DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLS

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‘P’ FROM PRODUCT WITHIN THE DIGITAL MARKETING MIX: E-MARKETING TOOLS

VIRAL MARKETING

DEFINITION

Viral marketing (also known as electronic word of mouth) can be defined as a strategy to empower individuals to quickly transmit commercial messages to others in such a way that the number of recipients of the message grows exponentially. We may call it auto-propagated commercial communication. The classical example regarding viral marketing is Hotmail.com, one of the earliest free web-mail services. Eighteen months after Microsoft launched it, the service counted on 12 million users thanks to the simple final words that appeared on every message each user sent: ‘Get your free and private e-mail at http://hotmail.com’.

IMPLEMENTATION

The main business advantage of this e-marketing tool is that once activated it does not require too much effort, since it’s the users themselves who keep it going. But in order to succeed trying to achieve this viral effect, a basic need has to be overwhelmed: finding the key appeal which propels the multiplying spread. Thus the name of the game in order to be successful when launching a viral marketing campaign is creativity; and there’s where you have to put your money by hiring the best agency your budget allows. But calm down, expenses won’t be huge: just think of 2006 parade hit by ‘El Koala’ in Spain who just uploaded the video with his song to YouTube; or, longer ago, of the film ‘The Blair witch project’ which gained its first notoriety thanks to the urban legend of it being a real recording which was spread through Internet forums. It’s not easy to give general recommendations so any company in any sector can create a successful viral ad, but if you are asking for a clue, here it goes: social content and networks can make the magic.

SUCCESS CASES

A jihadist-looking man steps out of a typical London townhouse wearing black sunglasses. He climbs into a Volkswagen Fox and drives past several blocks till he stops the car in front of a pub. He produces a detonating device, remains placid in a solemnity moment and activates it. A terrible blast follows but only within the car, which remains intact since no one outside it appears to have noticed the explosion. Fade in and you can read in white letters: ‘Polo. Small but tough’. You get the link to the video within an e-mail coming from a friend or any other trusted person (not spam) and you can not avoid resending it to all your friends not appearing in the ‘Cc’. British VW got an unprecedented success with this controversial viral campaign.
Nescafé Ice-shake viral ad was a real hit in Argentina

WV Fox endures the blast in this viral marketing piece

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Brand, Communication and Advertising

Traditional tools it teams with:
All those useful when launching a new product

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
TV Spots and, above all, radio ads

Online tools which reinforce it:
Interactive Webs and e-mail marketing

Online tools with similar objectives:
Miscrospots and m-videos; and Rich Media Ads

To learn more:
Unleashing the ideavirus. Seth Godin. ISBN: 0786887176

SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

DEFINITION

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) techniques refer to making the most of sponsored links within the major Search Engines (such as Google or Yahoo!) while Search Engine Optimization deals with the natural, non-commercial results users get when they query the Search Engine. We are now focusing on SEM. Despite for some non-veteran Internet users all results they get when using a Search Engine may seem the same, there are two precisely defined areas in which these results appear: on one side the direct results which only depend on the Search Engine algorithm; but the other area offers spaces that can be hired by advertisers to show the results they would have liked the user to find on the other area: of course, theirs. So they buy keywords related to their activity and are entitled to a very limited space in which to set a text (called creativity) with which to attract the web surfer attention and a link to their site.

IMPLEMENTATION

The name of the game is to determine which are the words that potential consumers of our products / services would type in the Search Engine when looking for them. The e-copy will be key to build an attractive creativity which convinces people of clicking in our web site link. You will rank higher in the list depending on what you pay in certain Search Engines while in others (like Google)
position will be a result of both your web relevancy and how high is the bid (in terms of CPC, Cost Per Click) you place in the e-auction where the keywords are sold.

Though advertisers can deal directly with Search engines to bid for the keywords, best option is to look for a specialized agency, at least at the beginning. They count on a huge keywords-efficiency history per industry that will help you not to have too bid too high to be top ranked.

SUCCESS CASES

“Electric wheelchairs. From only $5,000”. With such a creativity, a list of 4,000 keywords and active campaigns in Google and Overture (Yahoo), the US company HoveRound increased its commercial leads by a mere 250% and its revenue by 25%;online sales are now 10% of their business. If they succeeded with such a reduced consumer segment and such a difficult product to sell online, your company will do for sure.

Overture commercializing Yahoo searches

SEM campaign in Google are controlled through the AdSense console

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Brand, Commercialization and Advertising

Traditional tools it teams with:
All those used when advertising specific products or lines of them

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Product ads addressed to suitable targets

Online tools which reinforce it:
Promotional Minisites, e-commerce portals and interactive webs

Online tools with similar objectives:
Search Engine Optimization and Contextual Marketing

To learn more:
ONLINE PRODUCT CONFIGURATORS / VERIFIERS

DEFINITION

An online configurator is just a special software embedded into a site to give the potential buyer the facility of personalizing the products with all different options available. An online verifier is a system (just software or software+hardware) similar to an online configurator but not so focused on choosing options but on showing the product from all possible perspectives in order for the user to experience a kind of real trying experience of it. This tool is specially useful for products such as clothes and is being more and more used by luxury brands in order to try to provoke online acquisition, specially difficult in this industry.

IMPLEMENTATION

From the technical point of view, maybe these two are the most complex of all digital marketing tools. You probably recall the famous Boo.com case, which was considered the biggest dotcom failure (there is even a film based on it): Back in 1999, Boo was a British portal who invested huge amounts of money in launching a new concept of selling clothes. It was online based on a 3D simulator which offered even virtual shop assistants and which could be considered and ancestor of today’s online configurators/verifiers. Unfortunately the simulator presented technical difficulties impossible to work out with last century’s technology and broadband. Users were desperate in impatience waiting for the simulations to download.

SUCCESS CASES

Although there are several other interesting examples, Dell’s case overwhelms than all. In 1996 they changed the rules of the game, permitting the client configuring their PC online. The prefixed PC as the only customer’s option was not yet the only market choice. The rest is history. Today Dell is the biggest PC producer in the world with more than 40,000 employees all over the world. Part of the course you are studying has been written by the author on an online bought Dell PC.

If we visit the BMW web site in order to buy a Mini, we can access the “configure your Mini” section in which we will be able to choose between different models and, within them, all possible and available options, colours and accessories; with every new selection, the car appearance will be updated on the screen and when finished, we will even be offered the option of saving our future car on a virtual garage so we come back to check the good it looks like every time we want to.

“Configure your Mini” section in BMW’s web

You can already find smart fitting rooms in certain points of sale
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Promotion and Commercialization

Traditional tools it teams with:
Sample boards

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Catalogs, specially the ones whose thickness is due to the big amount of available options and components of the offered products/services.

Online tools which reinforce it:
Promotional Minisites, e-commerce portals and interactive webs

Online tools with similar objectives:
Online product testing and e-catalogs

To learn more:

E-MARKETING FOR RESEARCHING MARKETS: MARKETS E-RESEARCH

VRM: DETERMINING NAVIGATION PROFILES

DEFINITION

VRM or Visitor Relationship Management is the art of drawing value out of nothing: while omnipresent CRM (Customer Relationship Management) is based on gathering the maximum available information about the user (of course identifying him) not only for adapting our products and services to him but for producing what he wants to buy, VRM intends to complement the information CRM provides with aggregated data from visitors whose identity will never be known. By capitalizing these data as behavioural targeting information, which will allow us to determine their interest in our products offering them the information in the way they want it delivered via web, thus increasing our online sales.

IMPLEMENTATION

Already from our web site’s homepage, our visitors should find a navigation interface based on marketing decision-making trees in order to have them show their preferences with every new click. By structuring the web pages hierarchy through a profiles discriminator, every link our visitor follows will become an answer to our marketing questions: what are the most interesting products, which accessories he would be interested in, what price he would be eager to pay...

VRM software uses the aforementioned trees to accumulate a history of visitors decision-making and create multidimensional profiles for each type of visitor so real-time recommendations can be given to visitors when checking out our products online, thus reinforcing and optimizing the customercentric strategy every successful company must adopt.
SUCCESS CASES

Maybe the most famous example of VRM use is Amazon's functionality of making recommendations of books not only depending on our sales record (CRM) but on our navigation profile. Amazon uses VRM not only from the private side (markets e-research) but on the public one, telling visitors what others like them were also interested in.

WebCRM: Navigation tree corresponding to a prototype of visitor profile

Webtrends: Reports generation

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Marketing Audit

Traditional tools it teams with:
Focus Group and other mass media rating, such as TV

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Profile setting quantitative system, such as users panels and phone surveys.

Online tools which reinforce it:
E-surveys, e-datamining, web metrics/log analysis and e-CRM

Online tools with similar objectives:
Online Panels and Internet Marketing Research

To learn more:

E-SURVEYS

DEFINITION

E-surveys are powerful tools that help our marketing research from three different perspectives:

- Supporting relationships with our customers, allowing us to check if our products, services and prices are really satisfying them, as well as to deepen into their interests, likes and dislikes, in order to segment them for more accurate and personalized offers.
- Helping process evaluation, so our customer services, levels of client satisfaction and second purchase ratios can be improved.
- Defining the competitive environment, in order to achieve a better positioning for our brand, making different and more powerful value propositions than those form our competitors.
IMPLEMENTATION

The first consideration to be taken into account is that e-surveys’ best ally is not the web site but the e-mail. Though e-mails can lead users to restricted areas of webs where they can complete the e-survey, it should not be public if we want to avoid having out-of-target users leaving their opinions and corrupting e-survey results. Open e-surveys should only be used when qualitatively valuating web sites issues and other things of a kind, but never when quantitatively doing markets research. Regarding other formats, banners are only suitable for Intranets (internal communication) and pop-ups should only be used with highly motivated users. Talking about answer timings, 80% of who is going to fill in the e-survey will do it during the first week after its reception, so it is more than convenient to resend it to those who have not participated after 7 days, though anyhow we must be aware that at least 16% of them won’t be answering.

SUCCESS CASES

Caja Madrid, the fourth banking group in Spain with more than 6 million customers and 12,000 staff, has put online 20% of its markets research in a year. Their biggest efforts have been apparently addressed to external customers in order to determine the effect of their social marketing, ensure their marketing operations quality and optimize their portals, but –according to Fernando Boza, Caja Madrid e-business director- it’s their internal communications survey system the one that has gone 100% online.

Open e-survey in Caja Madrid portal
MTV’s questionnaire of habits

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Marketing Audit and Communication, if we regard scientific e-surveys. Brand and Product, if we are talking about open surveys

Traditional tools it teams with:
Phone surveys, better with the qualitative than the quantitative ones (in opposition to e-surveys)

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Postal surveys

Online tools which reinforce it:
E-mail marketing, interactive webs, e-CRM and VRM

Online tools with similar objectives:
Online panels and e-segmentation
PRICING

E-AUCTIONS

DEFINITION

When regarding to auctions, we are usually talking about direct or conventional auctions, in which someone offers certain services or products while the rest of the users can bid for them within an ascending (English version) or descending (Dutch version) scheme, where the best bidder normally takes it all. But the auctions that really matter to companies are not the direct but the reverse e-auctions.

A reverse e-auction is an electronic procedure by which a company –through its purchasing department- acquires products or services in a public and closed (in quantity and tech specs) contest that is theoretically won by the seller who offers not only the best prices but the best commercial and services conditions (keep in mind that not always the lowest bid takes the contracts).

IMPLEMENTATION

A reverse e-auction consists of several phases: in the first four the main player is the purchasing company, which prepares the lots, preselects participants, sends them the tech specs and asks them for initial prices and terms of service; while in the e-auction itself, selling companies access an online platform –hired or owned by the purchasing company- and place their bids; last phase corresponds to contract award.

There are several e-auction formats and lowest bid is not always king; bidding may be open or blind (without access to competitors’ bids); and there may be just one bid or a closed number of decremental ones.

SUCCESS CASES

Apparently, all success cases correspond to purchasing companies, like for instance British Airways, which saved 300 million pounds in 2005 by using e-auctions. But all major purchasers know that the advantage is not only in cost but in terms of identifying the best providers. And that’s key for the success of multiples SMEs (Small & Medium Enterprises) that have used e-auctions for increasing their number of clients. This is the case of OfficeMax, an American provider of office supplies whose sales through e-auctions stand 68% of the total, with a million dollars increase in their P&L just due to this channel. Another basic advantage of using e-auctions regards pricing: by analyzing competitors’ bids you are usually able to determine their pricing structure or at least gather much valuable information about it.
E-auction platform

Reverse e-auction development graphic

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Commercialization

Traditional tools it teams with:
All pricing models (from Excel spreadsheets to SAP or BAAN modules), from market control based ones to those which lay on cost structure analysis systems; and all competitors control tools

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Competitors’ prices research

Online tools which reinforce it:
Surplus / perishable goods electronic management, prices digital temporization and marketplaces

Online tools with similar objectives:
Offline electronic pricing models

To learn more:
Introduction to electronic auctions. Klein, S. Electronic Markets, 7, 3-6

PRICES DIGITAL TEMPORIZATION

DEFINITION

E-marketing algorithms allows products or services with strict and fast-coming due dates to have their prices electronically adapted to guarantee fix costs and as much as possible of the rest depending on how close the selling date is to the due one.

The most typical example is a plane ticket. According to Wharton Business School research, price may have up to 78% variation depending on the operator and the moment of the sale.

But –apart from services- prices digital temporization is also intensively used in perishable goods markets, both domestic (like online florist’s) and corporative ones. Marketplaces are used to sell these product with hard discounts when their due dates get closer and closer.

IMPLEMENTATION

There are software packages (normally ERPs specific modules) specially addressed to digital prices temporization. It’s clear they need heavy parametrization and, of course, additional
programming to integrate databases with products/services offering, but in fact technology is never the challenge. The operational keys for success happen to be product selection (own or retailed) to be offered this way (please mind the quality/price ratio) and algorithm development, which needs to take into account not only price discounts depending on time passing-by but other additional circumstances.

SUCCESS CASES

Digital prices temporization paradigm of success is Easyjet, the low-cost air company created in 1995 by Stelios Haji-Ioannou, who started with rented planes (the company didn’t have an own one till 1996) and operates 160 routes today. They sell online tickets straight to passengers, avoiding travel agencies and other agents.

Very recently, certain online travel agencies (such as atrapalo, trabber and others) have been entitled to offer easyjet flights in their own web pages by using this same digital prices temporization technique. But, far beyond his airline success, Stelios has built an utmost successful low-cost brand, EasyGroup, based on this digital prices temporization concept and nowadays he counts on EasyHotel, EasyMoney, EasyCar, EasyPizza...

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Commercialization and brand

Traditional tools it teams with:
Traditional advertising in mass media to back the “low cost” feature of the brand

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Specific sales force devoted to sell products/services coming to the end of their lifecycle

Online tools which reinforce it:
E-auctions; marketplaces

Online tools with similar objectives:
Online prices customization; Online prices geographic adaptation

To learn more:
Online pricing for service providers. Shahram Esmaeilsabzali - Nancy A. Day. ISBN: 1595933964
E-MARKETING PROMOTIONAL TOOLS: E-PROMOTION

POINT OF SALE ELECTRONIC MANAGEMENT

DEFINITION

The definitive battle for the consumer breaks out in the point of sale. This is clear; for this reason all commercial establishments try their hardest, within their means (except for low cost and category killers that are only focused on price), to make their customers’ buying experience as enjoyable as possible. They take care with the furnishings, lighting, colours and even smell – and we are not speaking about just stores dedicated to luxury and design products. The large department stores have for some time evolved into not only places to shop but places where the entire family can have a good time at the weekend. But there still exists the need to get the establishment’s average buyers (we are thinking of IKEA) to fill their shopping trolley even more by putting at eye level products and promotions that may interest them. The long walks and the long queues to pay have minimized all the effort made to increase the pleasure of shopping. But since a short time ago, this has changed thanks to RFID technology (Radio Frequency Identification), which has been successfully implemented since 2004 by Metro Group (Makro supermarkets) in the Extra Future Store, in Rheinberg, Germany.

It was at its time a pilot centre where a new concept of intelligent buying was developed, minimizing time invested by the buyer, maximizing the buyer’s satisfaction by guiding him or her to where the products that interest him or her are located and offering personalized promotions according to the buyer’s purchasing history. The key to this is the RFID smart tags that are stuck to the products that can be identified by radio signal without any need of contact. Besides the additional benefits, such as speeding up logistics, facilitating warehouse management and guarding against piracy and shop lifting, the basic marketing application is to personalize and automatize the client’s relationship at the point of sale. What is more, from a distribution point of view, it also avoids stockouts.

In recent times, experimentation with NFC technology has begun although this is not a novelty (it was approved as ISO/IEC standard in 2003) and in 2008 the first peripherals that used technology combined with Bluetooth started being used and is now the talk of the town. NFC means Near Field Communication. This is a type of wireless technology that works at a frequency of 13.56 MHz (a licence is not needed to operate at this frequency); it is an open platform considered from the start to be for telephones and mobile phones. Its transfer rate can reach 424 kbit/s meaning that it is aimed more at instant communication – identification and validation of equipment/people – than on transmitting great quantities of information.

There is nothing better to demonstrate the usefulness of electronic management of the point of sale than the video-demo on YouTube of Metro Future Store, additional information is given in the video: a client goes into a supermarket to do the weekly shopping; she takes her customer card out of her wallet and inserts it into the electronic device attached to an intelligent shopping trolley that immediately separates from the chain of shopping trolleys and greets her by name on the shopping trolley screen. The device detects her sales history and guides her to the aisles where she can find the products she usually buys while, along the way, promotional offers suited to her buyer profile and organised into categories are projected on the screen. The offers are for products that she has never bought but respond to her customer profile as well as for products that she usually buys discounted by volume. At the same time the shopper is selecting her products from the shelves, the stock levels are being electronically updated notifying both the shop’s warehouse and the supplier’s warehouse - which both do integral tracking – so as to guarantee the backup stocks when it may be necessary. Once the shopper has finished making her purchases, all she has to do is pass through the security arches (which are everywhere so that queues can be avoided), which control that all the products leaving the establishment have their intelligent tags and deactivate them after updating the shopper’s buying history and charging her bank account (which is hooked up to the user card that she will have just removed from the shopping trolley’s
A revolution in promoting, distributing and selling goods is here already and will soon go viral through all the distribution channels.

With reference to NFC technology, its strong point lies in the speed of communication, which is almost instantaneous without any need of previous matching. On the downside, NFC technology’s reach is much reduced - a maximum range of 20 cm. Nevertheless, it also has in its favour that it is transparent to users and equipment with NFC technology is capable of sending and receiving information at the same time.

NFC technology can work in two ways:

- Actively, both devices have an NFC chip that creates an electromagnetic field and data is exchanged.
- Passively, only one device is active and the other takes advantage of this field to exchange information.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Although the individual price for an RFID tag is around 0.4$, in very large orders this price can go down to 0.05. At the moment, cost is the barrier to this technology being adopted except for by large mass retailers, as its use implies not only having the tags but also a complex installation at the point of sale in order to take full advantage of the system: intelligent store aisles, customer identification cards, radio frequency devices that are fitted on the shopping trolleys where the cards can be inserted, tactile LCD screens, intelligent information points, label printers, anti-theft antennas, supply chain wipes, intelligent label decouplers, etc.

It is precisely this decoupler (that makes sure that the RFID chip becomes inactive once the customer leaves the establishment) that is fundamental for avoiding problems with groups of customers that believe this technology may be an invasion of their privacy. In the USA there have even been lobbies against this technology that consider it Orwellian and fear that it may continue to control citizens beyond the point of sale. So, it is better to publicize the efficiency of these decouplers in the store itself.

Without any doubt the new digital star at the point of sale is the use of NFC as a means of payment through mobile phones. The convenience and that the expense can be included in our bill or bank account are very powerful arms that put this technology on the road to becoming the most common form of payment in the near future. And it is in Spain that one of the biggest tests of this technology as a method of payment has just been carried out. It was in Sitges, with the collaboration of Visa, La Caixa bank and Telefónica. As far as implantation of this technology in mobile phones is concerned, Nokia plans to integrate it in all of its new mobile phones this year 2011, Apple may introduce it in its next iPhone, and Blackberry as well. With reference to Google, they have already placed it in the Nexus S and have given the same support to Android 2.3. and with the application Google Wallet. As we can see, the year 2011 is the year of NFC technology.

**Best Practices:**

An electronic management system of the point of sale should be comprehensive, fulfilling the following functions:

- Taking advantage of interactive commercialization potential by doing specific promotions resulting from being able to match available stock with clearly identified customers.
- Reducing unknown losses and improving stock supply through real time connection with manufacturers.
- Avoiding stockouts, guaranteeing customer loyalty.
- Improving marketing decisions by providing real time data from the point of sale.
• Maintaining a precise registration on what is happening in the aisles, such as expiration dates, etc.

SUCCESS CASES

In 2006 more than one thousand million RFID tags were sold, and increase of some 60% over 2005. After the initial trials which led to this technology being miniaturized – it had existed for decades and was originally used to identify engines – the definitive implementation is taking place among the key players in sales. The American giant Walmart (number one company in the world in 2007), the British chain Marks & Spencers and the German pioneer Metro, are already successfully using this system. And, in Italy, the chains Auchan, Carrefour and Coop, have already started initial testing in selected stores.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Distribution, trade e-marketing; commercialization, e-commerce
Ideal target: final individual client

Traditional tools it teams with:
Promotion and testing at the point of sale, which will depend on the human factor and its empathy

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Product control through barcodes

Online tools which reinforce it:
Product digital verifiers, e-tracking and e-merchandising

Online tools with similar objectives:
Electronic models of promotion

To learn more:
PROMOTIONAL MINISITES

DEFINITION

A promotional minisite is a specific type of web site, much smaller than an interactive web. It is usually designed to work as a supporting site to the main one. Though it is convenient that every minisite counts on its own url (and most of them do), it normally floats over the main web and, being smaller in size, it allows the parent (main) site to appear behind so that when the visitor closes the minisite he/she is still surfing the main site. Thus the minisite objective is clear: focusing on certain information and offering specific details not available in the main web. Minisites are typically used to give certain products a special communication treatment because of their launching, due to special promotion campaigns organized around them or simply because these products are the brand’s best-selling ones. But minisites can also be used for families of products, branding issues, anniversaries or special occasions.

Minisites creativity is even harder work than that of their father webs since it constitutes the central axis of all promotional activities regarding the product or event the minisite is developed for. Thus it includes special videos, contests, screensavers, e-cards, e-quizzes, podcasts, product trials, etc. Minisites life is much shorter than those of their main sites since they are eliminated or substituted as soon as the event or promotion they were used for is over. This helps to keep up this tool's freshness as the key for attracting attention.

IMPLEMENTATION

To create half an interactive web, half a Rich media ad or banner. That’s what you should have in mind when developing a minisite. It must be eye-catching and attractive but it also has to be able to provide not a lot but detailed information and count on a minimum navigation. One of the keys here is a hard copy work to extract the most relevant information regarding the product or event in the main site and to polish it with all promotional aspects to maximize the value provided to the minisite visitor so he finds himself in a very suggestive and fast evolving environment in which he can easily make the decision of not losing the special opportunity he’s being offered. This opportunity will consist of a purchase proposition (if accepted, a link will take the user to the online shopping cart –with the product already in it- in the main site) or a registration proposal (through a brief form embedded into the minisite itself) for later commercial contacts.

SUCCESS CASES

One of the most successful minisites ever was the one Look&Enter agency created for Toyota to support Land Cruiser’s launching. The key for success was to introduce in a very dynamic way the new version of the Japanese brand’s star ATV. Through different icons, web surfers were invited to better know the new ATV’s performance and features: engine power, safety, ascending and descending capabilities, oil consumption, etc. They could also watch the TV spot, apply for catalogues and get invited to a 4x4 trials and much other possibilities.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Branding and product marketing

Traditional tools it teams with:
All traditional promotion tools such as discount coupons, sampling, point of sale gifts, etc.

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Promotional prospectus

Online tools which reinforce it:
Interactive webs; e-commerce portals; banners; search engine marketing and optimization; e-quizzes; e-cards; screensavers, wallpapers and animated cursors

Online tools with similar objectives:
Podcasting and online coupons

To learn more:
Create a minisite in 30 minutes or less. Louis Allport

ONLINE COUPONS: E-COUPONS & M-COUPONS

DEFINITION

Their basic objective does not vary substantially from the traditional discount coupons. Both try to get the consumer to express preference for a brand/product/shop in exchange for a discount on purchase, a sample or even a free product. Coupon-based incentives traditionally imply cutting them out of the newspaper or magazine and then going to the establishment in order to take advantage of the discount.

The new technologies simplify this practice so that with only a click in the computer or button pressing in the mobile phone, e/m-coupons can be captured electronically and then later exchanged.

Groupon City Deals is a web site of collective purchasing or in geolocalized groups that offers big discounts (between 50-90%) on different types of services and products from local establishments. It is based on group purchasing and geographic proximity. The e-coupons are exchanged directly at the establishments from which the product or service was acquired.

The aim is to turn an elevated conversion rate of visits into sales, turn clicks into sales or occasional clients into regular ones. These are some of the advantages the system offers with respect to the traditional one:

- Firstly, it implies an improvement in the segmentation of the promotion, given that the e/m-coupons will only be shown and offered to potential buyers.
- Considerable cost savings and greater facility in use for those responsible for the promotion since they will be able to create and manage it in less time and without being at the mercy of printing offices.
- Easy technical implementation of the system (by being transactions of little value it is not necessary for them to be encrypted) which encourages minipurchases.
- And, above all, the coupons have greater reach, since they are all the same, they can be simultaneously posted in a multitude of supports appropriate to the target.

How does Groupon work?
We shall simplify and be clear, with Groupon, we select a product, and we put it on offer at a sale
price. Groupon keeps 50%, for example, if we have a product that costs 100€, we offer it on sale
for 50€, and we end up getting only 25€ for the product. If we have a business with a large margin
we can do this, but for businesses with small margins this is not viable.

IMPLEMENTATION

Specifics:
E-coupons can be distributed in in very diverse ways: from online stores to cybermail, from the
company’s interactive web site or commercial portal or even from a promotional minisite designed
ad-hoc for the campaign. The potential client finds the e-coupons at the beginning of the web site in
question, seeing the description of a determined product, just before finalizing their purchase and
even when he or she becomes interested in another product related to the one being bought.

With reference to m-coupons, these are sent directly to the mobile phones of clients or potential
clients, whose profiles fit the target and who are registered (if the campaign is to promote customer
loyalty), and where legal regulations permit this with regards to personal data protection.

Groupon and its clones:
With more than 80 million users, one of the advantages Groupon has (along with its clones,
Groupalia, LetsBonus, etc.) is that it can capture clients quickly. They can send offers to millions of
users, meaning that we can reach some clients that would otherwise be impossible to reach.

But the problem with Groupon is that customer loyalty is very low, some say less than 1%. For
example, if we put 1,000 units of a product on offer at 20€, we may capture 10 loyal customers at a
total cost of 10,000€. But if our product is innovative and we want to make it known, our margin is
very high, so then it is interesting to resort to Groupon. In any business, where the margin is higher
than 75%, Groupon is an interesting option.

The benefits of a Groupon City Deals campaign for a company are not usually very economical
since most service costs are not covered, but the benefits are good for publicity reasons. However,
the benefits are worth the effort if it is a local action of strong impact that arrives directly to the local
potential clients in a reduced geographical area, such as a city, and responses are received
immediately. The final aim is to capture new clients and create loyalty.

Best Practices:

▪ As in offline marketing, a campaign of this kind is organised when you want to promote a new
product, tap an existing market or get rid of accumulated stock of a product.
▪ Get and agreement with the campaign’s channel to avoid problems, especially if you want to
make the campaign more effective, make the e-coupons exchangeable offline (printing them,
taking them to the stores, to the entrance of a club, etc.).
▪ Organise the product and its distribution from stocks so that it does not sell out and the
campaign does not “die of success”.
▪ Set up a system to compile the coupons accepted and rejected by our clients and potential
clients, demographic information on these clients and history of transactions. If a CRM is
already available, you will only have to set the parameters.

Following on from here, we shall refer to occasions when allocating part of a company’s
promotional budget to a Groupon campaign can produce interesting and measurable benefits:
▪ Launching a new product on the market. In these cases a Groupon campaign can help the
product to get better known or for a company to establish itself in a new market. What is more,
in these cases the fact that a new product or service is being offered at a reduced price does
not usually affect its positioning in the market but can be understood as a strategy for
penetrating the market.
Stock liquidation. A Groupon campaign can be an excellent strategy for liquidating a company’s excess of stock.

- Fighting seasonal variation. As in the previously mentioned point, Groupon can be very useful for companies with high fluctuations in their business due to seasonal variations. In these cases, campaigns done through Groupon can help to compensate, attracting new clients during low season.

SUCCESS CASES

Procter&Gamble opened a portal for their consumers in Sweden under the name MinTid. To attract customers, the company offered discount coupons – both online and offline – that would allow consumers to get a sample of a product or a discount on their next purchase. The company used very well-known brands such as Ariel and the shampoo Herbal Essence for the coupons. Proctor&Gamble got more than 700,000 customers to register in a year.

In Spain, Carrefour has used in discount e-coupons in its promotions, which can be obtained through the web and used both in the online supermarket as well as at the physical stores – when the coupon has previously been printed. Whiskas and Johnson&Johnson have used free sample e-coupons for some of their products with good results. Amena and Caprabo are two other Spanish companies that have recently started using this promotional em-tool.

With reference to m-coupons, penetration in our country is still very low but McDonalds is using them with great success in California, sending SMSs that can be shown at the moment of a meal purchase, allowing consumers to get a free McFlurry dessert.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Product, product e-marketing
Ideal targets: private end client; purchase end user; oriented towards cost
Types of appropriate companies: of basic products and services
Appropriate markets/sectors: consumer markets such as leisure, tourism, shopping centres and hypermarkets

Traditional tools it teams with:
CRM, to add the e-coupon data to the data from the rest of the promotion and to carry out an integrated and comparative control. Point Programmes (Customer Loyalty)

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Paper coupons (much lower cost and greater reach)

Online tools which reinforce it:
Promotional minisites, e-commerce portals, interactive web sites and e-CRM
Online tools with similar objectives:
E-mail Marketing and SMS Marketing

To learn more:
Online: http://couponing.about.com

PODCASTING

DEFINITION

Podcasting (an acronym that stands for Public On Demand CAST) consists of creating sound archives (generally in mp3 format) and distributing them (using contents syndication systems, RSS) so users can subscribe to the service and (by using programs called RSS Readers or mobile players) listen to the archives where and when they want to. Thus a podcast is a kind of “spoken” subscription via Internet.

This new technology have been transformed into a marketing tool following two different models: developing podcasts whose contents explain companies’ products features and advantages. And sponsoring all type of third-party podcasts (there are podcasting networks in which they appear ordered by categories); this sponsorship can consist of mentioning the companies’ brands or products within the podcasts themselves or just appearing as the official sponsors of them.

IMPLEMENTATION

Steps to take in order to develop a podcasting campaign are very simple from the technical point of view: first and most important one is to determine a topic of interest for our targeted segments which can be associated to our brand’s values or products’ features; once topic has been defined, scripts must be developed, audios recorded and MP3 files generated. Afterwards a RSS record must be constituted containing all data needed to send the audios to final users. And to end the process, all files must be uploaded to a suitable server.

Difficulty, as usual, lies on finding the most suitable themes to gain our prospects’ interest; and, most important, to keep it. It’s not enough to develop a first very brilliant podcadst. The key for success is to be able to keep up subscribers’ interest so they keep looping forward to receiving next podcast.

SUCCESS CASES

In one of their most recent podcast, Heather and Jonelle, two USA High School students talked about boys, music and the rest of teenager’s hot topics. And when about to end, they said: “And now we would like to greet our sponsor: Acuvue Contact Lenses”. Johnson & Johnson, Acuvue manufacturer, hired the youths to develop and introduce a series of episodes about teenagers’ live entitled “Download with Heather & Jonelle”. According to Naomi Kelman, Acuvue president, the podcasting campaign has skyrocketed sales among teenagers. The two girls and their podcasts have a web page within Acuvue site and the program is also on sale in Apple’s digital music shop, iTunes.
Purina’s Petcasts

Fan Podcast from TV series “Dirt”

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
From promotional point of views, all traditional promotions, in and outside the point of sale. From branding and communication point of view, traditional ads.

Traditional tools it teams with:
Loyalty magazines and paper newsletters

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Radio commercial breakes and, only to some extent, TV spots

Online tools which reinforce it:
Blogs and interactive webs

Online tools with similar objectives:
Promotional minisites; screensavers, wallpapers and animated cursors

To learn more:

MOBILE APPS

DEFINITION

In the last 5 years telephones have evolved from simple devices to devices with a great processing capacity that integrate numerous resources thanks to Internet connection – smartphones. There are currently 4 platforms leading the market: iOS (Apple), Android (Google), Blackberry (RIM), Windows Phone (Microsoft).

A mobile phone app is a software developed to be used with smartphones. These apps are designed to teach, train or help users/consumers with their daily lives. Functionalities that before were only available on a PC, can now be used with mobile devices, with a high level of benefits. Given that 3 out of 4 smartphone users expect an App with their favourite brand of smartphone, the development of these apps has become a must.

The 0.7 million apps in existence have a potential audience of 255 million users given that 34% of smartphone users use Apps and there are 1,000 million of these devices in 2011, the year when the figure of 28.9 million apps downloaded has been reached, a growth of 87% with respect to 2010.
IMPLEMENTATION

Mobile phone applications are absolutely essential to a marketing strategy. The user's experience is fundamental and the brand's reputation is at stake. Following on from here you can find some of the best practices and recommendations for including mobile applications within a company's mobile marketing strategy:

- Integrate it into the company's marketing strategy.
- Make it simple and useful.
- Take advantage of mobile phone capacity.
- Use external Apps.
- Include social networks.
- Choose a platform well.
- Attract the client.
- Measure results.
- Mobile phone applications are one component more of a company's marketing strategy.

SUCCESS CASES

App for Groupalia

The iPhone application for the daily deals site Groupalia got 15,000 downloads in two months and good results in sales. During December 2010, the agency Elogia designed, developed and set up the first phase of Groupalia's mobile marketing strategy. It was centered on developing its native application for iOS devices (iPhone, iPod and iPad). As part of the launch, a small campaign on the AdMob network was released, accompanied by different displays from Groupalia's web site. The application arrived to the Apple Store on December 20th and it generated, until February 15th 2011, more than 15,000 downloads in Spain and Italy. These downloads attracted a total of 1,850 new users to the daily deals web platform; and, they were characterized by their enthusiasm and brand loyalty.

11% of these new users made some actual purchases (that is to say that the conversion rate was 4% higher than the web's standard user) and the shopping trolley of these clients was 53% fuller than average.

Elogia and Groupalia alone were able to identify that the user is much more loyal – since 75% of these smartphone users downloaded the updates available for the application.

A campaign of Admob was used to promote the new application and it got a 0.65% of CTR (click through rate). This reduced the CPL (cost per lead) by 10% and increased the conversion rate from 2.1% to 6%.

App for IKEA

The IKEA catalogue is one of the publications with the greatest print run. 199 million issues were distributed this year, which represents an enormous expense of paper and resources. For this reason, it is more logical to launch mobile applications that offer similar functionalities.

For the 2010 catalogue they developed an iPhone application with IKEA content that allows us to do two different things: "Arrange your furniture" and "Discover your style". This last one is the simplest and tells us what style most suits us from the answers we give to a series of questions.

But "Arrange your furniture" turns out to be much more interesting. We can select from a total of 45 pieces of furniture and different accessories and arrange them in the photo that we have taken with our mobile phone so that we can know how they would look in our homes.
**Tools for Marketing Control: E-Audit**

**E-CRM**

**Definition**

It's clear that every CRM system counts on an important Electronic component which caused several authors to start talking about e-CRM; however, in the last ten years since the first CRMs were adopted by pioneer companies, online activities have been a whole revolution within business world, only to be compared with the industrial one in the early 19th century. Therefore the need of focusing on the “e” in e-CRM: every time more and more data come from digital channels , which become more and more important in companies’ marketing strategy.

Differences between CRM and e-CRM systems lie on the following variables: availability, limited timeframe vs. a 365x24 scheme; accessibility, geographical and technical limitations vs. universal access; channels, phone, fax, sales force, etc. vs. Internet, mobile, PDA, TDT, etc.; interactivity, the need of middlemen vs. selfmanagement; integration, scarce and local vs. wide and global; service level: cost-limited vs. top-range thanks to new technological developments… Every feature results in a much more efficient system.
IMPLEMENTATION

System implementation requires a three levels model, of course adapted to every industry and company topology: user interface level (with query and data management functionalities, both integrated and multichannel); data level (improved to support B2B and B2C sales and including hyper-relations between all different data objects); and process level (which includes adaptable predesigned process support and customer data aggregated analysis subsystem).

But, apart from cost, which can be minimized with ASP Solutions for SMEs, the key for success is to face the e-CRM system implementation as a business challenge, not a technological one: without the correct strategic approach (including Top Management, key processes and certain officers involvement), the project will never succeed.

SUCCESS CASES

FAGRON, pan-European leader in active ingredients production for pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries, had just dramatically increased its size by merging Fährhaus, Synopharm and Bufa. Sales forces and marketing Systems overlapping was unavoidable. So Top Management took advantage of the need of customer processes redefinition to have an e-CRM Systems put into place. Today all their commercial channels are perfectly aligned, including the online one which is bringing more and more income, and converge digitally in the suitable key account manager, who counts on all the necessary information for best possible decision making.

![e-CRM system: information application control](image1)

![e-CRM system: general access console](image2)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Markets e-research and e-commerce

Traditional tools it teams with:
Traditional CRM, to which e-CRM complements and develops

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Telemarketing Control (1% of Management costs)

Online tools which reinforce it:
Online shopping assessment and e-customer service

Online tools with similar objectives:
e-GRPs
COMMERCIALIZATION AND E-MARKETING TOOLS: E-COMMERCE

MARKETPLACE

DEFINITION

A marketplace (a.k.a. digital market or e-commerce community) is a meeting point for purchasing companies and others selling their products or services. Marketplaces emerge as a consequence of all these enterprises’ common interest on finding new, more agile economic models for commercial exchange.

Marketplaces may be classified into two big groups: vertical Marketplaces, which specialize in offering industry-specific services; and horizontal ones, in which trans-sector goods and/or services are traded, such as supplies, technology, financial products and so on.

Apart from a series of general benefits such as cooperation, automation, standardization and transparency, marketplaces provide companies a mixture of contents and services which help them to improve their commercialization processes and quality. Regarding content, we can find companies directories, product catalogues and markets general information (the latter only on vertical portals). When talking about services, the basic ones are financial, logistics and negotiation functionalities, apart from sector services within vertical portals.

IMPLEMENTATION

From the technical point of view, a specialized Marketplace is nothing but a B2B e-commerce portal with a technological infrastructure specially designed to be neutral between sellers and purchasers, safe (for both money transactions and companies data) and reliable (redundant systems to avoid critical failures and ensure stability). If a company decides to start its own marketplace, it shouldn’t worry about all these issues but simply choose the most suitable platform according to its needs between all the ones existing in the market.

SUCCESS CASES

In March 2002 Obralia (www.obralia.com) was created from two previously existing building sector’s marketplaces (Edifica and BulI2Build) and today it is the referente for the industry in Spain. However, despite the powerful construction company Necso from Acciona Group (altogether with 32 other firms within the sector such as ACS, Dragados, FCC, Ferrovial-Agromán, Sacyr, Corsan-Corviam o COMSA) backed the project from its very beginning, success is not only due to Necso but mostly to all the SMEs which use the marketplace to access the most important e-commerce system in Spain for purchasing and selling building-specific products and services.

Obralia, leader Marketplace in Spanish building industry

World Wide Retail Exchange, one of the pioneer marketplaces worldwide

To learn more:
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Price and trading

Traditional tools it teams with:
All the commercialization ones

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Sales cooperatives

Online tools which reinforce it:
Interactive webs and e-auctions

Online tools with similar objectives:
Marketing Decission Support Systems and Profitability Online Control

To learn more:

E-COMMERCE PORTALS

DEFINITION

E-commerce Portals (apart from the obvious function of selling products) are fantastic for gathering very useful information, very specific contents with very well determined uses which are real added value generators. These contents can be classified in central ones (directly connected with portals essence) and support ones (which reinforce portals’ service).

But e-commerce portals main goal is to commercialize companies’ products through Internet providing visitors with added value services in order to convert them into clients and clients into loyal customers. According to last online commerce report released by Spanish Comisión del Mercado de las Telecomunicaciones (CMT), e-commerce has grown 57% in Spain during 2006, reaching 495 million euros invoicing. Besides, during the first three months in 2006 the number of e-commerce transactions went beyond seven millions, while only four millions had taken place during the same 2005 period. At a European level, Forrester Research estimated a global turnover for all e-commerce portals in Europe of a hundred thousand million euros in 2006.

IMPLEMENTATION

You can find a lot of out of the box software solutions for creating customized portals. But, as usual in this field, the success key does not lie on its development but in being able of aggregating added value services to what you are going to sell through the portal in order to support the sale. Anyhow you must take into account that developing an e-commerce portal with a certain degree of sophistication can easily cost more than 200,000€; this amount will cover a turn key project for a regular number of portal users and you should count on at least 700 ones to make the portal feasible.

Instead of contracting a regular turn key project for your portal you may consider the possibility of developing it internally, which will reduce costs dramatically, but then you should be aware that the project does not end when it starts working: you have to dedicate corporate resources to keep contents and added value services alive and attractive.
SUCCESS CASES

Spanish supermarkets chain Caprabo has a network of more than 600 shops. And their e-commerce portal, www.caprabocasa.com, is always between the three top selling ones. Last year turnover reached 30 million euros, with an average shopping cart of 50 products and 120€. According to Caprabo’s e-marketing manager, Xabier Pladellorens, its key for success lies on online shopping processes, using video demos and operators to offer useful help to users who really save time by buying online (for instance updating more frequently their shopping lists).

Mango’s e-commerce portal

Caprabo’s e-commerce portal

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Branding, promotion and trading

Traditional tools it teams with:
All commercialization tools, from small shops to huge chains (trading)

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Catalog sales

Online tools which reinforce it:
Promotional minisites, interactive webs and e-customer service

Online tools with similar objectives:
Marketplaces and Cybermalls/Virtual Retailing

To learn more:

ADVERTISING TOOLS WITHIN E-MARKETING: E-ADVERTISING

CONTEXTUAL ADVERTISING

DEFINITION

The enormous saturation of publicity combined with the tremendous fragmentation of media makes it increasingly more difficult for the advertising message to arrive effectively to the potential buyer. The key to achieving this is to create an impact with an advertisement that will really interest him or her. The internet has changed the rules of the game taking away importance from creativity and giving more to context: if someone surfing the net is reading a web site about typical food from the North of Spain, it is very unlikely that he or she will be bothered by an advertisement for an
Asturian sidrería (Asturian restaurant that serves cider) in the same city. This is just what we call contextual advertising, integrating advertising links in web sites of specific content and segmented by theme.

Nowadays contextual advertising is fundamentally made up of internet content from Google, which reaches more than 75% of Internet users in more than 100 countries and in 20 languages. Google’s network content is made up of hundreds of thousands of web sites, news pages and high quality blogs that collaborate with Google to show AdWords placement targeted advertisements. If you decide to advertise in this network, it can increase your advertising reach in a target public and to potential clients, who visit these sites every day. There is no greater network for contextual advertising in the world.

So, if we advertise both in the search engine network (SEM) and in the Google content network, we have the chance to show our advertisements to three out of four internet surfers on the planet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Exclusive reach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IMPLEMENTATION

Content advertisements in internet, which can be textual, with images, videos or rich media, are oriented in function of the themes that appear in their list of key words instead of specific key words. We can aim our ads at web sites associated with Google (Display partners), YouTube and specific Google holdings.

- Orientation advertisements for placement in the Display Network: the placements are another way to position groups of ads. By adding placements to a group of advertisements, advertisers can select the places where they would like their ads to appear, or rather make higher offers for those sites that coincide with the key words for the group of advertisements.

Get more information about placements.

- Add audiences to the Display Network campaign: we can use remarketing to reach those users who previously visited a web site and get the right people to coincide with the correct message. We can show users these messages while they surf the net through Google’s Display Network. Remarketing is a function of publicity based on interests that are available in the Audience tab.

- Display Network Offers: we can also activate the Display Network’s Offers function. This allows AdWords advertisers to establish a price when their advertisements are published in Google Network sites and searches and a different price when their ads are published in Google’s Display Network.

Configure where you would like your ads to be published

New campaigns that begin with key words automatically participate in Google Network’s distribution. For this reason, if you would like your ads to appear in sites and web products of the network’s Search and Display, you do not need to do anything else. We recommend that you target your ads as much at the Search Network as at the Display Network. To get a better return on investment for both options, revise the suggestions about the Search Network and the Display Network.
Other useful tips:

- There is no additional charge for advertising in the Google Network.
- When you post adverts in the Display Network, you can use additional ad formats such as ads with images or video.
- Some Google Network sites and products only show the three best adverts per page.
- The higher the average positioning of the ad is, the more exposure it will have.
- All sites that appear must comply with Google’s AdSense policy.

Best Practices:

- Don’t use the same generic words that all your competitors are using – their tagging is always by auction - increasing the CPC (cost per click) and decreasing the campaign’s ROI.
- Instead, look for niche words using a procedure of trial and error, changing as many words as creativities (no other type of publicity is as cheap as this).
- Optimize the key word association algorithms so that you avoid problems with words that have many different meanings.
- Be careful with depositioning, both in terms of whom our contextual ad appears next to and in what media and digital sections our ad appears in.
- Don’t overuse the latest graphic creativities (not only text) being offered by suppliers. Although it may be worthwhile to try them out, their CTRs (click-throughs) are not proven to be significantly higher than text-only creativities.

SUCCESS CASES

Mitsubishi Electric was not unhappy with the leads generated through their search engine marketing but they were unhappy with the cost that it implied. They decided to bet more on contextual advertising, selecting their line of digital projectors in the USA to try this out. They contracted a specialised agency – MEA Digital – in whose hands they put the media planning, key word selection and creativities development. Within less than a year their CPP (cost per prospect) went down by 70% without decreasing the quality of leads.

Google search network vs Google content network

Contextual ads in the free newspaper 20minutos’ web

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Brand, e-branding; product, product e-marketing; promotion, e-promotions; commercialization, e-commerce
Ideal targets: any kind of target but especially digital media readers (general and specific)
Types of business recommended: any kind of business
Appropriate markets/sectors: according to the Estudio Sobre Inversión Publicitaria en Medios Interactivos en España (Study on Advertising Investment in Interactive Media in Spain) by PwC
and IAB, in the first semester of 2006, the sectors where this em-tool was most used were: finance, travel, communication, teaching and culture

**Traditional tools it teams with:**
Any type of ad can be combined with them in a mixed campaign

**Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:**
Although there is no exact equivalent in the offline world, radio jingles, and even including them in the classified ad sections

**Online tools which reinforce it:**
Interactive web sites, e-commerce portals

**Online tools with similar objectives:**
Sponsored search engine marketing and promotional minisites

**To learn more:**
Your guide to contextual advertising: [http://www.contextual-advertising.org](http://www.contextual-advertising.org)

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**BLUECASTING: PROXIMITY MARKETING**

**DEFINITION**

Bluetooth technology allows wireless interconnection of any kind of mobile device which counts on this functionality, such as cell phones, PDAs, laptops, digital cameras, multimedia portable players of the I-pod kind, etc. Every Bluetooth compatible device counts on a unique identifier which makes it susceptible of receiving customized content. This allows any outdoor media armed with a blueetooth server to enhance its graphical advertising potential by sending a personalized message to anyone who passes by it with a Bluetooth enabled device.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Once again, technology- no matter how innovative it results to be- is not key, but getting the user involved; no one keeps his device’s Bluetooth functionality permanently enabled so the challenge is to make him activate it. In order to meet this goal, outdoor media creativy must be engaging enough to have the user read the message which exhorts him to put the bluetooth to work; and besides the contents about to be downloaded to his device must be attractive enough to end by convincing him. This is the real key on which to focus our operative efforts.

**SUCCESS CASES**

Companies such as Volvo have developed up to seven minifilms they offer via Bluecasting to VIP passengers in London’s Heathrow airport within their campaign “Life On Board”. Carling, the leader brewer company in UK, has also used this tool to distribute promotional music to their clients and potential customers in their Carlinglive.com campaign.
Bluecasting at work

RangeRover's bluecasting in Manhattan

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Promotion and commercialization

Traditional tools it teams with:
Outdoor media advertising

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Sampling

Online tools which reinforce it:
Screensavers and wallpapers; m-coupons

Online tools with similar objectives:
SMS Marketing

To learn more:

RICH MEDIA ADS

DEFINITION

Traditional Internet banners consisting of cyclic animations are about to become a low cost tools for secondary media. They are being substituted by a new generation of visual e-advertisement pieces called Rich Media Advertising which, being a mixture of Internet online games and TV spots, happen to treble CTRs (Click Through Rates).

It’s a new online advertising tool based on hiring commercial space on digital media to offer the users audio and videostreaming content enriched by newest animation techniques as well as downloadable software they can interact with.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Rich Media Ads with best results are those which get active when the user’s mouse moves over them launching multimedia staff to give a detailed explanation of the advertised products or services. This multimedia content is hosted on streaming (on-demand video) third-party servers, which allow visitors of massive media (such as portals, online newspapers, etc.) to start watching
the content while it is still being downloaded. This eliminates the problem of downloading much more complex creativities (up to 40 times heavier) allowing access to much more sophisticated content even to users who have no access to broadband connections.

The reader will already have realized of the two most obvious advantages: it’s much easier to gain users’ attention; and the concepts being communicated are much more easily detailed. But the main advantage is not as intuitive as these two: rich media ads efficiency can be tracked in much more detail than that of traditional banners, for which the only available information was the number of impacted users and the percentage of them who have visited our site. With this new tool we can measure users’ interactivity and detect what’s really interesting for them: the average time they devote to watch the rich media ad, which parts of it have been the most interesting ones, at which point most of the users drop, if they review it, if they activate the sound, …

SUCCESS CASES

Todd Riely, Volkswagen e-marketing manager, faced the challenge of using digital advertising to launch the new Passat and decided to bet on rich media ads as a means of collecting potential customers’ feedback within the ad itself. The campaign, whose name was “Get closer” was an spectacular success.

But rich media ads are not just for wealthy multinationals. The same agency responsible for VW campaign, Media Planning Group, also developed an ad of this kind for IE Business School –one of the best Business Schools worldwide according to Financial Times rankings but obviously with a much more reduced e-advertising budget than Volkswagen’s. This rich media ad’s objective was to help explaining an original and quite complicated concept of new blended MBA based on learning virtual communities. The enhanced audiovisual capabilities rich media advertising provides were key to markets’ understanding and acceptance of the success of this new learning methodology.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Communication, commercialization, branding and product marketing

Traditional tools it teams with:
All media-mix tools for an advertising campaign (Ads, etc.)

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
TV spots addressed to younger targets

Online tools which reinforce it:
Interactive Webs, e-Commerce Portals and Promotional Minisites
Online tools with similar objectives:
Banners/Skycrapers, Interstitials/Layers/Flies, Pop-ups/Pop-unders, Microspots/m-videos

To learn more:

E-MAIL MARKETING

DEFINITION

E-mail is one of the most intensively used Internet services. First thing 83.7% of Internet users do once connected is to check their e-mail accounts. From companies point of view e-mail is nowadays essential for their communication, both internal and external. Regarding marketing, e-mail is the basic tool to keep a sustained dialogue with customers along the whole commercial relationship, but its main functionality serves advertising as one of the most powerful leads generator ever.

E-mail marketing is also a perfect complement for offline marketing; 200 billion commercial e-mails were sent in the States during 2004 generating $4,800 millions revenue and reaching a 15% average answer rate.

A good segmentation and a professional approach are the key operating factors to maximize e-mail marketing benefits (costs cuts, interactivity, customization, low intimacy invasion and time and distance reduction) and minimize its disadvantages (lists quality and legal and brand risks). If both factors are met, really cheap OTSs (Opportunities To See) will be generated to achieve the desired amount of potential customers.

IMPLEMENTATION

Key factors for defining a successful e-mail marketing strategic plan are the following:

- Planning. We should define: communications format (HTML, text, etc.); creativity type; sending frequency; degree of customization; and action total coverage (definition of our target segment).
- Management. We have to define how we are going to handle our technical (software, hardware, communications, etc.) and strategic (databases fine-tuning, hour and week day to send the e-mailing, etc.) resources.
- Testing (tracking). We need to evaluate each of the actions we are preparing to be able to determine the most effective and profitable type of communication. To meet this goal pre and post campaign tracking tests are a must.
- Meassurement. CTR (click-through) and conversion rates (registered users, final buyers, etc.), drop-outs and non-delivery ratios must be weighed-up to increase our communication efficiency.

SUCCESS CASES

Since its very beginning Allianz insurance company had been into the use of offering new products to their customers via postal mail. Then in 2004 they decided to try an e-mail marketing campaign in Austria. Campaign ROI increased by a spectacular 25% and 10% additional contracts were closed.
New York State University publications department started to commercialize its works via e-mail in 2001: since then $300,000 dollars a year have been saved, revenue has increased 15% and use of internal resources has been cut by 80%.

**E-Dreams’ advertising e-mail**

**E-mail marketing’s viral potential**

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Other related areas and tools:**
Communication, commercialization and trade marketing.

**Traditional tools it teams with:**
All media-mix tools for an advertising campaign (ads, etc.)

**Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:**
All direct marketing tools, specially postal mailing (lower cost and higher reach)

**Online tools which reinforce it:**
Multimedia electronic documents, Interactive Webs, e-Commerce Portals and Microspots

**Online tools with similar objectives:**
Newsletters, Distribution Lists, SMS Marketing and electronic transactions marketing

**To learn more:**
Marketing with E-mail. Shannon Kinnard. ISBN: 1885068689

### IADS

**DEFINITION**

iAd is the new Apple platform for advertisers to reach millions of iPhone and iPod touch users through their favourite apps, at the same time it offers a new source of revenue for developers.

The idea behind iAd is to combine the emotion of the advertisements that we can see on television with the interaction that surfing the internet provides through cell phones. This means quality publicity that is more attractive to the user because of the way in which it can be integrated into the iPhone OS 4.

iAd aims not to be intrusive. The advertisements are within the application itself and permit the user to access all of the content without having to leave the app, and being able to return to it at any moment.
IMPLEMENTATION

iAd advertisements are done via HTML5 and come out really well, just like we can see in the cases of Toy Story 3 or Nike. What is more, thanks to the inclusion of new web standards, we can access extra information, make purchases and even play mini games.

But not everything is so easy. Apple supervises the advertisements (for example, they have already eliminated the possibility of placing iAds – no matter what kind – in applications for children), which may make advertisers a bit wary. But the motive is neither more nor less than guaranteeing good publicity, although of course this may be considered as something objective. Either way, they do not usually go any further than slight warning signals about what might not be suitable.

SUCCESS CASES

The new Nissan Leaf minivan, is advertised through the iAd system allowing users not only the opportunity to win one of these incredible cars but also a trip to Disney World for the entire family.

The Nissan Leaf iAd, focuses mainly on the car's features such as interior lighting, spaciousness and efficient fuel consumption.

Using this platform, the advertisements are aired in these applications via communication media such as The New York Times, giving consumers the opportunity to take part in the contest.

iAd for Toy Story 3

iAd for Nissan Leaf

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
E-commerce and e-promotion

Traditional tools it teams with:
Television: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8vWVtpCFlX8&feature=player_embedded

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Television spot

Online tools which reinforce it:
Mobile Apps

Online tools with similar objectives:
Podcasts (MP4)

To learn more:
http://advertising.apple.com/
FACEBOOK MARKETING

DEFINITION

Social networks have been consolidated as platforms oriented towards the business world. If you are not actively present in them, it is practically impossible to achieve the necessary online reputation that leads a consolidated brand. The analyses and forecasts for this year, 2011, place the active presence of brands within social networks as an absolutely necessary starting point for achieving success in any business.

Nevertheless, each social network has its own characteristics that make it more or less adequate for one or the other marketing objectives. Facebook, with more than 800 million users, works just like a meeting place for people with similar needs and interest. It is a social network where users share their needs and interests as much on a professional level as on a social one. This consolidates it as the most important general social network on a global level and from a marketing point of view makes it especially interesting for products and services aimed at large markets, such as those of leading consumer products.

Facebook is more efficient at identifying needs and, based on those needs, establishing variations in marketing strategies, imbuing them with the dynamics that underlie these identified needs.

IMPLEMENTATION

Nowadays, some 60% of Spanish companies have their own Facebook page. It has become one of the best tools for the communication and distribution of cheap and efficient viral marketing.

When buying publicity space on Facebook, you have the option of dividing up you potential clients by age, sex and you can even specify the geographical area where you want your advertisement to be seen. That's quite interesting, isn't it? The price of publicity varies as much by size as by length of time on the network. Nevertheless, it is much cheaper than advertising on the other social networks. What is more, it is not necessary to advertise indefinitely, the good thing about Facebook is that it works like a chain. For example, you advertise for a week, you gain "x" number of followers. At the same time, the friends of your followers may also become interested in your product and profile, therefore, in this way, multiplying your number of followers.

With reference to unpaid communication on Facebook, the main thing is to be able to develop experiences for our clients and potential clients that are aligned with the brand's values. These values may vary in each case and may be anything from a game to a product sample via a contest, a demo or even a simple debate about the products and services being offered by the brand. In any case, the two keys to success will be in testing the experience to find out its level of engagement and the frequent publication of content related with it. In this way it is convenient to bear in mind the posts that are uploaded in the morning, these are what generate a greater quantity of commentaries and interactions (what is published in the morning generates a 39.7% greater participation than what is published in the afternoon) and that there are 3 peaks in activity during the working day: at 11am, 3pm and 8pm. These are some of the (free) ways of making our product, company or cause known on Facebook.

1. Our user profile
2. Groups
3. Pages
4. Events
5. Notes and Photos
6. Messages
7. Marketplace
8. Share / Posted Items
9. Networks
10. Mini Feed and News Feed

SUCCESS CASES

With a very low budget and one of the basic Facebook tools (tagging), Ikea has created a curious interactive campaign – unlike the usual formats found on social networks – specifically for the opening of a new store in Malmo, Sweden, which is, according to the company, the most modern store to date. It all started with the creation of a profile for the director of the new establishment, Gordon Gustavsson, who uploaded photos of store showrooms in his personal album. The first users who tagged the products that appeared in the images with their names, won them. So that is how the viral marketing started, in the most natural way, on Facebook: via news between the contacts. The Ikea campaign achieved visibility without even having to put a banner: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LlseyeU0FK1o

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
e-Communication, Markets e- Research, e-Commerce

Traditional tools it teams with:
Guerrilla Marketing, TV publicity

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Outdoor advertising, traditional coupons

Online tools which reinforce it:
Marketing Viral, Youtube Marketing, Blogs

Online tools with similar objectives:
Twitter Marketing, Linkedin Marketing

To learn more:
Facebook Marketing for Dummies; Paul Dunay, Richard Krueger; ISBN-10 : 0470487623
E-MARKETING TOOLS FOR BRAND BUILDING: E-BRANDING

WEBS 2.0

DEFINITION

More than 10 years ago when e-marketing was born, web sites were just a kind of advanced virtual visit cards most trendy companies used to introduce themselves to their potential customers across cyberspace.

Technology has allowed this concept's evolution till converting initial web sites into real e-branding tools: selling through Internet is not mandatory or even advisable in certain occasions; sometimes the real key to success is to be able to induce the visitor to buy through a different channel. And nothing better to meet this goal than letting users to know our way of doing business via interactive, social web sites which allow them to have a key role in its own content development.

IMPLEMENTATION

First issue to take into account when building an interactive, social web is to focus it on our clients and potential customers' peculiarities. Never mind the technological development (either internal or hired) if usability and design (not only graphical but contents one) are not the most suitable ones for our target segment. Thus it's not a bad idea to count on professional advise regarding web design in the same way we use to hire the best agency we can afford when developing a corporative leaflet to attract our profile customer. And following prospectus' examples: if we change our brochures every year, why do not usually do the same with our web sites? They are more than paid off after a couple of years and it's quite usual to find 3 - 4 year old web sites in lots of major companies.

SUCCESS CASES

In order to look for inspiration to improve our company's web site, there's nothing better than checking out some of the numerous prestige lists which rank the best web sites per sector each year; maybe the best ones happen to be Forbes at an international level and Expansion.com in Spain.

If we have a look at the webs which appear on top of the aforementioned rankings, we will realize that all of their menus and options appear just when the visitor needs them, all of them count on active 3D graphics and interactive maps you can handle with a slight mouse movement, no one forgets the key role of users and everyone integrates the most suitable content sources in order to offer visitors the industry information they are looking for or the product comparison they were thinking of.

Honda Web site: best one in the world within automotive sector according to Forbes

Iberdrola Web site: best one in Spain within energy industry according to Expansión
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Advertising and communication

Traditional tools it teams with:
Brochures

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Corporative presentations

Online tools which reinforce it:
Screensavers, wallpapers and animated cursors; e-cards; online games marketing; forums; e-quizzes; online shopping assistance

Online tools with similar objectives:
Domains management; blogs

To learn more:

BLOGS CORPORATIVOS

DEFINITION

A blog, a.k.a. weblog or surfing diaries, is an open web site which periodically compiles texts or articles form one or several authors regarding any theme. The contents are offered chronologically and readers are allowed to post their comments for every new entry, but the author(s) may have the right to delete the ones not considered suitable.

There are multiple kinds of blogs: personal, journalistic, entrepreneurial or corporative, technological, educational, etc.

The ones that really matter to companies are corporate blogs, released with the support of the organizations, which count on its help to meet their goals. This help may be applied from branding side - in order to reinforce the firms’ positioning- or from the communication side, both internal (with blogs acting as knowledge management collaborative tools) and external (to back relations with key accounts or targets).

IMPLEMENTATION

To launch a blog requires no technical skills; thousands of people with just basic IT knowledge do it everyday. There are several free tools for blog developing. Blogger (www.blogger.com) is the most famous one and besides it also offers free hosting services. However free hosting is precisely what makes this free tools so dangerous for corporative blogs: if there’s any problem all contents are hosted on third-party servers (over which you have no control) and might be lost. That’s why the best possible solution for companies is to buy a blogs releasing standard licensed engine, the most flexible and reliable of which is MovableType. Other important issue to take into account regarding corporative blogging is the need of providing our visitors RSS feed services, so they can configure their RSS readers to be able to receive automatically all our new posts.
SUCCESS CASES

A pleasant success case is that of Barbies’s Blog, in which the manufacturing company puts the values they want to transmit regarding their doll in its own mouth, thus being able to get much closer to their target segment: little girls who usually want to take after their playing partner and use the blogs to check its thoughts day after day.

Barbie’s blog, an example of branding via blogs

Blogs aggregator from Adobe (former Macromedia)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Product marketing and communication

Traditional tools it teams with:
All public relations and branding tools

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Products pre-tests, gazettes and press dossiers

Online tools which reinforce it:
RSS Marketing, direct search engine marketing and interactive webs

Online tools with similar objectives:
Forums and e-Public Relations

To learn more:

ONLINE GAMES MARKETING: E-GAMES AND M-GAMES

DEFINITION

Keeping in mind that one of the main uses of Internet is leisure, it seems clear that one of the best vehicles for transmitting a viral message should be an online game. Jupiter Media Metrix data confirms this supposition: online gaming grows by 25% each year, being the fifth activity Internet users devote more time to; besides, 81% of online gamers brings a new player to the game and 49% get two or three of their friends involved.

But Online Games Marketing concept is more oriented towards branding than to viral marketing itself: the key idea here is to have users resend a link to a virtual game related to our company and embedded in our corporative web. We are referring to an evolution of the viral marketing concept of
having each recipient passing the message to several others thus generating an exponential growth in the number of impacts, just as virus cells multiply to infect individuals.

IMPLEMENTATION

The typical marketing e-game works on a web platform is quite addictive and counts on quite simple contents. This variety of e-games goes under the name of advergaming and in all of them the users plays on his own challenging the system. But this is not the only kind of game: although less frequent, there are several others depending on the type of platform and the number of competitors: VR Advergames use virtual reality to increase playability by using special gloves, helmets, etc. that the user finds at the point of sale as part of the promotion material; 3D Virtual Games incorporate the third dimension in web environments to provide additional amusement; and Group Virtual Games count on a double attractive: on one hand for users who compete against one another and on the other side for the audience when taking place in machines installed in promotion points with a lot of traffic (for instance, the successful Telefónica MoviStar campaign which used motorcycles racing console-games in big malls).

SUCCESS CASES

Oreo was one of Nabisco’s star brands. Ever since it was created, its sales had been growing from year to year in the US market. But then came 2000 and the social alarm of little children and teenagers’ obesity in the States. And revenues started to decrease more and more. In 2003 Oreo developed quite a bunch of measures to revitalize the consumption of Oreo cookies. And one of the most important bets was the development of kids-oriented online games to recover top of mind in this target. These e-games were so successful (with an average of 7 minutes playing per user) that Oreo revenues were at its normal level by the end of the year.

E-game for Oreo (Nabisco)

Make Over Mona AdverGame for Drcomenge

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Product marketing, promotion and advertising

Traditional tools it teams with:
All branding ones, but especially print ads which include the e/m-game url/cell number to be able to access/download it.

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
TV Spots

Online tools which reinforce it:
Promotional minisites, interactive webs and e-mail marketing
Online tools with similar objectives:
Viral Marketing and Rich Media Ads

To learn more:

LINKEDIN MARKETING

DEFINITION

LinkedIn is a social networking site used by professionals. It was created in 2003 and scarcely 4,500 people signed up for it in its first month. Now, after some years, LinkedIn has 150 million professionals from all over the world.

In the first years after its creation, LinkedIn was mainly used to look for a job. Nowadays LinkedIn has some new functions which considerably increase its marketing opportunities for any professional. For this reason, it is not at all unusual for the Marketing Departments of companies with products of complex sale – where many members of the client company may take part in the purchasing – to have LinkedIn as one of their favourite sources for generating leads.

Basically there are two big techniques for generating leads in LinkedIn:

- Those based on direct contact with people within our network, in our network of contacts and other members of the LinkedIn groups to which we belong or even people with whom we have no common link via LinkedIn internal e-mail or paid for messages (InMail) or directly or by telephone. We are referring to unsolicited messages, which in general would fall under the category of spam and of which we are not going to deal with in this post.

- Those based on creating and developing a relationship with our potential clients, in offering useful and relevant content and building a dialogue with them about our solutions. These are the techniques that we are going to look at in more detail following on from here.

IMPLEMENTATION

LinkedIn is a means of communication that encourages us to be descriptive. We need to take each step in this social network strategically and try to explain our achievements and what we can offer in a clear and descriptive way. Here is some advice for best taking advantage of LinkedIn:

1. Contact others through groups and responses
2. Research
3. Take advantage of the applications
4. Make your profile a place of interest
5. Recommendations

SUCCESS CASES

When American Express decided to focus more on the business consumer, it opted for LinkedIn to do so. There were not many previous examples of large multi-national brands using LinkedIn for direct sales so Amex was facing the risks and opportunities that go along with being a pioneer. Hence, they created an application "For Everything You Do", that let people nominate their company managers via LinkedIn; in exchange, they could possibly win a gift card courtesy of American Express. The application worked by vote, so the people most voted for won $2,500, there were also daily winners who won smaller prizes. The campaign was launched through
advertisements in the LinkedIn network. The campaign was a great success for Amex which, although it may not have been the most creative, successfully used the social network for marketing beyond the mere posting of the typical banners.

The second example of an important brand using LinkedIn for its marketing is a slightly more creative and adventurous campaign launched by Volkswagen to advertise its Passat. Volkswagen’s action focused on using LinkedIn’s API to create a personalized experience similar to Facebook Connect. The application compared the profiles in LinkedIn among different contacts, encouraging users to complete their profiles. The person who had the most complete profile on LinkedIn won a prize. The beauty of this campaign was that far from distracting from the main objective of LinkedIn, it truly encouraged people to use it even more.

The campaign was a great success in Holland during the spring of 2011 and it received many prizes for its innovativeness.

Amex – Campaign: For Everything You Do

Volkswagen Passat LinkedIn Challenge

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
e-Advertising, e-communication, Markets e-Research

Traditional tools it teams with:
Focus Groups, Workshops

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Direct Marketing by post, traditional PR professionals

Online tools which reinforce it:
Webinars, e-RRPP

Online tools with similar objectives:
Blogs, Twitter Marketing

To learn more:
Revolución Linkedin (LinkedIn Revolution); Juanma Roca; Ed. Paidós; I.S.B.N : 9788449322785

IPTV MARKETING

DEFINITION

According to IAB (Interactive Advertising Bureau) 85% of marketers did not have an IPTV marketing strategy in 2011 despite the fact that the sale of televisions connected to internet will reach 100 million units in the USA over the next two years.
The Connected TVs already offer brands the opportunity to connect their offline expenses with the rapidly growing market of online content, with applications, advertising campaigns oriented to the electronic programming guide and to home screens.

These new TVs, brands like Samsung, LG and Sony, will make up more than 90% of the total in 2014, according to Futuresource Consulting. In addition, the launch of set top boxes such as YouView and TiVo Virgin Media are also ready to meet consumer demand for connected television services.

The concept of IP television (IPTV) is still hazy among the population and among many Marketing directors. Nevertheless, this system is going to become a very important ally in cross media campaigns in the coming years and an extraordinarily powerful marketing tool for clients.

IPTV is Imagenio, Jazztelia and the IP television offered by Orange, televisions with Internet protocol (IP) included among the group of what has come to be called triple play: offering Internet, television calls and television for a flat rate.

But IP television goes much further. Zattoo (www.zattoo.com), a television system through Internet, gained in 2007, according to its management, 125,000 clients in only two weeks after its launch in Spain in July of that same year. Equally, Joost (www.joost.com), a Project created by Janus Friis and Niklas Zennstrom, promoters of Kazaa and Skype, let users access more than 250 channels and 15,000 programmes for free.

IMPLEMENTATION

In a practical sense and with a view to advertisers, IPTV offers various possibilities as much in cross media marketing as in the creation of a new marketing channel for clients and going through added value campaigns where premium content is offered, accessible through the web and with interactive functions; and, in this case, the creation of community.

We can imagine, for example, a buzz action for a popular consumer goods brand on an IP television channel of the company itself where an interactive promotion is developed. Or, a customer loyalty campaign consisting in offering registered users exclusive content accessible by IPTV, Internet or cell phone. The possibilities are limitless and so are the ways to make the action profitable.

What is more, IPTV on the web (WebTV) allows the broadcast of a linear television schedule grid where the user can view different sections or contents on demand, therefore giving the user an extraordinary variety of choice unknown in the audiovisual world until now.

At the same time, the advertiser gains an additional benefit by having access to high value information for his or her company: IP technology allows statistics to be gathered on the number of viewers, the time spent in each section and users' favourite content. This provides the advertiser with greater knowledge about his or her clients that can be used for future commercial and promotional actions.

IPTV has another application that is also interesting for broadcasting on plasma screens, it presents countless opportunities for large corporations, the government and companies that have waiting rooms, common spaces and commercial spaces to offer a private television channel with ad hoc content created specifically for their target public and at a moderate price (considering what it would cost to create a real private television channel).

Besides being provided with a more personal and interactive programming, the viewer now also has the possibility of choosing the messages he or she receives. This way the publicity can and should adapt itself much more to the audience's interests. This implies developing IPTV projects based on personalizing publicity according to the television viewer's profile through new publicity
formulas that allow publicity related with what the viewer is watching to be inserted within the programming. For example, if the viewer likes the clothes that the star of a programme is wearing, he or she can hit pause and buy the clothes online.

Another way to implement IPTV Marketing is to directly create an IPTV channel for the brand.

SUCCESS CASES

In 2008 Land Rover launched Go Beyond, a web site with an interactive internet television channel with a lot of variety of content and dedicated to the spirit of adventure. It was the first broadband television channel started by an automobile company and one of the most ambitious online projects ever known.

The web site and television channel Go Beyond www.gobeyond.tv is focused on real people who live their lives a little unconventionally. It can be accessed from any computer with a broadband connection. In the Land Rover web site, www.landrover.com, there is also a link to this new communication channel.

"Go Beyond has to do with going beyond personal limits and experiencing adventure in different ways", according to Phil Popham, General Director of Land Rover. "This means of communication broadens the Land Rover brand's promise to go beyond. It is certainly not just a vehicle web site, although you can find out about all of Land Rover's products and many of the adventures shown are experienced in a Land Rover."

The content is a mix of high quality material and covers all aspects of adventure in the 21st century: fascinating journeys; extraordinary 4x4 Land Rover events such as the G4 Challenge; food; wine people; and remarkable places.

"We tell the stories of real people who go beyond the ordinary every day," Steve Hobbs, Director of Go Beyond confirms. "Adventure means different things to different people, what we try to do is cover a wide range of extraordinary activities. It might be climbing the Everest or something as simple as coming home from work, preferably through the countryside."

Go Beyond TV is broadcast in English, which reflects the strength of Land Rover in markets such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and South Africa.

Homepage television channel
Go Beyond of Land Rover

Video channel Go Beyond of Land Rover

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Product marketing, promotion and advertising
Traditional tools it teams with:
All branding ones, but especially print ads which include the e/m-game url/cell number to be able to access/download it.

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
TV Spots

Online tools which reinforce it:
Promotional minisites, interactive webs and e-mail marketing

Online tools with similar objectives:
Viral Marketing and Rich Media Ads

To learn more:

PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTION AND E-MARKETING TOOLS: TRADE E-MARKETING

AFFILIATE MARKETING

DEFINITION
Affiliate marketing is a type of trade marketing via commissions through Internet in which a company (advertiser) rewards financially another one (editor) for bringing potential customers to it by means of a series of links the latter introduces in its website. These hyperlinks may have two different goals: direct sales of the products/services; or simply redirecting potentially interested users to the advertiser’s web site. Affiliate agreements between advertiser and editor companies are developed through the so called Affiliate Programs, which work following two different models:

- Per Click. Everytime a user visiting the editor’s web clicks on the affiliate link and visits the advertiser’s site, a certain amount of money (variable upon agreement) is earned by the editor.
- Per Sale. In this case, the editor receives a comisión per every sale the advertiser completes thanks to the affiliate link, which is tagged in order to identify clients coming through this channel.

IMPLEMENTATION
The key issue here is to design the strategy that better fits each case and to develop it correctly. There are two different possible options for doing so:

- Internal development: the company develops its own affiliate program and asks a software developer for writing the code. In the meanwhile they may begin looking for the affiliates desiring to join in and start working with the Admin Office in order to organize commissions’ payment methods.
- Outsourcing: in this option the company hires a trusted and experienced affiliate programs provider which takes care of negotiating the best possible conditions with potential editors and collaborating in the program’s strategic planning. The provider will also be in charge of commissions’ administration and payment, while the advertisers will only have to face an overall monthly fee.
SUCCESS CASES

Jeff Bezos, CEO and founder of Amazon, was in a private party and started chatting with another guest who run her own web site and intended to sell books in it. Her intention gave Bezos the idea of asking the lady to link to Amazon (then in alarming red figures) and offering her a commission for every completed sale due to the link. Shortly afterwards, on July 1996, Amazon launched its affiliate program, called Associates Program, by which affiliates placed a banner or a text link in their sites addressing to either Amazon's homepage or individual books pages. Whenever a visitor coming from an associate’s web page bought a book in Amazon, the editor made the corresponding commission. Soon Amazon P&L’s bottom line abandoned its traditional red ink to stay black for ever since.

Additional Information

Other related areas and tools:
Advertising

Traditional tools it teams with:
Agents and commercial representatives’ management

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Word of mouth

Online tools which reinforce it:
Interactive webs and banners

Online tools with similar objectives:
Sponsored Search Engine Marketing (SEM)

To learn more:

INFOMEDIARIES AND CYBERMEDIATION

DEFINITION

An infomediary is normally a web site offering specialized information regarding customers and companies within a certain sector or industry. They take care of compiling, analyzing and distributing all interesting information in the market. Although there are several ways of infomediation, all of them share the vocation of gathering potential customers and sellers at a same place, their site. Thus the importance for companies marketing their products: infomediaries are
true catalytic channels which will act as a driving force to increase our sales. There's an alternative use of infomediaries: as a means of obtaining target's information since some of them sell customer's and aggregated purchases info (of course counting on all necessary legal permissions). There are four main types of infomediaries:

- **Directories**: they offer free information through hand-indexed data which allows visitors to easily identify the most interesting sites for their personal cases.
- **Smart Assistants**: these infomediaries are specialized on locating the products/services which best fit consumers needs following different criteria (such as price, delivery time, tech specs, etc.) give by their own navigation behaviour.
- **Valuation e-venues**: webs providing information (organized by price, range, products, customer support, etc.) about e-commerce sites as a result of previous valuations via e-surveys and direct feedback from customers.
- **Online purchasing groups**: these infomediaries are demand aggregators. They just gather consumers interested in purchasing the same products or services to collectively look for better offers not just in terms of price but also assistance, delivery, provision, etc.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Using this tool does not need any kind of technical implementation but the necessary efforts to achieve a good positioning within most visited infomediaries web sites within the sector. And these efforts should be focused on negotiating with them and on convincing our customers to give positive feedback in the infomediaries' sites that have this functionality.

**SUCCESS CASES**

One of the classical examples of infomediation is Kelkoo, which compiles information regarding 10,000 e-commerce portals all around Europe in order to help consumers to make up their purchasing decisions.

Google has also launched an infomediation tool based on the same principles; its name is Froogle and it sweeps the whole Internet in search for products and shops, offering users quick results perfectly backed by Google’s brand prestige and independence. Froogle’s advantage is that it acquires info by itself through active screening of companies’ webs by similar crawlers to the ones which index them for showing the search engine results, what offers a good opportunity for these companies: they may redefine their sites' layout and programming in order to improve Froogles’s valuation.

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**Infofranchise, first B2B franchises’ infomediary**

**Froogle, the most famous infomediary**
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Commercialization and markets research

Traditional tools it teams with:
All tools devoted to push the channel

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Printed directories by industry

Online tools which reinforce it:
Interactive webs, e-commerce portals and marketplaces

Online tools with similar objectives:
Direct Search Engine Marketing, cybermediation, B2B purchasing centers

To learn more:

COMMUNICATION AND E-MARKETING TOOLS: E-COMMUNICATION

STAKEHOLDERS SITES

DEFINITION

This tool includes all kind of websites addressed to stakeholders (so we are talking about internal communications here): shareholders (through specific minisites within quoted companies’ corporative webs); employees (through Intranets, password-protected internal sites which use the same technology external webs do) and distributors (via extranets, semi-private sites in which they can check orders status, etc.).

A corporative intranet is a company’s computers LAN which offers Internet-kind tools to simplify and improve operations regarding reports, queries, etc. in order to increase staff’s productivity; it’s also an excellent tool for internal communication at a workgroup level. An extranet (extended intranet) is a VPN (Virtual Private Network) which results of the interconnection of two or more intranets from different companies and which uses Internet protocols for transmitting information.

Shareholders minisites are devoted to provide them all necessary information for managing their investments.

e-Press Rooms may also be considered as stakeholders sites; an e-press room is a web space used by a corporation to provide corporative information to individuals, professionals or companies which need the info in order to communicate with the public opinion.

IMPLEMENTATION

Both Intranets and Extranets can be built using out of the box solutions which usually form part of integrated ERP systems.

Technical difficulties pop up when ad-hoc programming is the only path for integrating the old client-server applications in the new web-based environment. The key here will be to identify the
information that really must be shown as well as the ways for accessing it. Last related point to take into account is safety, in order to avoid critical information robbery.

SUCCESS CASES

Regarding distributors’ Extranets, the typical success case is WallMart, the leader supermarkets chain in USA. They were able to get to this leading position mainly thanks to real-time sharing data with their providers, which allows WallMart to keep stocks to the minimum to such an extent that their main warehouses are their trucks. This system also allows manufacturers to work for them JIT (Just In Time) with huge productivity improvements.

Regarding shareholders’ minisites, Spanish Telefónica’s deserves a special mention due to its quality and frequency of data updating, which has helped to build the common idea of ‘Matildes’ (Telefónica’s shares) being the most solid value in our stock market.

Last but not least, Intranets: any important multinational counts on a powerful intranet which could work as an example for us, but maybe IBM’s should be considered heads and shoulders above the rest: the blue giant was a pioneer in offering its employees the opportunity of working remotely from home and its intranet was the key element for providing access to the same functionalities available while in the office.

ADDITONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Trade marketing and branding

Traditional tools it teams with:
Corporative Statements. Staff conventions and team building events.

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Employee Handbook. Hundreds of faxes and phone calls devoted to coordinating orders with distributors.

Online tools which reinforce it:
Interactive webs

Online tools with similar objectives:
Newsgroups and stocks electronic management

To learn more:
Corporate intranet: create and manage an internal web for your organization. Ryan Bernard. ISBN: 0471149292
TWITTER MARKETING

DEFINITION

Social networks have consolidated as platforms oriented towards the business world. It is practically impossible to achieve the necessary online reputation associated with a consolidated brand without having a presence in these social networks. Analyses and forecasts for the year 2011 situate the active presence of brands in the social networks as an essential starting point for achieving success in any business.

Nevertheless, each social network has its own characteristics that can make it more or less appropriate for one or the other marketing objectives. Twitter, is more a search engine in real time and a platform of viral information transmission where news is distributed in real time. What is more, Twitter works as a vital tool for SEO since the visits that it gets through different links are exponential.

Twitter promotes businesses of brand consolidation and accelerates purchasing decisions. With regards to competition and determining added value, it allows us to monitor in real time what is being said about the brand and/or the products being offered.

Direct publicity has not been very developed in Twitter although there have been various successful experiences with the so called Promoted Tweets, these are tweets sponsored by some partners (Best Buy, Bravo, Red Bull, Sony Pictures, Starbucks, Virgin America, etc.) that appear at the top of some pages that come up when twittering that are not only publicity but informative since Twitter –due to its system Resonance – only sends these when they are considered to be useful. They are easily identified, tagged as Promoted when the advertiser pays, and come with all the features: how to respond, how to retweet and how to mark as favourite; and showing only one Promoted per page result of the search.

IMPLEMENTATION

Here are some rules for marketing on Twitter as presented in twitip.com.

1. Posting occasionally is not necessarily synonymous with spamming
2. Think before you promote
3. Think before you speak
4. Learn how to communicate effectively on Twitter
5. Enter into the community
6. Take maximum advantage of your account
7. Plan your messages
8. Don't go over the top in promoting the product
9. Facilitate conversation
10. Subscribe to relevant feeds

SUCCESS CASES

The combination of a great interactive campaign and Promoted Tweets worked spectacularly well for Toy Story 3, as can be confirmed by the action's CMO and ROI which were so tremendous that a sponsored tweet got 65 million impressions in 24 hours – although a tweet connected to Steve Jobs must have also had something to do with it...

A great example of a live and interactive Twitter Marketing campaign was launched by Volkswagen in February 2011 to promote its sponsorship of the the Planeta Terra Festival (Planet Earth Festival) in Sao Paulo and get its new Fox model known by young Brazilian adults. Festival tickets
were hidden all over the city and their locations were shared with potential customers through a map. The trick was that the map (based on Google Maps) could only be enlarged to view if a sufficient number of persons had exchanged the hashtag #foxatplanetaterra in Twitter:

The campaign was a great success and the hashtag was the top trending topic in Brazil for practically an entire day.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Other related areas and tools:
e-Advertising, Markets e-Research

**Traditional tools it teams with:**
Focus Groups, Guerilla Marketing

**Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:**
Traditional Market Studies, Press Releases

**Online tools which reinforce it:**
Traditional Market Studies, Press Releases

**Online tools with similar objectives:**
Blogs, Facebook Marketing

**To learn more:**
Twitter Marketing Personal y Profesional (Twitter Marketing Personal and Professional), José Antonio Carballar, RC Libros. ISBN: 978-84-938312-2-6

**BUSINESS VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES**

**DEFINITION**

A Virtual Community is a social aggregation that emerges from the net when a sufficient number of people engage in public discussions long enough to develop personal relations through cyberspace. When classifying virtual communities, a distinction must be made between the user oriented ones (in which participants decide the community theme, maybe geographically, demographically or by topic) and the ones oriented towards organizations (vertical, horizontal or geographic, whose themes are defined accordingly to the objective and working areas of the firm promoting them). The latter model corresponds to Business Virtual Communities.
IMPLEMENTATION

Business Virtual Communities about to be created should fit one of the following models: communities around a product; a service; a certain professional activity; formative communities; sales networks ones; or brand reinforcement communities (either introduction or entertaining ones).
In order for Business Virtual Communities to be attractive for future users, its structure must be carefully planned. This structure should consist of the following components: a set of individuals sharing a common culture, a common room (cyberspace), a group of mandatory rules or norms and a managerial team who control and administer them.

Steps to follow in order to successfully develop and maintain a Business Virtual Community are: its feasibility analysis, planning, services and technical platform selection and implementation, managers training and strong promotion till achieving a critical mass of users.

SUCCESS CASES

In Spain, Coca-Cola created the "Movimiento Coca-Cola" (Coca-cola Movement), a virtual community which offered its more than a million users the possibility of playing, chatting or exchanging promotional coupons. According to Hugo Giralt, Coca-Cola Spain’s e-Marketing manager, the Movimiento community meant lower investments in markets research, promotions and logistics and a bigger and more efficient advertising impact for Coca-Cola in our country.

Regarding Business Virtual Communities as a internal Communications tool, Crédit Agricole-Lyonnais has created about 300 communities for its staff, involving above 2,500 employees within an organization's competitive turn-around program.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Markets research, branding, promotion, advertising and commercialization

Traditional tools it teams with:
Company magazines for internal communication; corporative publications and public relations actions for external communication. Regarding Business Virtual Communities uses out of communication, we may refer to point of sale promotions as well as products and markets tests

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Traditional users clubs (company or product oriented), whose offline structure is much more expensive to maintain and its loyalty effect much weaker (since each members’ perceived value is much smaller)

Online tools which reinforce it:
E-commerce portals, interactive webs, online coupons, forums, distribution lists and chats

Online tools with similar objectives:
Social networks and e-events

To learn more:


RSS MARKETING VS. DISTRIBUTION LISTS

DEFINITION

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) Marketing, a.k.a. Syndicated Contents Marketing, was born as a service meant to offer blogs to its frequent visitors so that they could keep up-to-date with the latest posts without the need to permanently visit the weblogs. When a client or potential customer subscribes to an RSS feed from a certain company, he starts receiving information without having to give his e-mail address since he checks it out via an RSS Reader he can download for free (there are several ones to choose). Contents reception via RSS is exclusively based on a simple text format, a feature due to its origin as a service for bloggers, who needed to distribute small doses of plain information, no images, no navigation, just text. However, according to Pew Internet, just a 5% of web users receive content frequently via RSS. That’s why distribution lists continue to exist despite of their multiple problems (spamming, etc.).

IMPLEMENTATION

Distribution lists services are very simple to implement; just a web front office to receive subscribers data and a back office to provide marketing data mining services using those data. Besides, there’s a list server program for each existing distribution list running under several standards such as Listserv or Majordomo, which differ in the way of subscribing, sending messages or dropping from the list. But apart from technical considerations, what’s key here is to be able to offer contents attractive enough to maintain clients or potential customers’ interest. Additionally distribution lists may or may not allow public feedback from subscribers (received by all members in the list), which means the need for an administrator; however, keep in mind that this functionality is much more suitable for internal communication than for external one.
Regarding RSS Marketing, (whose orange symbols are appearing on more and more webs each passing day), three considerations must be taken into account:

- Don’t forget content is king; nothing new when compared to distribution lists.
- Don’t use the same free RSS management platform most of blogs use; they do not provide such essential marketing functionalities as targeting or tracking.

And please include links to web pages offering the possibility of downloading the main free RSS readers.

SUCCESS CASES

We may quote TodoPerros portal in Spain as an example of a good use of distribution lists. It started as an amateur web site for exchanging opinions and tricks for a better care of dogs, but after using this tool for promoting the site, it now counts on more than 140,000 registered users, which provides the site owners important advertising profit.

Regarding RSS Marketing, eDreams, one of the most popular online travel agencies, uses this tool for communicating latest offers to its potential customers, who do not need to visit the agency's web in order to receive the offers which are best aligned with their personal interests.

E-dreams Spain’s RSS Feed  TodoPerros’ distribution list

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Branding and advertising

Traditional tools it teams with:
Conferences and press releases

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Printed bulletins

Online tools which reinforce it:
Interactive webs, corporative blogs and e-mail marketing

Online tools with similar objectives:
Newsletters and newsgroups; forums; and e-press rooms

To learn more:
ARCHIVE

E-GRPS

DEFINITION

GRP (short for Gross Rating Points) is the sum of ratings achieved by a specific media vehicle or schedule. It represents the percentage of the target audience reached by an advertisement. If the advertisement appears more than once, the GRP figure represents the sum of each individual GRP.

GRPs in Internet are still low when compared to mass media such as TV since the number of people with access to Internet is still not so big as the number of people who watch TV. Besides the concept of GRP is only valid in terms of transactional marketing. GRPs have to be adapted to be effective in digital media so blended marketing campaigns can be properly measured.

Thus e-GRPs, or electronic GRPs, also named iGRPs ("i" from interactive), are born. This measurement consists of reasonably estimating the number of unique users who will be reached through any online channel and correlate it to the gross number of hired printouts. Thus a relation (e-GRPs) will be obtained which can be compatible with traditional GRPs.

IMPLEMENTATION

In the case of this tool, all the operational effort is on the provider’s side, being the advertiser’s only concern to hire this service, straight or indirectly through the agency.

It’s key to count on a significant panellist’s base. If it’s properly structured regarding on and offline media usage, it will be able to provide comparable and significant measurements of the number of unique visitors who get to a site due to a certain piece of an e-marketing campaign. Then comparing this number to the exposure frequency and applying social-demographic targeting an e-GRPS figure will be obtained for each element of the campaign. Finally by confronting aggregated e-GRPs and traditional GRPs within a detailed cost-analysis environment, blended marketing campaigns could be optimized in terms of ROI.

SUCCESS CASES

Procter&Gamble has cooperated with Nielsen Netratings for developing Apollo Project, an initiative addressed to measure online campaigns success integrating digital and traditional metrics under the premise “to compare apples with apples”. The key idea is to measure one day in life of a prototype consumer, evaluating every exposition to an advertising message, no matter the media or channel, but keeping in mind that nowadays TV is no longer media king: for instance traditional radio impact is adjusted regarding online radio one and every connection to Internet is taken into account as it is time devoted to play with videoconsoles. After completing a pilot program with 500 people, a panel with 50,000 members in USA and 70,000 worldwide is in its start-up phase and will be giving P&G a good enough base to start using really significant e-GRPs in order to improve its decision making both in on and offline marketing campaigns.
Impact And exposure Graphics from Nielsen-Apollo

Integral report from comScore Media Metrix regarding AOL

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Advertising

Traditional tools it teams with:
Online media purchasing, campaigns organization and campaign control via GRPs

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Online media purchasing based on CPM history

Online tools which reinforce it:
VRM and Web Metrics/Log Analysis

Online tools with similar objectives:
Marketing Decision Support Systems and Profitability Online Control

To learn more:

AVATAR MARKETING (SECOND LIFE AND OTHER METAVERSE)

DEFINITION

An avatar is the second identity a user chooses to represent himself within a virtual world he has joined. This identity consists of a 3D representation of the user based on clothes, appearance and behaviour features defined by its human ‘alter ego’. Second Life (although it might be better to say ‘The Other Life’) is the most popular of these virtual worlds: up to 4 million registered users all around the world, 66% of them between 18 and 24 years old; 1.3 millions of frequent users; 865,000 new users just during January 2007; and what’s most important: €1.14 millions electronically transferred each day. Second Life even counts on its own currency, the Linden$, which has a fixed exchange rate with the real dollar. Let’s think of how many hours younger targets are spending in this kind of worlds instead of in front of the TV.

IMPLEMENTATION

There are two basic options: building a virtual world around our brand or going to one of the most popular ones and organizing our marketing campaigns there. Wells Fargo, for instance, followed
the first path by launching Stage Coach Island, a world designed to teach children in the right use of money; and DaimlerChrysler launched Mokitown, a comic-looking virtual world for pre-teenagers to make them aware of traffic security; this option poses the additional problem of developing a community from scratch attracting users to the new digital world. But if what we are looking for is a deep impact in our target, the fastest solution is to use the most important virtual worlds (mainly Second Life) to establish our company there. It’s not mandatory to contact these virtual worlds’ representatives in order to settle a partnership with them to organize our marketing campaigns. Much on the contrary, David Fleck, Linden Labs Vice President of Marketing, has clearly stated that he won’t be dedicating much of his time to company's heads contacting him. He advises them to purchase an island in Second Life and settle a head office in it; once they have done that they may contact virtual advertising agencies within the metaverse and hire their services.

SUCCESS CASES

McDonald’s has used one of these virtual worlds, Sims Online, to successfully install virtual restaurants in which automated (not controlled by humans) shop assistants sell the same menus you can find in real life; users’ avatars select different food and drink options using collapsible menus. Adidas and Nike are using Second Life to commercialize their trainers, some of which allow the avatar to run faster than usual. Levi Strauss has tested and launched new jeans models in a virtual world called There. American Cancer Society has organized a charitable gala in Second Life using avatars to sell virtual candles to get up to $5,000 donations.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Markets research, branding, product marketing and commercialization

Traditional tools it teams with:
All the advertising ones

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Advertising via TV Product placement. Focus group for markets research

Online tools which reinforce it:
Forums, chats, blogs and online focus groups

Online tools with similar objectives:
E-games, microspots and rich media ads

To learn more:
PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS NETWORKS

DEFINITION

Professional contacts networks, whose most famous example used to be LinkedIn till Plaxo and Xing showed up, are one of the varieties of the wider category called social networks, like the archifamous MySpace or Facebook. Leisure social networks were the first to appear and once its communication power was clear, business communication didn’t take long to try to take advantage of this potential and professional contacts networks were born. These network work on a by invitation only basis and link all professional contacts an executive counts on. When gathering and online interconnecting all executives’ contacts, multiple business possibilities (which were not visible in the offline world) emerge immediately when you realize that a contact’s contact or one of your contacts is precisely the person your company is looking for (may be as a customer, provider, distributor, employee, etc.).

As previously indicated, the most popular and general purpose network of this kind is LinkedIn, which has grown 323% in 2006 and counts on more than 10 million professionals. But there are many of them, even at a local level, like for instance Neurona or Econozco in Spain.

IMPLEMENTATION

Just in case you are thinking of developing a professional contacts network for your company within its sector, these are the minimal functionalities it must count on:

- Contact lists automatic updating.
- Visible profiles.
- Availability for creating new links through introduction services and other ways of online social connection.

If you decide to bet on using an existing professional contacts network, please find some indications you should consider:

- First of all, you should be part of it. While some networks allow straight registration, others demand a member’s introduction in order to be accepted as a new one.
- Time should be assigned for creating good profiles for each of the best executives within the company, perfectly detailing their areas of expertise and interest. And don’t forget to exclude the “career opportunities” option in their profiles if you don’t want them to start receiving job offers from your competitors; professional contacts networks are headhunters favourite weapons!

SUCCESS CASES

Howard Dean’s campaign for becoming the democratic party candidate for the presidential election 2003-04 in the States was mainly based on a social network called Meetup, which is a network specially focused on professional events. By then it counted on around 2,500 themes in about 600 cities. Meetup helped make close to100,000 citizens meet Dean all around the country.
Services recommendations in LinkedIn

Meetup social network help creating a candidate out of nothing: Howard Dean

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other related areas and tools:
Branding and advertising

Traditional tools it teams with:
Offline campaigns from Public Relations Agencies

Traditional tools it substitutes at a lower cost:
Commissions to gain business contacts

Online tools which reinforce it:
Search Engine Optimization

Online tools with similar objectives:
Leisure social networks and e-Public Relations

To learn more: