

Jumpstart Your B2B Marketing

**A COLLECTION OF INSIGHTS
TO HELP WITH YOUR STRATEGY**



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ISBN 978-0-615-56192-9

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INTRODUCTION

Well, it's about that time of year where you need to start thinking about a plan for *next* year. And in case you've been sleeping, we're talking about 2012. Since we're currently in planning mode for a number of our clients, it only seemed fitting to share some of our approaches and factors to consider, in the hopes that it will help provide some food for thought. As you read through our very first e-book (which we are extremely excited about!), you might pick up on a recurring theme talked about in a lot of entries — customer insight. At Godfrey, we truly believe customer insight is at the heart of effective marketing programs.

You also may notice us throwing around the term *unification* a lot. That's because, as we move toward 2012, we're putting a lot of emphasis on the importance of having a unified strategy. Tactics are easy to implement, but it's the strategy that will really inform the messaging and how and where we're reaching people.

So take a look through our e-book. We've got contributions from our experts in a variety of areas. We hope their insight will spark some fresh, exciting and *relevant* ideas for your 2012 planning.



STRATEGY

1

Get Unified: Integrating Your B2B Marketing Communications

CHUCK MANNERS / JOE WEINLICK

Make customer insight the foundation of your program.

If you are like many of our clients, as well as many agencies, you've struggled with how to fully integrate digital and traditional marketing communications. More than a year ago, Godfrey embarked on an initiative to better integrate these disciplines. What we learned is that integration *per se* is fairly straightforward and, by and large, we were already there. The real issue is not *integration* but unification, and unified marketing goes well beyond astute combinations of digital and traditional program elements.

The way we've come to see it, unified marketing is centered on the B2B customer, with fresh, relevant insight that drives strategy. It's less about the current campaign and more about customer relationships and the lifecycle of those relationships. It's about creating and delivering customer-driven solutions with testing, measurement and analysis built into a continuous, closed-loop process. At bottom, it's about creating a competitive advantage through marketing to drive sales and growth.

Our suggestion? Before you finalize planning and tactics for the next year, take some time to evaluate your brand, talk to your customers and fine-tune your plans so that they become more unified.

A Decade of Transformation

In many ways, unification isn't something new. It is a return to what agencies have always done. The last decade has been one of rapid transformation for our industry — and the world. Those of you older than 40: Remember the days when you had to turn to the Yellow Pages if you wanted to find a company? When taking money out of the bank involved waiting in line when it was convenient for *the bank* to be open? Today, we take it for granted that anything we want is immediately available, at our fingertips. Need to replace a window? Figure out how to get to Tacoma? Hire an electrician? Figure out who that actor was in the movie you watched last night? Share a photo of the kids with the family? All are easily done on the Internet. And, with smartphones and tablets, we can do these things ANYWHERE.

Of course, if we can do these things, then so can our customers. Over the last decade, Godfrey rapidly developed expertise in an evolving set of new technologies, channels and techniques so that we could reach people as they adopted these new technologies. Engineers are going online to search specs? We are there. Developers are chatting on social media sites? Hey, we can do that too! Sales people want to demo products on an iPad? Cool! And wow — we can even track all of this activity? Sign me up.

And sign up we did. Over the past decade, Godfrey cultivated expertise in web and application development, user experience, online advertising, social media, web analytics, search engine marketing, online publishing ...

But What Is Unification, Anyway?

The challenge was that each new area of expertise required new team members who needed to be part of the process. If every campaign requires a web presence, then we'd better make sure that user experience architects, developers and digital designers are involved from the get-go. Cross-functional teams developed very successful integrated campaigns, but over time it became easier to focus on planning and integration than ideas.

Which leads us to unification. Consider a facilities manager or an architect. They aren't thinking, "Well, it's about 10:00 a.m. Time to do some social media." Magazines, online newspapers, blogs, Facebook, direct mail, phone conversations, email exchanges. These are just part of life. Their world is unified. Customers are plugged in all the time and they expect the



companies they work with to act in a similar manner. To take a cue from B2C, the mom who visits Pottery Barn expects to continue her experience online. And, Pottery Barn obliges. In fact, a sales person might pull up the Internet to help her order online if the store doesn't have the merchandise. We need to deliver to our customers the experiences and interaction they want, when they want it and to create a seamless experience across all media. That is unification.

“Go back to what good marketing and advertising has always been about — understanding the audience.”

I Get It. But How Do We Unify?

Unification is common sense, right? But, with the complexities of the sales cycle, busy customers with other things on their minds and the many moving parts of a company, an industry and the world, how do we become unified? Our recommendation is to go back to what good marketing and advertising has always been about — understanding the audience. And developing a sound strategy and big creative idea based on that understanding. It isn't enough to simply communicate across all mediums. We need to give people a reason to care. A reason to believe. This starts with insight. If we don't know what our customers care about, how can

we give them a reason to care? We need to understand them rationally AND emotionally so that we can engage and inspire them. Because they are no longer comparing their experiences to other B2B companies and the competition. They are comparing it to Apple, Nike, Target and other brands that are getting it right.

So at Godfrey, 2012 is a year to focus on deeper understanding of our audience and cultivating insight. From insight, we'll develop big ideas. And then — and only then — will we figure out the best media and channels to consistently bring those ideas alive.

We call this unification. It's the same thing we've always done. Only better. We hope you'll join us.

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