



GIBBS & SOELL

Insight

FOR MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS

February 2008

Capitalizing on a Transforming Media Landscape

According to a new report from Forrester Research, increasing online marketing is the top spending priority this year for business-to-business marketers. It's not just a priority, but it is the top priority.

As new media transform the business information landscape, we all face an exponentially larger and more competitive universe in which to tell our stories, create buzz, build loyalty and capture revenue.

To that end, this month's G&S *Insight* includes excerpts provided by Gibbs & Soell for the American Business Media's *Business Media Matters* January 2008 State of the Industry e-newsletter. This discussion underscores the need to better understand and, ultimately, capitalize on this changing media landscape.

The New Media Effect

For most companies, it is no longer a question of whether to integrate new media into their offering, but to what extent?

On the other hand, new technology isn't going to kill older ways of doing things. The key is how to marry the two, adapt offerings and find value.

Cases in point: Radio did not kill newspapers and television did not kill radio. Each of these advances in information delivery forced the other media to adapt in order to stay viable. All are examples of

evolution, not revolution, and the Internet's effect is no different.

The focus for marketers should be on finding the right balance to integrate online and offline media in ways that recognize the Web as a separate medium and bolster more traditional (print) products.

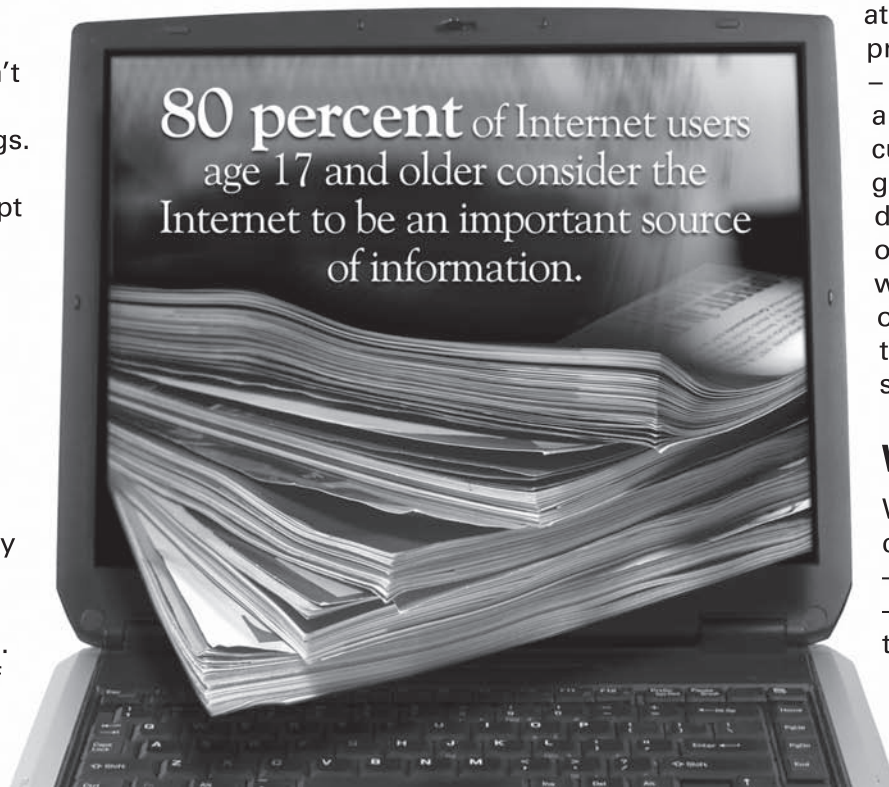
For business-to-business marketers, industry-specific media are still the most effective means of reaching and influencing key decision makers, according to an October 2007 Forrester Research report. Why? These media deliver objectivity, trust, and content that is both relevant to their business and useful for making purchase decisions.

So, while there has been a noticeable shift of marketing and advertising dollars to online media, it is important to realize that there is no one-size-fits-all solution for companies and their brands.

There's a variety of factors that need to be evaluated when integrating print and online media – not the least of which are how your target customers prefer to get their information delivered, what types of information they want to receive, how often they want it, and to what degree of personalization.

Why Integrate?

When making purchasing decisions – personal or business – most people prefer to access information via multiple chan-



nels, with online gaining in prominence.

According to The Center for the Digital Future at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication, the number of hours U.S. adults spend online has risen to an average of 15.3 per week, and 80 percent of Internet users age 17 and older consider the Internet to be an important source of information – compared with a 63 percent rating for newspapers.

However, although online media and information resources have become the norm for how a majority of consumers gather data and make their purchasing decisions, print media are hardly dead.

And, while advertising and subscription rates for many publications have taken a hit of late, print continues to be a dominant force.

Even more ironic, as information gathering goes digital, the need for face-to-face interaction holds newfound value. That's why many conferences and seminars are seeing dramatic gains in attendance.

As marketers prioritize their plans for 2008, there's a number of trends worth considering:


- **Trusted "Sourcing"** – Search vs. site is an interesting dynamic. Traditionally, "search" has been king. Hence, the recent emphasis on search engine optimization for everything from corporate Web sites to press releases. The irony is that as more and more content emerges, and more bloggers saturate the Web, the trust value of established media has risen. Consider the current U.S. presidential primary elections: It's the difference between doing a Google search for "politics" or going directly to a major news

site, like *CNN*, to get the latest information on all the candidates. In the end, what you receive is only valuable if it is from a trusted, credible source.

- **User-Driven Content** – Internet users want it all ... the most relevant information, when they want it, where they want it, and how they want it. As the success of Google and Yahoo alerts, RSS feeds and the various news aggregators has proven, the power is in the hands of the user. If you don't provide it, someone else will. If you don't make it engaging, someone else will. The pressure is always on to better serve the user.
- **Video** – In today's visually oriented world, adding a face, action or interesting graphic makes for a more memorable user experience. Yet, just because you can do it doesn't mean you should. Use video and multimedia applications when and where appropriate.
- **Online Communities** – Online communities are more than Second Life, Facebook and MySpace. They are places where members go to share common interests, hobbies or professional issues. According to USC's Center for the Digital Future, 15 percent of Internet users are members of an online community, which is more than double the percentage from just three years ago. Wherever the masses go, marketing dollars are sure to follow.

Engage your Audiences

So what is the best way to engage your audience? Unfortunately, there is no one magic formula. It really is all about being creative and targeting differentiated content to your audience in a way that delivers a tangible advantage.

Perhaps the most important lesson learned during this new media transformation is that the changing media matrix puts more pressure on all of us to develop robust, relevant and targeted information. For savvy marketers, though, that presents a world of opportunities! 

Get Insight by E-mail

If you would like to receive this newsletter via an HTML e-mail instead of standard postal service, please send your name and e-mail address to us at gsinsight@gibbs-soell.com.

Thank you.

G&S Contact Information

Cos Mallozzi

President and CEO

+1 212 697 2600

cmallozzi@gibbs-soell.com

New York

Luke Lambert +1 212 697 2600

llambert@gibbs-soell.com

Chicago

Jeff Altheide +1 847 519 9150

jaltheide@gibbs-soell.com

Raleigh

Bob Bowman +1 919 870 5718

bbowman@gibbs-soell.com

Zurich

Jill Allemang +41 (0) 44 205 5565

jallemang@gibbs-soell.com

China

James Huang +8610 6530 7781

james_huang@inhere.com.cn

Tokyo

Linnea Duvall +81 3 5561 2915

duvalll@cosmopr.co.jp

Latin America

Mayra Hernandez +1 954 730 7730

mayra@bitnergoodman.com



GIBBS & SOELL

Your business
is our *passion*.

www.gibbs-soell.com