaller ones, from more fully embracing integrated campaigns. “But for us, we know it works and we need to do it or else we’ll be missing the boat,” he said. “Don’t wait for perfect conditions and perfect insight into how it worked.”

“With analytics comes the expectation that any initiative should be constantly monitored, evaluated, and—when needed—altered for one that may be more effective,” said Jennifer Green-Moneta, executive vice president and managing partner at the Burns360 agency. “And while technology exists that can now track, analyze, and report on what initiatives are working—and not working—with each of those channels, our job is harder than ever.”

To get the most from integrated



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campaigns and stay on top of their added complexities, Dunn recommended having someone in the company who is solely focused on them. “It’s critical to have people like that working on them full time or it’s a waste of time,” he noted. “It can’t be something that someone is doing part time while he or she also manages other projects.”

An Evolving Tool

For all their value, however, integrated campaigns are not getting easier to execute. Green-Moneta noted that the multichannel approach provides an opportunity to tailor the customer’s experience for every touch point.

“This is good news, but it also makes the process more complicated,” she said. “For example, in the past, I was able to use my experience and understanding of an industry to make recommendations for a client’s marketing program. And while my years of experience still matter, I am finding that I can no longer recommend a course of action without having a better understanding of the buyers my clients are trying to reach.”

She noted that integrated campaigns require a deeper dive into the persona of the customer:

“What channels do they use for research? How long is their buying cycle? What are their daily pain points? How many decision makers are involved in the final purchase process? What are their interests outside of work?” she asked. The answers can be as simple as not spending resources on a Facebook page if the majority of customers prefer, say, LinkedIn or Twitter, or providing core content—such as discovering customers becoming more concerned about late deliveries and responding with content that positions a company’s superior logistics. ■

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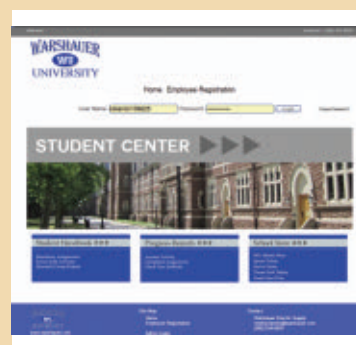
2016 WINNING ENTRIES

Integrated Promotional Campaign

The following companies were selected for outstanding marketing campaigns composed of three to eight complementary components used to promote the same product or service. The campaigns either used entirely traditional (paper-based) media or combined both traditional and digital media.



EECO, Utility Electrical Storeroom Management



Warshawer Electric Supply, Warshawer University

NSi, Year of the Twist



Summit Electric Supply, Careers & Recruiting



Southwire, Phases of the Job

