

Welcome to IF Consulting's weekly e-mail newsletter

February 21, 2003

Our regular email tackles the topical issues that surround all marketing channels and their underlying strategies.

This newsletter is also available as a PDF on our Website (<http://www.i-f.com/E-comLinks02.htm>) if you want to download a version for your hard copy file.

The challenge of integrating multiple marketing channels

The challenge faced by any commercial enterprise is in managing the multiple marketing channels available. The ways in which large enterprises are now interfacing with customers include: physical showrooms, Internet storefronts, interactive online customer support, printed catalogs and telephone call centers. Customers value, and have come to expect, a seamless experience between all of these multiple front ends.

To achieve seamless integration, companies must approach this challenge from both technological and business perspectives. Incorporating an effective online channel in tough economic times is not easy – especially when faced with the legacy of existing IT systems.

A well thought out and incremental strategy to integrating online and offline channels is advised. Although there are many hurdles to conquer when adapting existing systems to suit a multi-channel strategy, comprehensive review and strategy can lead to highly efficient improvements.

<http://www.ecommercetimes.com/perl/story/20750.html>

IF Comment

The old saying, "The more things change, the more they stay the same" rings true for companies who decide to use the Internet as a marketing channel.

If we think back to the introduction of computers, companies either changed from manual to computerized systems with reckless abandon, or alternatively, saw little benefit and were very slow to adopt new age computing technology.

Today, information travels at the speed of light and new innovations are announced daily with a seeming imperative that if new technology is not adopted immediately, an organization is woefully behind the times.

Although we are starting to hear of enterprises successfully using online channels, anecdotal evidence indicates far more websites fail than succeed.

Any online channel not run 100% in parallel with existing marketing channels is doomed to failure. In developing a new online marketing channel, speed is not of the essence - planning and accuracy is.

As the E-Commerce Times article says, "Understand your goals before you act"



Marketing Channel
Strategy Consultants
Maximizing shareholder value
through creating the best route
to market

IF Asia Pacific Pty Ltd
An International IF Company
ABN 38 970 704 536

390 St Kilda Road Melbourne
Victoria 3004 Australia
Telephone +61 3 9867 8822
Facsimile +61 3 9866 3969

email channels@if.com
www.i-f.com

USA
Europe
Australia
Latin America

Snippets

Following a South African Competition Tribunal ruling late January, Durban companies can no longer dictate a minimum price to their distributors or franchisees. The ruling was made when the Competition Tribunal found automotive group Federal Mogul Aftermarket guilty of anticompetitive behavior. Federal Mogul had penalized a distributor for selling goods below its established minimum price.

<http://www.bday.co.za/bday/content/direct/1,3523,1274403-6078-0,00.html>

TNT Express Worldwide (Thailand) plans to take on the state postal operator with the launch of around-the-clock domestic and international express document delivery services at 7-Eleven convenience stores. Called EZY Express, the service will be carried out by a joint venture with CP Seven Eleven Plc, and targets convenience store customers, small and medium-sized business operators, expatriates, tourists and students.

http://www.bangkokpost.com/170103_Business/17Jan2003_biz73.html

Lexus, the maker of luxury cars, has developed a web site built on the online advertising dictum: make yourself useful. Although the *Luxury for Living* site contains links to Lexus advertisements, it is dominated by lifestyle information including luxury hotels, high-technology homes and farmers' markets. Web sites, such as the Lexus one, are responding to an increasing disdain for online advertising clutter and intrusion, typical of the widely despised pop-up ads

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/11/business/media/11ADCO.html?th> (free registration required)

Share the Knowledge.

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IF Consulting publishes "Our View", a quarterly review of topical marketing channel issues. Samples are available on our website. To receive "Our View", please return this email with your address details.

To unsubscribe, please reply with "unsubscribe" AND a copy of the email address to be removed.

IF Consulting is a leading international marketing channel strategy consulting firm with over 30 years experience in a vast number of industry sectors. See our website for further information.

<http://www.i-f.com>