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## **MARKETING METHODS AND TRENDS OF 2011**

We have entered a new decade and have seen the shift in how we market and reach consumers. In order to be efficient in marketing, it's important to realize what will work and what marketing methods are being left behind. This statement is broad and may not reach your specific demographic groups. For example, if you serve a senior market a yellow page may help to attract customers for you, but if your customer is under the age of 60 it's best to put the dollar elsewhere.

This year five marketing methods and trends are worth discussing. We've seen many changes over the last few years and this year will be no different. Trends and methods that will be watched closely include:

### **Mobile Marketing**

In CTIA Wireless Association report it was stated that 250+ million Americans have mobile phones - that's over 80% of the nation's population. Mobile applications will continue to be developed and smartphones and tablet PCs will remain a part of our daily lives. It's no longer just about mobile access to email, messaging, calendars and websites. We will see more location based services, mobile gaming, applications, and event-based mobile marketing. We've been inundated with new technology from Apple's iPhone, iPad and Google's Android integration. I guarantee it won't stop there, we will continue to see mobile marketing innovations throughout 2011 and beyond. We will see new devices, faster speeds, and location based technologies integrated with one another. If you are a marketer and you've not explored the avenue of mobile marketing, this is your year. Get on the bus or get left behind.

### **Social Marketing Integration**

In 2010 companies began to take social media marketing seriously and that is why we saw social media explode as a marketing tool. This year we see companies integrate social media into their overall marketing plan, which is how it should have been done in the first place, but better late than never. Social media will expand from a tool used primarily for customer service and brand management to being used to collect customer data and enable better target

marketing of products and services.

### Traditional Marketing Continuous to Diminishes

This is always a touchy subject, because there are so many businesses that don't want to say goodbye to the traditional marketing. Interactive or real-time marketing is easy to measure, engage and gain real time statistics that allows changing a marketing message quickly. Customers continue to go online to search for information and in return making their purchases online. It's important that marketers move their marketing dollars to where the consumers are and right now that is making a gigantic shift to online. Internet marketing enables us to reach targeted audiences online, advertising costs are lower and they are easier to measure. But overall marketing budgets will continue to shift to a higher spend online and the traditional marketing spend will continue to diminish.

### Consumers Will Determine Value

In today's economy consumers are watching their pennies and they will only spend on purchases that they consider to be of value. They will continue to seek good value for their money. Consumers no longer purchase just because an item is on sale, rather they will justify every dollar spent. This means you must marketing the value of your product or service in order to get consumers to open their wallets.

### Regulations Abound

This is a trend that makes a lot of marketers anxious. It's been apparent that the FTC is looking at regulating the online industry. They started a few years ago with disclosures for blog reviews and paid endorsements. Rules have been passed regarding Net Neutrality and the FTC exploring a "Do Not Track mechanism that would regulate the tracking of consumer behavior online and the calculation of data. It is not clear how this will play out in the next year and beyond, but we will see regulations implemented when it comes to the internet industry and many of those regulations will affect marketers.

### Relationships will Drive Loyalty and Sales

Customers want to know they matter to you and your staff. They evaluate now more than ever how they are treated, whether or not your business cares about their satisfaction. Gone are the days that they just purchase out of convenience. If you can give the best customer care, you will find that you will create consumers that are loyal to you, regardless of whether or not you have the least expensive price. They realize that in tough economic times their loyalty to you could be the

life or death of your business and that's often why they will go out of their way to spend their hard-earned dollars in your place of business - if you have helped in creating loyalty by giving them extraordinary care.