

Hyperintegration: planning the customer experience at Web 2.0 speeds

Web 2.0's dynamic media landscape is changing the expectations and behavior of B-to-B customers, driving dramatic changes in B-to-B marketing.

B-to-B audiences have been fragmented by the proliferation of new media. Business buyers now expect to control how they interact with marketers and how they access and use content. They want information quickly, at the touch of a mouse. And, they assume they can access almost everything a marketer has to offer anonymously, without identifying themselves. The new media have finally forced the issue, codifying one of marketing's golden rules into law. Now more than ever, the customer's in charge.

As a result, B-to-B marketers must create deeper, richer, and more compelling online experiences that anticipate this new behavior. Intensive campaigns must allow a prospect to move quickly and efficiently through all aspects of your offering and information. Any breaks in the chain, from initial exposure and possibly all the way to the purchase, can stop the process and may well drive the prospect to go elsewhere.

In short, traditional marketing communications is ready to go beyond the combination and coordination of message, media, and audience, and evolve to more

comprehensive program thinking. It's ready for hyperintegration.

Hyperintegration: shaping the user experience

Hyperintegration offers marketers the opportunity to plan and shape the user experience. This new potential arises from several critical abilities of the new media:

- Their complementary nature. Unlike the ad of the 1980s, which was expected (perhaps unrealistically) to achieve awareness, interest, desire, and action in a single document, today's new media each occupy a specific niche and fulfill very specialized functions.
- Their ability to be linked. Because search, e-mail, podcasting, and social media (to name just a few) live together on the electronic world of the Internet, a user can move within and among these media with just the click of a mouse. And, because they can be linked, there is an expectation that they will be and should be.
- Their trackability. Each click can be (and probably is) captured somewhere, somehow. And, thus, with the right record-keeping and analysis, we can know what people are doing, how they are reacting, and what tactics are working.

Because the new media are complementary, clickable, and

trackable, marketers now have a new opportunity: the ability to plan how the various media are used and what role they could play in a hypothetical selling process. The key is to anticipate each step in the user's experience, asking simply, "and then what?"

- A prospect sees the ad, and then what?
- They go to the web, and then what?
- They come to a landing page specially constructed for responses to the ad, and then what?
- They agree to receive future communications, and then what?

The new media have thus, magnified the power of integration, turbocharging the process of anticipating all those and then whats. Where it once took days or weeks to move a prospect from one level of involvement to another, it now takes a click. And, today's impatient customers and prospects will go as far as possible, as deep as you'll let them, as fast as they want to.

Hyperintegration gives marketers the opportunity to formulate a strategic program that tightly links all tactics – new media and old – into a planned customer experience that can be measured and improved continuously. It's about putting yourself in your reader's shoes, telling them a story that they

can relate to, and anticipating what they want to do next.

Hyperintegration: the whole is more than the sum of its parts

Integration has always assumed that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Hyperintegration energizes that strength by combining or coordinating marketing efforts

to produce returns that are larger than could be expected from the individual tactics done separately.

It requires customized, individualized plans for each program. But, more importantly, it requires the same for each user. If the plan is constructed well, they never have to ask what's next. You've anticipated their needs, thought

of everything. When they ask, "what's next?" the answer is right in front of them. That's the magic of hyperintegration: anticipating the needs of users, giving them what they want, allowing them to drive the marketing process, making the and then whats seamless, intuitive, and easy for the user. It's hard work, but it's the key to marketing success in a Web 2.0 world.

Some 2.0 User Scenarios...and their "and then what"

Description of User	Stage of the buying process	"And then what?" offer
Passive Unaware	Not aware of a need	Provide more information on the problem
Browsing Learner	Actively studying, seeking to stay current	Educate them about the technology
Active Explorer	Looking into problem	Demonstrate your market and/or applictaion experience
Solutions Seeker	Curious about how you can solve their problems	Show your relevant successes
Vendor Researcher	Investigating and qualifying vendors	Help them find the right product or service
Live Prospect	Engaged in vendor selection	Offer help in applying your technology
Transactional Buyer	Planning to buy	Support the sales process; possibly e-commerce
Prime Customer	Looking to maximize value of purchase	Show them other ways you can help; customized experience
Development Partner	Trying to build competitive advantage	Let them help you



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