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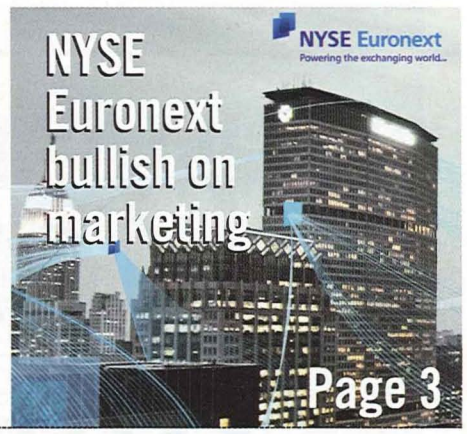
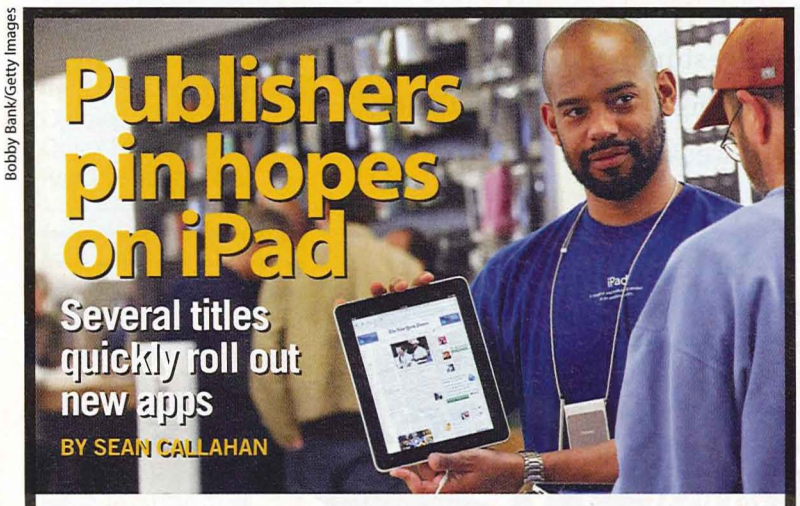




Publishers pin hopes on iPad

Several titles quickly roll out new apps

BY SEAN CALLAHAN

APPLE INC.'S IPAD, WHICH officially debuted April 3, may be just the thing to revive b-to-b magazine advertising, some observers say.

Obviously, the iPad's potential for helping the magazine industry remains an open question. Nonetheless, there is much data, research and opinion indicating that it and other tablet devices may help remake the way trade publishers sell advertising.

"We feel it's an exciting, new, major media platform, and it can't be ignored," said Jason Snell, editor of IDG's *Macworld*, which is developing an iPad app.

The iPad itself, which was well-received enough to sell 300,000 units on its first day of availability, will likely impact how digital content is consumed.

For one thing, with its vertically oriented, color screen that mimics the size of a single magazine page, the iPad is seen in some circles as an ideal device for reading digital magazines.

While digital editions have been available for years, they've been more popular with publishing companies—which can maintain circulation without paying for paper, printing and postage—than

iPad, page 37

B-to-b marketers apply analytics to social media

'BtoB,' WAA survey also documents metrics, tools, budgets and staffing

BY ELLIS BOOKER

B-to-b organizations are well along in their measurement of social media. This was just one of many findings in a just-completed survey by *BtoB* and the Web Analytics Association.

The "B-to-B Web Analytics Survey" found that nearly half (48.3%) of respondents are already measuring social media. This finding seems to map with another clear interest among the survey respondents—reputation management. Nearly a quarter (24.3%) said they planned to increase their budgets this year to monitor public sentiment.

"It's 1993 all over again," said Jim Sterne, chairman of the Web Analytics Association and author of "Social Media Metrics: How to Measure and Optimize Your Marketing Investment" (John Wiley & Sons, 2010). "Everybody knows that social media is important, but it's so new that only a few are measuring its business impact with any sophistication."

Sterne added: "Knowing who the influencers are is far more important and powerful for b-to-b firms than for consumer-facing companies."

Alex Langshur, president of PublicInsite Web Analytics and current president of the WAA, said the survey brought forward three themes: "The desire to have a more integrated view across all channels, a jump in investments to measure and understand the impact from mobile and social media, and that the skills shortage remains acute."

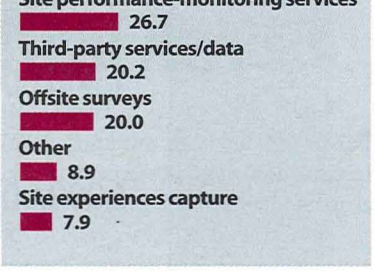
According to the survey, social media measurement was higher than mobile measurement (17%) or video measurement (14%). The highest score for a tracked marketing channel was Web sites (88%), followed by e-mail (76%).

WHITE PAPER

The complete "B-to-B Web Analytics Survey," which contains two dozen charts, survey analysis and case studies on 10 b-to-b companies, is available for paid download at www.btobonline.com/intelligencecenter.

Exclusive 'BtoB,' WAA survey results

'BtoB' and the WAA asked b-to-b marketers which of the following tools they use to measure online performance.



The online survey, conducted from Jan. 21 to Feb 12, collected 679 responses. Of these, more than two-thirds (69%) said their company's marketing was primarily b-to-b; the balance of respondents said their business was a combination of b-to-b and b-to-c. □

Interactive print bridges traditional-digital divide

BY CHRISTOPHER HOSFORD

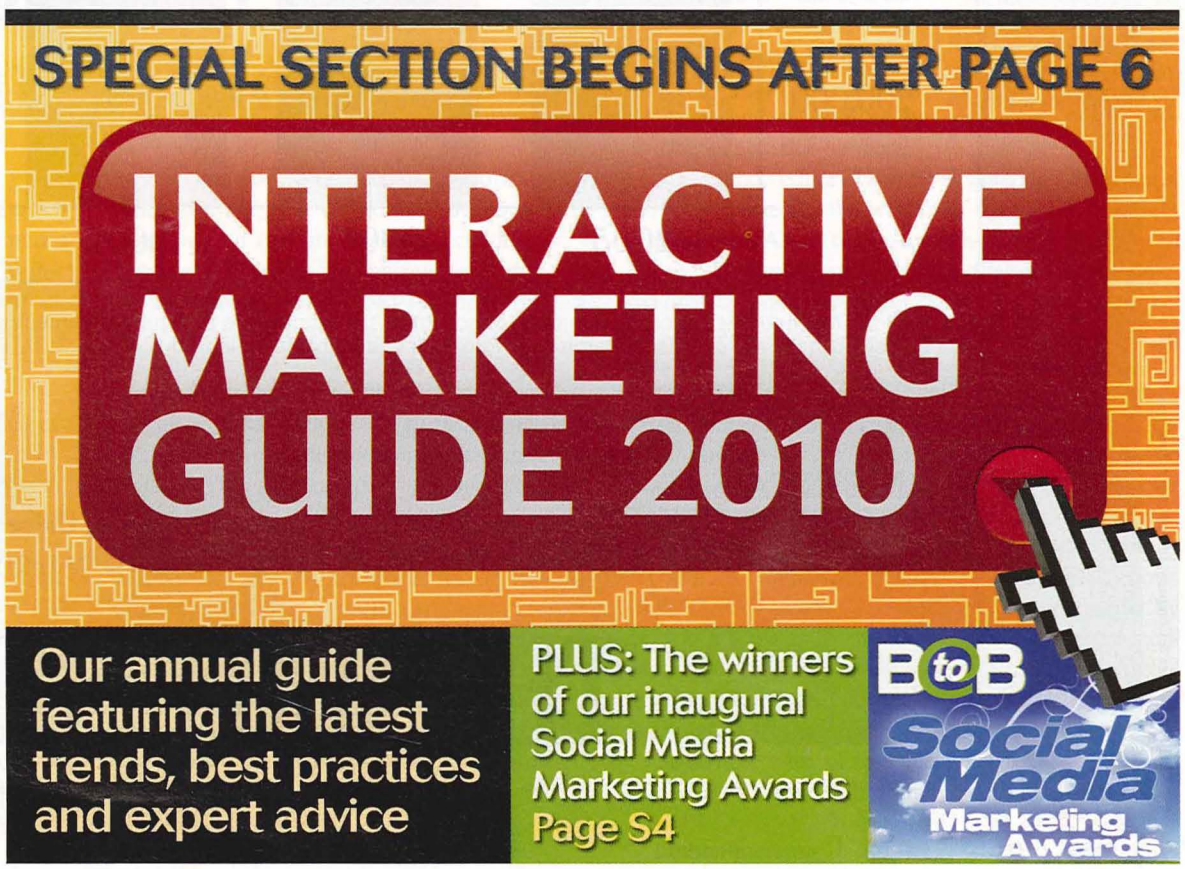
Trade show direct mail invitations too often can be ho-hum affairs, but not the one sent to physician attendees at last month's American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons' annual meeting in New Orleans.

Attendees were invited to bring the innocuous-looking direct mail piece, titled "Mobile Bearings," to the Stryker Diagnostics booth for a demonstration of the company's hip- and knee-joint replacement products. The magic came when attendees placed the card under a computer Webcam and were able to view an animated image of Stryker devices in full 3-D interactive motion as the card was moved under the camera.

The Stryker campaign, developed by health care agency Medtera, New York, is an example of "augmented reality," driven by software technology that reads printed images to produce hologramlike interactive renditions on computer or mobile-device screens.

This and other evolving technologies in what can be called interactive

Print, page 35



B to B

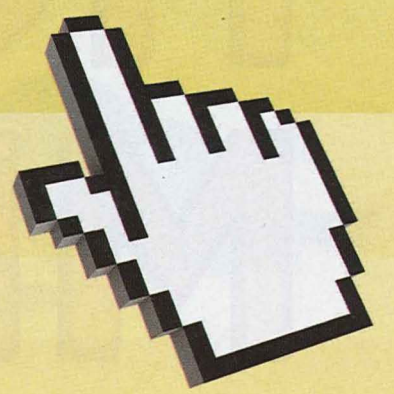
INTERACTIVE MARKETING GUIDE 2010

SOCIAL MEDIA

WEB SITES

E-MAIL

SEARCH



ONLINE PUBLISHING

ANALYTICS

VIRTUAL EVENTS

AGENCIES

A method to the madness

Marketers focus on strategies to get the most out of virtual event capabilities

BY CHARLOTTE WOOLARD

THE NEXT big innovation in the online events market will not come in the form of improved video chat or graphics capabilities.

It will have nothing to do with avatars.

Instead it will center on the evolution of events marketers themselves as they work to build integrated strategies that leverage the tools already offered by virtual platforms.

"[The platforms] have features that most people don't even use yet," said Michael Doyle, executive director of the Virtual Edge Institute, an organization that promotes virtual events and best practices. "Even though the technology is going to continue to advance—and there is going to be more functionality, and capability and ease of use—it's going to be up to that person who is planning the event or meeting to really make it work."

Marketers still are learning to integrate data-rich virtual events into their overall programs. They are looking at how to better employ virtual platforms to not only generate new leads but also to communicate with partners, train staff and connect with customers and prospects all along the sales pipeline, experts said.

HYBRID EVENTS ON RISE

Interest is growing in the creation of hybrid events that combine on- and offline touch points, as well as immersive virtual environments that serve as year-round communities.

Many companies plan to increase their investment in the virtual arena, according to the 2010 "Virtual Market Outlook Report" released in March by George P. Johnson Experience Marketing and the Event Marketing Institute. Almost 40% of the 889 marketers who responded to an online survey conducted in December and January said they expected to see their budgets for virtual events grow this year.

"People started dabbling in the virtual experience to either augment the physical event or to answer the immediate economic constraints of doing a physical event, and they realized that the successes were there," said Kurt Miller, executive director of program strategy at GPJ. "With some experience under their belts, they can look at the behavior of their audience, look at the opportunities technologically to extend reach. They can take the more careful and holistic view of how they can incorporate it into a 360 [degree] plan, rather than looking at it as an add-on tactic."

Paul Oliu, director of marketing for the investment services division of Fiserv Inc., a technology solutions provider serving the financial industry, illustrates the kind of evolution that marketers are undergoing.

"Annually we had an in-person event, and two years ago we canceled because the economy was not strong," he said. The company replaced its client conference first with a series of webinars and then with a multitrack virtual event that drew more attendees than any other event, in-person or online, in the division's history.

The virtual environment allowed the company to reach a new audience within the companies that use its services, addressing not just the interests of senior executives but also the needs of day-to-day end-users. A client survey conducted in the period following the event found a 15% uptick in customer satisfaction with communication.

"After that, I was convinced," Oliu said. "The virtual event was a catalyst for better communication between our client services folks and our clients. I have become an advocate for virtual shows and environments as valid and valuable tools in a marketer's arsenal."

Now, even as the company plans to reintroduce its face-to-face event, it has announced the development of an ongoing virtual environment that will house a community for its clients, as well as user guides, webinars and other collateral.

RAPID CHANGES

Other marketers also are experiencing rapid change when it comes to virtual events.

Four years ago BlueLinx, a distributor of sustainable building products, communicated with its customers primarily via facsimile. Now the company is reviewing the lessons learned from its first virtual event and contemplating the creation of a perpetual online warehouse that would combine a virtual platform with interactive content, social media and a data management system to help better connect the wealth of information gleaned from the environment to the company's sales operations.

"I know where my company wants to head, so I'm trying to pull together all of those golden threads," said Shiloh Kelly, national sustainability lead at BlueLinx. "We're taking the virtual show farther. How can we leverage a 24/7 environment? We're trying to create a piece that we can use later as we grow and evolve."

The momentum behind virtual events does not signal the demise of the face-to-face market. Many companies are turning to a combination of in-person and online initiatives to deepen their reach into portions of the market they already serve.

"While we know the companies that we sell to, we don't necessarily know all of the staff within those companies," said David Liff, senior VP-product marketing for the mainframe business unit of global information technology management software company CA Inc. "The combination of the physical and virtual events is a good way for us to build up that understanding of who does what within those companies and start providing them with value."

CA this year will convert what had been a series of about 50 webcasts into a monthlong live virtual environment. May Mainframe Madness will overlap with the company's five-day physical CA World event and emphasize dialogue over new sales.

But CA World content and presentations will not dominate the online offerings. Instead, the company is focusing on providing content customized to meet the needs of the 23 different types of customers it has identified in the IT world.

"The virtual trade show environment gives us that flexibility," Liff said. "We're choosing the content we provide for them so it gives them just what they need." □

Need to Know

5 simple rules for developing a virtual event

- **Establish clear objectives.** An event strategy should be developed with audience and marketing goals at front-of-mind, rather than available technology or content.
- **Research platform providers.** Real choice exists among vendors. Visit the various platforms to determine the partner that best matches the needs of your program.
- **Create compelling content.** The flexibility of the virtual environment allows you to adapt content to match interests recorded at registration. Develop content that encourages dialogue and drives attendees to engage with multiple features of the event.
- **Nurture your audience.** Brand marketers need to develop a strategy to drive people to take a next step, whether the goal is a sale or a repeat visit to a virtual community.
- **Connect the dots.** Virtual events generate a wealth of data. Have a process in place to connect input to existing management systems. Establish how you will attribute a win to your event.

Success Stories

Virtual exhibit a hit for GE Healthcare

"We have always done a microsite around [our presence at the Radiological Society of North America's annual convention]. It has been award-winning, but I wanted to do something different this year. The virtual exhibit allows the visitor to connect with field sales, to see their photos and their bios—in some cases to chat with them live. It had more of a live type of feel than a static microsite. The virtual exhibit allowed us to pick from a menu of standard options. We could [give it] a unique look and feel, so it looked like a custom site, and it was easy to turn on and off a functionality. … Right now through comments and e-mails after the show, I know we have four confirmed, qualified opportunities and at least two sales as a result of this site. These are major equipment sales, so the site paid for itself."

—JIM SALINSKY, *global webmaster, GE Healthcare*

Kalido Connect sees virtual conference registration up 700%

"[The virtual Kalido Connect 2009 User Conference] exceeded every expectation I had. The results speak for themselves: Registration increased 700% from the year before. Sponsorships increased 70%. We came in under budget. The partners got involved with it and created online, customized booths with video—and you could download collateral. They found it interactive and innovative; and they didn't have to travel and set up a booth. It also provided an asset for them. It is now on demand, and they can track those leads three months or even six months later. The customers also loved it. Rather than sending the one person who ran a project or team [to an in-person event], the entire team could do the event together. That's where we integrated a face-to-face element. [Our salespeople] went [to client sites] and hosted the event, so you were able to integrate the face-to-face with an online event."

—MARY WELLS, *VP-marketing, Kalido*

Ask the Expert

MICHAEL DOYLE

Executive director-editor, The Virtual Edge Institute

Before you tackle your first virtual event ...

BtoB: *What advice do you give to marketers as they work with virtual events?*

Doyle: Look at the different form factors for the different solutions, and just go out and attend events on different platforms so you can start to match your need with the features that are available and with the type of audience that you are likely going to attract.

Start to look at the user perspective and also your business case. Do you need multiple tracks? Do you need to have live-versus-prerecorded materials? Do you need an expo hall? What type of networking and inter-attendee communication do you need? Then guide your business case. How are you going to fund it? Who is going to be the manager of it? Who's going to support that person?

That's the way I recommend people start, all through the process making sure they are also talking to stakeholders and getting them to try some of these platforms as well.

They should start small and work through it. There are a lot of similarities to putting on a physical event, but there are a lot of differences as well. Once they get experience, there is a movement to more of an integrated approach.

They're looking at creating perpetual environments where any business unit can go for all different purposes: lead generation, nurturing, support, training. They start to look at these environments as an extension of their Web site, as a much more immersive environment where customers are coming in, partners are coming in, employees are coming in. So they need more of an integrated communication and collaboration environment as opposed to an event. □