



THE GILBANE GROUP

White Paper

Strategic eMarketing: Converting Leads into Profits

Utilizing Web Content Management as an eMarketing platform
to deliver tangible ROI on marketing investments

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eMarketing, the practice of utilizing all the versatility the Internet offers, is as much a strategy as it is a compelling set of technologies and practices. It should drive sales, period. Proving that it can – and quantifying that it does – is the marketer's conundrum. Solution providers that understand the need to increase the Web Content Management (Web CMS) impact on revenue generation rather than simply providing administrative control are delivering Web CMS-driven eMarketing platforms. In this market segment, the approach combines commoditized functionality for Web site management with the technologies necessary for true *revenue* management.



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Executive Summary

More and more marketing dollars are moving online, raising the bar for corporate expectations of traditional Web sites. According to a recent study by *eMarketer*, U.S. Internet advertising spending reached \$16.4 billion in 2006, a nearly 31 percent increase over 2005. In 2007, spending is projected to reach nearly \$20 billion. In its current U.S.-based forecast, JupiterResearch says that email marketing spending will grow to \$1.1 billion by 2010, “fueled by spending on retention, acquisition, and transactional email.” There is no doubt that the Internet is a critical component of marketing and sales strategies for organizations large and small.

A Web site is one of the most multi-faceted communication tools that marketers have at their disposal. It is immediate, dynamic, and globally accessible. It is now at the center of most offline and online marketing activities. More importantly, it can be personalized, optimized for multiple search engines, integrated with leading-edge analytics, and used as a primary lead generation engine that integrates with sales force automation (SFA) and customer relationship management (CRM) systems.

eMarketing, the practice of utilizing all the versatility the Internet offers, is as much a strategy as it is a compelling set of technologies and practices. The goals are clear and universal:

- Targeted lead generation
- Maximized lead conversion
- Consistent retention for upsell opportunities
- Precise analytics for effectivity measurement
- Continual, closed-loop improvement

Herein lies the problem, however – the allure of intriguing, new Internet marketing techniques, impossible to ignore, are all too often implemented in a disconnected, department-centric fashion. Lacking cohesiveness between marketing, sales, and customer service processes, many eMarketing campaigns result in a glaring ROMI (Return on Marketing Investment) void.

As a result, the opportunity to definitively measure which methods work and which do not is significantly compromised. Optimizing, automating, or expanding any particular method becomes mere speculation when budgeting marketing dollars to enable projected revenue increases. The ROMI void grows exponentially when companies have multiple Web sites.

For the small to medium-size business, achieving eMarketing goals is challenging at best. Most, if not all, organizations manage tight budgets with limited resources. In addition, designing eMarketing campaigns that deliver tangible ROI results is an emerging skill set. As Dr. David Stewart at the University of Southern California’s Marshall School of Business notes, “Marketing people are talking a lot about accountability, but we have an absence of tradition in this area, and also a lack of knowledge about measurement-based accountability that’s tied to the financial performance of the firm.”

eMarketing should drive sales, period. Proving that it can – and quantifying that it does – is the conundrum. Compounding skill set challenges is the fact that until recently, technology-driven eMarketing and measurement has not been well-integrated with Web site management nor have such capabilities been financially accessible to a broad market.

The good news is that corporate demand, improvements in content management technologies, and emerging technology delivery such as SaaS (Software as a Service) are significantly changing this scenario. As a result, enabling coordinated, multi-faceted, and *measured* eMarketing campaigns is within reach of organizations of all sizes. Even better, there are concrete methods and technologies for eliminating the ROMI void by using Web Content Management (Web CMS) systems to centralize eMarketing techniques.

Essential Components of Profitable eMarketing

- ✓ Brand management ✓ Lead generation and conversion ✓ Revenue growth

These traditional, institutionalized goals for marketing investments have driven corporate growth strategies for decades. And depending on the coordination and cohesiveness of marketing campaigns, conventional techniques such as direct mail, print advertising, radio, and telemarketing have enabled organizations to be successful in achieving them.

Be forewarned, however. The pervasiveness of the Internet has literally leveled the playing field when it comes to achieving these goals in an “always on” world. Today’s marketers face enormous pressures to utilize the Internet as a communication vehicle, a lead generation portal, and a sales channel. Many are struggling to understand what works and what doesn’t in an environment where grabbing attention can be elusive, enticing conversion is easier said than done, and measuring effectiveness appears more and more complicated.

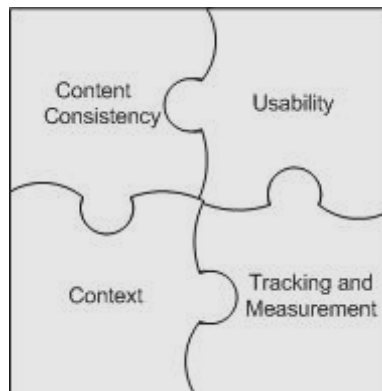
It’s a challenge that many find dizzying, given an array of emerging approaches, techniques, and technologies. In essence, the definition of multi-channel as a simplistic choice of a print or electronic medium no longer exists. Internet-driven practices classified under the umbrella of “eMarketing” are as far from one-dimensional as possible. Consider the variety of techniques within a multi-faceted, Internet-driven marketing campaign as the cusp of possibilities:

- Direct email marketing
- Search engine marketing, both paid and “organic”
- Personalized Web landing pages
- RSS-driven content distribution
- Event registrations, interactive surveys and forms
- Rich media advertising including video and podcasting
- Social media advertising within Internet communities, blogs, and wikis

The good news is that coordinated and cohesive eMarketing programs have the potential to target, entice, and personalize conversations with specific global audiences in ways that conventional marketing techniques can not. On the other hand, the promise of new profitability channels predictably increases pressures for tangible results and accountability. Corporate expectations for tangible ROMI have steadily increased from a dull roar to a consistent, piercing demand. As Richard Rosen from the Institute of Direct Marketing notes:

“The age of accountability requires a new way of thinking – especially in terms of marketing and advertising. The shift can be made by taking small steps within the existing marketing process. Ideally, it is a shift that is supported at the top level of the organization, championing sales, marketing, advertising and finance to work together to make the customer the number one focus.”

Delivering eMarketing that provides tangible results requires a renewed focus on the essential components of profitable marketing. These campaigns should drive sales, period – no shortcuts, no excuses and no “passing GO.” Why are the stakes so high? Because in this arena, communication takes place at lightning speed, the volume of “digital noise” is deafening, and random, uncoordinated messaging can erode brand equity as fast as a Google search return.



Content Consistency: The Brand Management Enabler

By now, everyone has heard that “content is king.” This is not news to savvy marketers, whose careers are information-driven. However, many a campaign has produced market confusion due to multi-channel collateral with glaring inconsistencies. eMarketing campaigns cannot afford uncoordinated, inconsistent messaging. Nor can they be subject to fragmented processes across marketing, sales, and customer service organizations.

Perhaps the greatest and most powerful advantage of eMarketing is that information is immediately searchable and globally accessible. But, herein also exists one of its greatest risks: the speed at which a 24 x 7 Internet can erode brand equity when information is invisible or contradictory. In addition, eMarketing has no “stop the presses” escape routes, no print fulfillment agencies performing quality assurance, and in the case of direct email campaigns, a spam filter that’s milliseconds away from being triggered.

From a brand awareness, management and equity perspective, content *consistency* is king. This demands an investment in a single source of content, banners, images, rich media assets, and metadata – or keywords – to serve as the “golden copy” for multi-faceted eMarketing campaigns. The bottom line? Multiple, digital channels such Web sites, email, personalized landing pages, and eNewsletters cannot contradict each other. Each must be part of a phased, coordinated communications strategy that builds on the previous and prepares for the next.

Marketers that understand the value of brand understand the significance of content consistency.

Content Consistency Checklist

- ✓ Establish product terminology: manage it through centralized access.
- ✓ Eliminate content creation redundancy: collaborate instead and strive for *one voice*.
- ✓ Keep it short: less copy equals more conversions.
- ✓ Be persuasive and “action-oriented”: write, re-write, edit and test to make sure the content is on target.
- ✓ Invest in a style guide: synchronize color, fonts, and text emphasis techniques.
- ✓ Reuse published content: coordinate promotion with destination.

Usability and Context: The Customer Experience Enabler

eMarketing campaigns that engage potential and existing customers demand Web experiences that are interactive, innovative, compelling, and as discussed previously, consistent. According to a December 2006 survey from the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 65% of American adult Internet users, about 92 million people, use the Internet on an average day. The top two most highly-rated activities are sending or reading email and using a search engine to find information.

As marketers are well aware, the battle against information overload is formidable. Doubleclick's 2005 Consumer Email Study revealed that the average consumer receives 361 emails per week, an increase of 17% over 2004. Competition for mindshare is fierce, to say the least. In addition, technology-savvy consumers are armed with a bevy of tools to suppress what they view as an "onslaught" of irrelevant messaging. The sheer volume of Web information has also created rigid, preconceived judgments about the value of the content they have been or will be exposed to. Here's a chilling statistic that underscores this point:

The visual appeal of a Web site is assessed within 50 milliseconds.

Gitte Lindgaard, Gary Fernandes, Cathy Dudek, J. Brown,
Behaviour and Information Technology Journal
<http://taylorandfrancis.metapress.com/content/wx27w11640p75106/>

One could easily interpret the message from this study as "grabbing attention requires speed." Certainly, speed is part of the equation. However, the formula for successful eMarketing campaigns depends as much on the *appeal* of messaging as its velocity. This is the realm of "customer experience," a term so prevalent in today's eMarketing resources.

eMarketing promises an opportunity to attract new customers, strengthen existing customer relationships, reinforce brand and enhance loyalty. Opportunity however, is directly dependent on *how* target audiences experience their interactions with Web sites, landing pages, promotional emails, video advertising and other eMarketing techniques. Knowing how prospects or customers feel about what they saw, read or heard is critical. Making the experience personal and relevant enough to make a strong impression is mandatory.

The foundation for providing *experiences* as opposed to information rests on two broad principles: usability and context. Building credibility is impossible without them.

Usability and Context Checklist

- ✓ Understand accessibility standards: up to 20% of all Internet users have some form of disability and 10% of males are colorblind.
- ✓ Context begets relevance: know your customers and talk in their "language."
- ✓ Personalize landing pages according to customer segment, the message (the offer) and the promotion or product.
- ✓ Design effortless interactivity: lengthy forms, surveys, and registration pages are lead generation inhibitors.
- ✓ Ban even the possibility of a "dead" link

Measurement and Analysis: The ROMI Enabler

Marketing programs must have measurable outcomes. So say numerous studies, including 66 percent of executives in 2004 research from the Association of National Advertisers (ANA.) (*Making the Perfect Marketer, Association of National Advertisers and Booz Allen Hamilton Marketing Organization Survey, 2004*) Marketing guru Philip Kotler discusses the problem of ROMI void in stronger terms:

“CEOs are understandably getting impatient with marketing. They feel that they get accountability for their investments in finance, production, information technology, even purchasing, but don't know what their marketing spending is achieving.”

*Philip Kotler, Professor of International Marketing
Kellogg Graduate School of Business, Northwestern University*

Effective measurement and analysis is not simply a checkbox item to relieve the discontent of corporate executives. Rather, these components can close the gap between marketing and sales organizations by aligning, or better yet *bolting together* lead generation and lead conversion efforts. It's no secret that bridging disparate marketing, sales and customer service business processes is one of the “holy grails” for most organizations.

Fragmented, isolated, and disorganized efforts undermine any potential of collaboration and coordination, culturally or in daily business practices. Inevitably, generating the lead becomes disconnected from closing the sale, which then severs customer service opportunities for cross and up-sells. The typical “blame game” between departments that results has no effect on the growing level of confusion among prospects and current customers, which slowly but surely erodes brand equity.

Obviously, this scenario is not the road to closed-loop marketing, in which the goal is to understand the rate of marketing *spend* in relation to the return on the marketing *investment*. Sounds simple enough, but marketers have struggled for decades with this formidable challenge. Still, as Wharton marketing professor Peter S. Fader notes, “Measurement is inherently more difficult in marketing, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't try it.”

ROMI is impossible without measuring the accuracy and response to eMarketing techniques and as a result, understanding why some campaigns deliver relevancy and others do not. Identifying and capturing data is actually only half the battle. Rather, the problem for many organizations is accessing and consolidating the data with critical sources such as sales force automation (SFA) and customer relationship management (CRM) systems and then, collaboratively using the data for informed decision-making and continuous improvement.

Measurement and Analysis Checklist

- ✓ Design targeted campaigns based on specific consumer and market information
- ✓ Execute automated campaigns with integrated, multi-faceted components
- ✓ Track, compile, and analyze volume, response, and conversion rates to identify successes and failures
- ✓ Integrate campaign results with SFA and CRM resources
- ✓ Refine and improve campaigns based on timely, accurate data accessible to a coordinated marketing, sales, and customer service team.

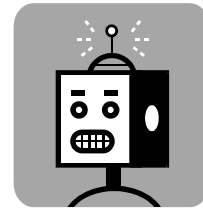
Web Content Management: A Powerful eMarketing Platform

The influence of the Internet has forever changed the marketing industry, resulting in the proliferation of technology-driven marketing practices. Certainly, the pervasiveness of print collateral has not disappeared, but its impact is now marginalized without corresponding electronic materials. Compounding the challenge to marketers is that the definition of “electronic” is far from one-dimensional; multi-channel continues to be redefined as innovative eMarketing techniques exploit a full range of content types including Web pages, emails, video, and audio.

The allure of eMarketing is impossible to ignore. Consumers expect it and corporate executives demand it. Unfortunately, eMarketing campaigns are all too often implemented in a disconnected, department-centric fashion. As a result, “quick-shot” email campaigns, generic landing pages, and disorganized Web sites are not delivering the ROI that marketers hoped for.

The good news is that the Web Content Management (Web CMS) industry is beginning to respond to the demand for solutions that enable multi-faceted, cohesive, and coordinated eMarketing campaigns. Solution providers that understand the need to increase Web CMS’s impact on revenue generation rather than simply administrative control are delivering eMarketing as an integral platform. In this market segment, the approach combines commoditized functionality for *Web site* management with technologies necessary for *revenue* management.

Imagine a programmable Outside Sales Representative whose performance is predictable and measurable based on specific marketing campaign goals. Think of this representative as an *engine* that efficiently utilizes combined eMarketing techniques and technologies to uncover unique leads and increase conversion rates.



As your business partner, “right-hand man,” and invaluable assistant, the engine understands how to combine campaign targets and results with CRM and SFA resources. It provides timed, automated progress reports to brand managers, inside sales, and customer service representatives and spurs the team to collaborate on campaign fine-tuning and improvement. It takes no coffee breaks, guides your A/B testing processes, and manages your keyword strategies for search engine optimization (SEO.)

Rather than a dream, this scenario is the reality of a marketer’s ability to utilize Web CMS-driven eMarketing platforms. The availability of solutions that deliver this reality is an extremely important industry breakthrough. The accessibility of solutions from a pricing perspective is equally significant, broadening implementation opportunities to an array of small and mid-size organizations. Software as a Service (SaaS) models continue to have the greatest impact on this trend, allowing marketers to deploy and manage eMarketing programs with lower upfront costs and reduced risk.

Web CMS-driven eMarketing platforms can significantly close the gap between disconnected strategies for brand awareness and management as well as provide more collaborative marketing, sales, and customer services processes. In addition, the approach brings the world of analytics technologies closer to marketers than ever before, transforming ROMI expectations from unrealistic to conceivable.

Although an emerging industry approach, there are specific capabilities that marketers should expect from platforms that promise to deliver optimized lead generation, conversion, and analysis. These include:

- Centralized management of Web site assets, including HTML pages, forms, and rich media sources such as video and audio.
- Performance management for micro sites as well as landing, registration and survey pages
- Email marketing management, including rules-driven interactivity and dynamic personalization

- SEO tools, including metadata and keyword management
- Analytics capabilities, including tagging, tracking, conversion measurement, automated optimization, and generic Web site behavior reporting
- Integration paths to SFA and CRM resources
- Design tools that promote usability and account for Web accessibility guidelines

The following subsections provide more details on selected capabilities to help you assess your Web site management and eMarketing technology strategy. If you are searching for a Web CMS-driven eMarketing platform, this information should help you develop a requirements list to properly evaluate available solutions.

eMarketing Automation: The Impact of Single-Sourced Content

When potential buyers get the right level of information from a direct email, a Web site, or an eNewsletter, they investigate further. If the information remains consistent and relevant, they buy. If it does not or worse, buyers cannot *find* information during their investigation, they give up and obviously, don't buy. eMarketing research such as MarketingSherpa's *Email Marketing 2007, Benchmarking Guide* underscores the value of Web site content. During landing page tests to understand effectiveness, "the top three best ROI tests were more to do with words (copy, offer, subject line) than with design or graphics."

Consider the following scenario. A typical integrated eMarketing campaign starts with a direct email with promotional information targeted to a specific audience. Assigned to the creation task by a marketing or brand manager, a copywriter writes the email based his interpretation of the campaign goals. He incorporates the digital assets such as a corporate logo, product image, banner, and aesthetic components from other corporate Web pages and a library of sources on his desktop. Using email as a "review and approve" mechanism, he receives approval to distribute the email to a spreadsheet-based list provided by marketing. The email includes a link to the corporate home page, which makes no reference to, nor provides any links to promotion details.

Web site statistics for the home page reveal little to no increase in the subsequent week. Brand and marketing managers are not impressed, and re-assign the task to another copywriter, who creates another version of the email, starting the process again from scratch. Not surprisingly, there is no Web CMS solution that drives the content creation, management, and distribution processes in this scenario. Further, there are no integrated eMarketing or analytics technologies that would ensure any iota of success.

Achieving messaging consistency across each touchpoint in an eMarketing campaign is integral for brand management and consumer-perceived relevancy. The takeaway message from this scenario? Drawing from a unified same base of content, banners, images and rich media assets – or single-sourcing – should be "Marketing 101."

Marketers who understand this *from the start* avoid the ROMI void that inevitably occurs when multiple campaigns for multiple projects are based on an uncoordinated, mismanaged stream of emails and landing pages. The void becomes vast when an organization realizes that none of it can be A/B tested, tracked, analyzed, or most significantly, used as the basis for eMarketing automation methods.

Now, consider an optimized scenario:

- A copywriter creates the email within a Web CMS solution as though it were a static HTML page, inserting logos, banners, and images from the solution's centralized digital asset library.
- A Web CMS marketing user then creates a personalized landing page that includes a 'call to action' and Web form that integrates the data requirements of a SFA or CRM system to capture user response. The landing page utilizes content and digital assets from the *same source* as those used within the email.

- He also applies a core set of Web CMS-stored metadata including page tags and embedded keywords. This metadata enables the capture of status information such as “opened”, “not opened, or “clicked through.”
- Workflow with embedded approval requirements automatically manages the review process through various departments.
- Once the direct email is approved, a Web CMS solution merges content with contact information culled from a formalized lead database and either automates distribution directly through the Web CMS or by delivering the static HTML email page to an email service provider (ESP).
- The ESP delivers the email based on permission-based rules provided from the company’s SFA or CRM system.

Single-sourcing is a critical enabler of eMarketing automation that raises the level of content consistency throughout an entire campaign, from components such as direct emails to landing pages to “call to action” techniques such as opt-in forms and surveys. Web CMS’s deep heritage in this arena enables it to inherently support the concept of creating content once, and enabling its reuse an infinite number of times.

Search Engine Optimization: More than Just Paid Advertising

Search engines are a daily part of Internet life. Search engines use various ranking and relevancy-based methods to perform keyword matching inside a specific advertising group to decide which pages “reach the top” and which do not. Their influence on consumer behavior is profound.

eMarketing campaigns simply cannot afford to understand and implement search engine optimization, better known as SEO. Optimization can focus on two forms of advertising: organic, natural search and paid search. For the latter, the money to be squandered on paid search marketing campaigns such as Pay-per-Click or the newer concepts of Pay-per-Action or Cost-per-Action could eliminate a small firm’s eMarketing budget within months.

Certainly, marketers should be familiar with resources such as Google Adwords, Yahoo’s ContentMatch, Microsoft adCenter, and ASK’s Sponsored Listings as paid search resources. However, the value of organic, natural search should not be overlooked. According to JupiterResearch, more than 80 percent of clicks on search engine results pages actually go to organic listings versus paid search ads. (*Search Marketing: Understanding Searchers’ Patterns to Enable Targeting. February 2007.*)

Defining keywords for natural search is both a science and an art. As such, it has spawned a specialized market segment for independent SEO agencies to help organizations optimize strategies. However, outsourcing SEO is just not realistic for the small to mid-size firm managing a tight budget with limited resources.

This should not preclude these organizations from designing an SEO strategy. An important differentiator of an eMarketing-driven Web CMS platform is its ability to help marketers do just that. In fact, here’s where consistent, single-sourced content *plus* intelligent metadata *plus* Web site management controls make a great team. Capabilities to look for include functionality to:

- Identify and test a series of keyword phrases before implementation.
- Perform keyword analysis on factors such as keyword density, frequency, and weight.
- Manage robots.txt files for each Web page.
- Control metadata such as h and alt tags as well as url, page, and browser headings for each Web page.

There is no doubt that keyword development and analysis requires commitment, design collaboration between marketing, writers, and subject matter experts, as well as testing and ongoing monitoring. The bottom line however, is that Web sites pages that rank well via search

engines are more valuable than those that do not. eMarketing-driven Web CMS platforms that can help marketers produce significant natural search results at an affordable price point can be invaluable.

Web Analytics: Understanding What Works and What Doesn't

The Web Analytics Association defines Web analytics as “the objective tracking, collection, measurement, reporting and analysis of quantitative Internet data to optimize Web sites and marketing initiatives.” For many marketers, achieving this goal has not been a viable reality based on available and affordable technologies. If analytics was possible at all, it was usually implemented by home-grown systems designed, implemented, and controlled by IT resources.

In essence, marketers have lacked a business user-friendly environment to understand visitors, traffic patterns, and eMarketing campaign effectiveness. This situation has now changed dramatically, as Web CMS-driven eMarketing platforms fuse analytics with technologies such as centralized content management, search engine optimization, and integration with CRM/SFA systems.

Web analytics brings a number of powerful capabilities to the table when *fully integrated* with a Web CMS-driven eMarketing platform, including

- Consistent KPIs (key performance metrics)
- Predictive, scenario-based capabilities based on keyword and phrase analysis
- Automatic campaign tracking
- Accurate current and historical data on lead conversions
- Dashboards that enable ease of understanding and spur collaboration
- On-demand reporting
- And most importantly, tracking the lead source to the sale

For those relying on direct email marketing for lead conversion, integrated analytics is a must. Direct email is a compelling example because of its immediacy and ability to deliver results in the shortest possible timeframe. One of the most widely-used eMarketing techniques today, the Direct Marketing Association believes that direct email delivers the highest ROI of any technique: “a whopping \$57.25 for every dollar spent on it in 2005.” (*Power of Direct Economic-Impact Study, October 2006.*)

Certainly, this finding would not have been possible without tracking, measurement, and analysis. Applying its promise to any direct mail campaign requires the same analytics-based approach.

eMarketing Platforms in Action: Focus on Manufacturing

In the following case study example, a Midwest manufacturer faced a harsh reality. The marketing department had invested heavily in a corporate Web site based on high expectations for the ability to promote its brand, capture leads, and enable sales. The site provided company and product information along with an opt-in subscription method to attract new customers through supplemental communications.

Although generating reasonable traffic, the site was having no impact on sales. Worse yet, the company's external sales channel, a group of 22 independent dealers across the U.S, Canada, and the UK, continued to under-perform. Marketing struggled daily to answer the proverbial executive question, “Where is the return on the dollars we spent?”

In trying to formulate an explanation, the department uncovered a number of critical gaps in their research and implementation strategy for the initial Web design project. Categorizing their findings in terms of people, process, and technology issues, marketing set out to address the challenges:

Category	Issue
People	<p>Lack of daily collaboration between marketing and sales personnel</p> <p>Absence of agreed-upon metrics to define sales performance criteria</p> <p>No marketing to sales reporting process</p> <p>Customer service reports that described “confused consumers” who could not easily locate specific product information</p>
Process	<p>Direct email marketing did not utilize the Web site’s opt-in subscription list</p> <p>Little to no analysis of Web traffic or Web site behavior</p> <p>Absence of factual documentation that proved or explained sales underperformance</p>
Technology	<p>No formal content management system</p> <p>No central database to organize incoming leads from the Web site as well as other marketing efforts such as direct email campaigns, telemarketing, magazine advertising, and tradeshow exhibits</p> <p>No Web analytics, lead tracking or reporting capabilities</p> <p>No way to personalize email marketing campaigns based on customer segment such as consumer or trade</p>

These issues prevented the company from:

- Tracking and measuring the effectiveness of marketing dollars spent
- Providing executive management with information on actual versus desired sales performance
- Gaining an understanding of current and future customer requirements
- Utilizing the Web site as a lead generation and conversion engine.

Documenting the Requirements: Toward Tangible eMarketing Results

Addressing the roadblocks and bottlenecks in marketing and sales processes required the company to re-evaluate their current environment. The foundation of a strong Web content management platform was missing, the integration with a sales lead database was non-existent, and developing an ongoing resource of timely, accurate analytics data seemed to be an impossible task. Equally disturbing was the lack of communication and collaboration between the marketing, sales, and customer service teams.

Marketing stepped back and documented the desired components of its eMarketing strategy. Some goals were simple and some less straightforward, but the *end goal* was clear: integrate best-of-breed technologies to achieve the following requirements as quick as possible and at an affordable price point:

- Increase the use of brand images, product-specific rich media, and navigation on the Web site for increased brand consistency, content relevancy and usability.
- Create better customer profiles through Web site-driven surveys and industry specific contact forms.
- Implement personalized email marketing development and distribution, with embedded tracking.

- Based on *accessible and shared* results:
 - Generate automated lead categorization and integration to a centralized CRM/SFA database.
 - Automate category-based lead distribution to the appropriate independent manufacturing firm.
 - Trigger workflows and the automatic generation of task lists according to lead type.
 - Create more relevant content for the Web site.
- Gain insight into the advantages of natural and paid search techniques.

Achieving these goals would allow the company to better understand what happened when people visited their Web site, where the traffic was coming from, and which eMarketing techniques were delivering actual results. It would also enable the foundation for closed-loop marketing processes to improve collaboration internally and across the external sales channel.

Implementing a Solution: Hot Banana's Web CMS-driven eMarketing Platform

As the company researched its options, the marketing department was continuously intrigued by the description of a Web CMS solution from Hot Banana, a subsidiary of J.L. Halsey Corporation. Claiming to be "taking Web CMS to the next level by integrating Web site optimization and marketing automation features," the department decided to request information based on a simple message: prove it.

And prove it they did. Within months, this small manufacturer:

- Launched a new Web site based on Web Content Management principles.
- Increased leads by 21% and reduced the time it takes to close a sale by 40%
- Has real-time ability to understand marketing campaign results and generate sales forecasts
- Can hold the marketing and sales chain accountable for performance
- Responds immediately to prospects through email, eliminating the need for a literature fulfillment service
- Sends customer satisfaction surveys within one week of project completion
- Implemented and established Web form data to sales integration with Salesforce.com

So how, *exactly* was this possible?

By centralizing its Web site content and digital assets within a Web CMS foundation, the company was able to utilize Hot Banana's concept of "content containers," combinations of images, text, lists, links, tracking metadata, and RSS feeds. Content containers are independent of any one Web page; as such, they can be re-used consistently across multiple locations within one page, across multiple pages, and across multiple Web sites. The company also re-built their Web forms to correspond to defined lead categories, personalizing

Email Marketing and Web Surveys: A Closed Loop Example

1. Web form filled out and submitted by prospect; metadata captured includes lead type, and date
2. Automated follow-up email sent, including embedded customized survey
3. Survey filled out and submitted; custom object in Salesforce.com stores results
4. Survey data triggers workflow from Hot Banana and sales task assignments from Salesforce.com.
5. Automatic report generation highlights Web form and email behavior
6. Weekly, automatic email notification and report distribution to manufacturing firms; includes status and standings of sales efforts to date

as appropriate for the prospect type. So begins the reality of consistent brand management through a single sourced content.

By utilizing Hot Banana's marketing automation features, the Web CMS platform was fully integrated with the company's CRM/SFA of choice, Salesforce.com. Taking their new Web forms "to the next level," form submission through the company's Web site now triggered internal workflow processes, data imports to Salesforce.com to capture the lead records, and automated email notifications to the appropriate local dealer. As a result, the sales channel views and updates the status of lead activities and more importantly, responds immediately to prospect inquiries.

The third "leg" of the implementation focused on what we've referred to as the promise of a lead generation and conversion *engine*. SEO was an important part of this company's strategy. By using page-level SEO attributes and Hot Banana's keyword phrase analyzer, the marketing department was able to proactively design its approach. Now, they were armed with the knowledge to leverage natural search to increase conversions. Taking yet another step forward, the company implemented its first Pay-per-Click (PPC) advertising campaign, leveraging Hot Banana's built-in PPC keyword lead source and conversion tracking and reporting, and moved the project to the next core component: Web analytics to deliver the elusive closed-loop marketing process.

Since Hot Banana provides a "technology-agnostic" approach to this critical eMarketing component, the company had no difficulties integrating WebTrends into its platform. (They could have also chosen Google Analytics, IndexTools, or ClickTracks.) This integration injected the engine with powerful and automatic campaign tracking, tagging and conversion tools that would quell the frustrations of executive management and optimize the performance of the sales channel.

Conclusions: The Gilbane Group Perspective

The influence of the Internet has forever changed the marketing industry. Its continued evolution compels organizations to re-evaluate lead generation and conversion strategies from a people, process, and technology perspective.

This whitepaper cites multiple statistics about the growing corporate demand for marketing accountability and tangible ROI. It's hard to find any marketer that is not experiencing this pressure.

Avoiding the "ROMI void" requires commitment, collaboration, and *knowledge*; hence our inclusion of some educational resources in this section. It also requires a process-centric approach to eMarketing strategies. Understanding how to efficiently "get the job done" with the human, content, and structured data resources at hand is imperative. Closed-loop marketing is a process vision, enabled by the workers and technology that drive it.

Finally, avoiding the "ROMI void" requires evolution from the content technologies industry, specifically the traditional Web CMS market. Certainly, Web CMS has evolved considerably over almost a decade of development. However, today's market requirements demand solutions that continuously evolve content technologies from infrastructure components to customer experience-driven applications for revenue management. For marketers, the arrival of Web CMS-driven eMarketing platforms is a significant step in the right direction.

Getting More Information: Selected Educational Organizations

Direct Marketing Association
www.the-dma.org

eMarketing Association
www.emarketingassociation.com

Email Experience Council (EEC)
www.emailexperience.org

Sales and Marketing Executives
International (SMIE)
www.smei.org

Search Engine Marketing
Professional Organization (SEMPO)
www.sempo.org

Highlighted Company Contact Information

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