

# Luxury Experience Company

## Internet Marketing - Executing versus Reacting

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So, what is reactive Internet Marketing? Well, as with the Internet, there is no single answer, but there are a series of key indicators that may determine if you are reacting or executing.

The "New Marketing" has all those great buzz words such as blogs, wikis, website optimizing, and social networks. What power meal (breakfast, lunch, or dinner - hey it may be a long day) would be complete without those dreaded questions, "Do you blog?" or "How is your social networking life?" As if they really care.

The ability to reach a customer has become more fragmented now than at any time in the past. Reaching the right customer is the challenge, and this becomes more complex due to the multitude of media options compounded by the multitude of options within each media, which may explain why so many companies lose their focus.

Then along comes a friend or a sales rep, or one-in-the-same with a solution to help you leap frog your competition, jump into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and get jiggy, so you can find those targeted customers. In many cases, the solution may not be clear, but the buzz about success stories has you believing that though you may not understand it, hey you should do it.

Are you executing or reacting?

Blogs: I know more companies that jumped on the blog bandwagon because it was the "thing to do." Okay, it is easy to write what you think, post it on your site, and do this as often as you can, BUT...

Reacting There are numerous stories of individuals getting a bit behind in their blogging, so as not to be a bad blogger they start to fill in their blog with public relations messages, customer testimonials, or upcoming events or sales.

You will lose respect from your readers if you do not blog 'correctly'. Blogging is for ideas, views, concepts, and opinions, not to promote your product. The customer is very savvy and if they are on the Internet looking at your blog, they know what to expect, so do not insult them.

Executing A company designs a blog concept that includes a customer response section. A plan is developed to determine who from the company will post to the blog (ex. CEO, CFO, CMO, Technical personnel, etc.). Lastly, there should be someone monitoring the process to ensure that there are timely blogs being posted, and that the goal to draw readers to the blog and to engage the customer to create a dialogue via blog responses is being met. If not, then change your focus and energy to work on things that are working for you now and do not waste valuable time. You can always return to the idea at a later time.

Websites: With all the tools that are available to buy a website domain name, then buy the hosting services on the Internet, and finally build a website in minutes, it is no wonder that the value of what is present on a website has more form than function. In addition, there seems to be a new website

they can test out their solution, and the perceived leap frog begins.

Reacting How many websites are technically 'cool'? The website has all the latest tools such as RSS, podcasts, streaming video, flash, and 360° viewing.

Are you engaging and retaining valued customers? Are you drawing in new customers? Is the website the alter ego of the company? Does it reflect the business beliefs, brand values, and customer requirements? Does your website reflect the values and image that you are presenting in other mediums? If your response to the questions is no, then you are reacting to external pressures and not following your business and marketing plan.

Executing The value of your website is not in how cool it looks, but does it reflect your values as a business, or how you want your products to be viewed, and will it retain existing customers while attracting new customers. Will it drive top line exposure and bottom line revenues? Many of the new tools are not search engine compatible, thus what you see is not what the computer driven search engines see. One of the goals of a website it to provide 24 X 7 visibility, to submit your products and band in a manner that the search engines can catalog the information and return it as a search result when potential customers are searching for services and products.

Are you engaging and retaining valued customers? Are you drawing in new customers? Don't build in the latest tools just because they are available. Stop, Think, Act, and Develop the website that reflects the business's values, the brand and product information in the manner that your store and sales representatives are presenting it.

Social Networks: Joining a new social network has become as easy as 1) Open your email, 2) Read a message from an acquaintance, friend, family member, or long lost business associate, and 3) Click on the invitation link. I belong to so many social networks that I had to create a word document to keep track of the social network urls, the email address I signed up to use for that social network as I have multiple email addresses, the password that popped into my head on the day I joined, and most of all, who asked me to join. So, where is the reactive problem?

Reacting Well, companies seem to have become consciously comfortable with social networks, thus they afford them more leeway with respect to how does this fit into their overall marketing plan than maybe they should afford them. Thus, companies are more apt to run a program that uses a social network as the link to 'their targeted' customer, but in the end they are not sure what the true result was.

If you work a social network to attract customers, then you need to ensure that your website is ready to accept them. Is the page you are directing them to ready to receive them and does it project the image that you want? Do you have other measurements set up to track traffic to the designated sections and pages as well as to other sections of the site? If you are pondering your response, then maybe you are not ready for this marketing tool and you are reacting.

Executing You have investigated the demographics and psychographics of the social network, you have done a detailed review of the both the message you will post on the social network site as well as the message on the corresponding website pages that you will drive them to, and lastly you have set up a baseline across your website to track traffic numbers to the designated pages, to other pages, overall traffic during and for a designated period after the program has run.

The need to plan out your efforts does not get less critical because the Internet is just a click away. The need to develop a plan and to do a walkthrough of all the touch-points in the process becomes even more critical to ensure that you go out with your best effort.

A business can be a fragile ecosystem that needs to be nourished at all times. The need to develop a marketing plan that encompasses not only tactical programs, but also includes the development of an overall business message that captures the vision, values, and customer requirements is an invaluable element to be used as a review point for every 'opportunity' that is presented.

The common thread to reacting versus executing Internet Marketing is that for those that are reacting, they are not following or they are ignoring their Internet Marketing plan. You only have one chance to make a good impression does not only count for a person-to-person interaction, it also includes your website, which is your business alter ego.

I thank you for your continued support of Luxury Experience Magazine, and as always, your comments are welcome, so please send comments to: [Publisher@L-E-Company.com](mailto:Publisher@L-E-Company.com).

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