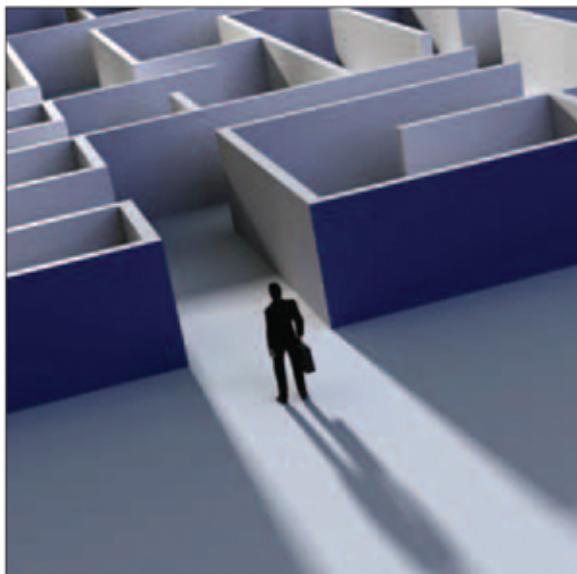


Getting Business



and Their Clients
**Opportunities for Commercial Printers[^]
in the New Communications Arena**

**Joseph W. Webb, Ph.D.
Richard M. Romano**

authors of *Disrupting the Future*

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Resources for discussing the book internally, working in planning sessions and other scenarios, PowerPoint slides, and more—as well as a PDF version of this book—are available for download at <http://whattheythink.com/gettingbusiness/>.

Dr. Webb and Mr. Romano are available for keynote speaking, workshops, planning meetings, business discussions, organization events, bar mitzvahs, and presentations about this book, or about other essential topics about print and media. Please contact Ms. Cary Sherburne at cary@sherburneassociates.com for more information.

Getting Business

**Opportunities for Commercial Printers and Their
Clients in the New Communications Arena**

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Foreword: Making the Leap

When we started MSP Digital Marketing in 2008, we realized that a paradigm shift in how marketers are reaching their target audiences was well under way, and we began to build a business that would help them deliver their message in a variety of digital formats.

I'm an industry veteran who has never been afraid to change with the times. I started out in a small family run print shop, and in the 1980s, merged with another printer called Press of A Colish, which eventually became part of Sandy Alexander. I stayed with Sandy Alexander until 2008. At that time, I was keenly aware, as we all were, of what was going on in the industry and of the surge in digital media and the rapid technological advancements in that area. I thought to myself, "Well, I'm in my mid-50s, there's time to do one more great thing and why not go for it?" And I decided to make an entrepreneurial leap and see what happens.

That entrepreneurial leap led to the formation of MSP Digital Marketing which, as our Web site (www.mspsdigital.com) says, "is a privately held organization building a unique national network of world-class marketing solutions providers." We use a variety of cross-media applications to develop and execute highly targeted marketing communications, content aggregation, and on-demand distribution of customized content for a variety of business segments including the educational, non-profit, healthcare, financial, and retail sectors.

Our first move in this direction was not to build an entirely new company from the ground up, but to strategically acquire a pre-existing company that had some of the skills and technologies we required. A good candidate

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was Hudson, MA's TecDoc Digital, which we acquired and which serves as the foundation of MSP's network. A short time later, DXP in NJ joined our group. We continue to actively search for other partners to add to the network.

One of our objectives is not to necessarily be in the digital output business, but to be more a digital communications partner with our clients. What we want to do is help them understand what their strategies are, what their communications objectives are, and be a significant part of executing those strategies. Our goal is to have the correct arsenal of output channels so that we can help our clients communicate their message properly.

The concept of migrating from a traditional print "supplier" to an innovative "services partner" is both necessary and achievable. I speak from personal experience, as MSP Digital Marketing is about making that transition. Printers in today's environment need to recognize that, even if they haven't actively done anything yet to change their business model, they actually already have the most valuable asset to do so—their relationship with their customer.

As a result, we followed the advice of Dr. Joe and Richard's previous book *Disrupting the Future*: go where the customers are. As an example, we did not go Graph Expo 2011 but on those dates we instead exhibited at the Association of Donor Relations Professionals (ADRP) annual conference in New Orleans. They are a university fundraising organization, and we provide a lot of targeted direct response (multichannel) to that segment. So we are going where our customers are. We have actually been doing so all year and the results have been terrific.

In this current book, Dr. Joe and Richard explain how to take the customer relationship and expand it to a new level. *Getting Business* is a must read for printers that are looking to take their current business and leverage it into a profitable multichannel business model. Following Dr. Joe and Richard's advice is not only imperative, but vital for future success.

Printers and printing industry professionals can make the leap. It just requires a certain amount of fearlessness and good old-fashioned entrepreneurial spirit.

*Roy Grossman, Founding Partner
MSP Digital Marketing*

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Introduction: The Facebook Machine

Here is a story we came across recently on WhatTheyThink:

In December 2010, George Shinn, owner of Predominantly Printing, a Delaware, Ohio-based commercial printer, had received and completed the WhatTheyThink Economics and Research Center's quarterly business conditions survey. One of the questions asked "what services do you plan to offer in 2011?" and one of the choices was "offering social media marketing services to clients." This was a topic he had heard about and was eager to investigate. So he checked the box on the survey, fully intending to look into what social media marketing meant.

Fast forward six months, and although Shinn had made some tentative steps at setting up a Facebook page and a Twitter feed, he never really did much with them, as he was preoccupied with ensuring that his offset printing equipment was kept busy. Then, at a trade show, he happened to stop at the booth of a company called River City Solutions, which was touting the features of its new FB5000, a large device the size of an old phototypesetting machine. Shinn started talking with the owner, Harold Hill, who told him that the amazing new FB5000 is an "automatic Facebook update machine" for companies looking to offer social media marketing services.

"It is push-button automation for the social media age," said Hill. "Simply enter a few parameters—a Facebook account name, the target industry or market—and bam! It will automatically post relevant and timely Facebook updates for clients."

Shinn was intrigued, and asked about the

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specs. At maximum speed, the FB5000 can operate at 25 updates per minute (upm), and in “Like Mode,” it can produce 50 likes per minute (lpm). A version of the device with an imaging unit—the FB5000DI—will let it post and tag pictures. Shinn knew he had to have one. “It was a steal at \$50K, but had very attractive leasing options. And very low consumables costs.”

The FB5000 was installed in Shinn’s shop and was operating for two weeks when something about it seemed curious. “It turned out that the ‘consumables’ were chocolate-chip cookies and fruit smoothies, which was very odd—but then again I did once own one of the early digital color printers, so I was used to quirky equipment.”

He opened up the back of the machine, and discovered that his “Facebook machine” was actually a large box containing two 13-year-old girls posting updates via their iPhones.

“It was actually working, so I kept them,” said Shinn. “With proper parental supervision, of course. I hope they can still tweet and get their homework done at the same time.”

The above story is, obviously, made up, and is the kind of thing we would run on WhatTheyThink’s annual April Fool’s Day edition¹.

The point of the story—and we acknowledge that there is a danger in painting every printing company with the same brush—is that the industry culture equates opening a new product line with the purchase of a new kind of machine. But that’s only natural, because that has been our history. You couldn’t be a printer without a press, and you couldn’t be a typographer without a typesetter, and so on, for decades. That new equipment has measurable specifications, occupies physical space in a production room and outputs tangible things. This has made it difficult for many owners to “get it” in terms of digital media, and to understand what it’s about or what value there is in whatever “it” is.

¹ And owes a bit of a debt to *The Music Man*. He probably inspired lots of prepress equipment marketing in the 1980s, too.

There are other aspects to the equipment culture that define our operations and our management. If it's equipment, it has an hourly cost, and that gives you a head start in figuring out what pricing should be and how much business needs to be generated to make it profitable. That equipment requires skilled personnel who are paid a competitive rate with others working in similar shops with the same skills and background. The costs are known and they are easy to markup and bill.²

It's so different now. Where you were once defined by equipment, because that equipment was expensive, hard to get, and required special training, it was a means of certifying that you had the capabilities needed to be in the printing sector of the grand expanse of communications industries.

So much of what marketing and communications have become today is less about producing something on a device, and more about thinking strategically about how different media and communications channels interact with each other.

Desktop publishing eventually ruined it all by turning mechanical skills into software.

Things have changed so much in production of content that even the skills needed in digital imaging are less important than they were a decade ago. So much of what marketing and communications have become today is less about producing something on a device, and more about thinking strategically about how different media and communications channels interact with each other to reinforce a brand, communicate a message, and aggregate a fragmented audience. These are alien concepts to print business owners who are more comfortable in the more logical processes of the custom manufacturing environment.

Where an owner would like to hire a press operator

² We were always amused by the story of a long-time Manhattan printer, back when the City was full of them, who saved money by not hiring an estimator, and just multiplied his paper costs by three. You could do those kinds of things in a simple business in a growing industry. That could be done forty years ago and you could make a decent living as long as everyone ordered nice and expensive paper.

with fifteen years of experience, it's impossible to do that with social media. By the time someone has fifteen years of social media experience, something else that's new will have replaced it...possibly two or more times!³

Back to the Future

Following the success of our runaway bestseller *Disrupting the Future: Uncommon Wisdom for Navigating Print's Challenging Marketplace*,⁴ we had the opportunity to talk to many printing industry groups, and hundreds of actual print executives of all shapes and sizes, both in North America and Europe. Much of what we had to say in *Disrupting the Future* was controversial ("Print is not vital?! Print can't be saved?!"). We were buoyed by the discovery that a lot of the people we encountered understood what we were talking about, got excited by our approach, and then they themselves became advocates of our integrated communications approaches.

Others, however, rolled their eyes and thought we were clueless consultants who knew nothing about the realities of running a printing business. One comment Richard got after giving a presentation at a Xerox event in Berlin, Germany, was, "When do I have time to learn anything about marketing? I'm too busy trying to keep my presses busy." You could make the same argument about any industry. When does Ford have time to learn marketing, when they have to keep their production lines busy pumping out Focuses? And yet, don't they? It's not for everyone, that's for sure.

Our point in *Disrupting the Future* and subsequent presentations was pointing out the elephant in the room, that those presses are becoming—and will continue to become—less and less busy, and there is very little, if any-

³ It's better to hire someone with Facebook experience who has worked with fifteen different customers.

⁴ <http://whattheythink.com/disrupting-the-future/>. Okay, maybe it wasn't a "bestseller" since thousands of copies were downloaded and a lesser number of thousands were given away in hard copy. It's yet another sign that terms we find endearing—like "bestseller"—don't seem to have an equivalent in the digital media world. "Bestdownloaded"?

thing, that we as an industry can do about it. It can keep investing in better presses with much improved printing characteristics, and it should, because the cost of print has to keep coming down, and the flexibility of producing print has to go up. You can only do that by investment in new equipment, and by aggregating as much print volume onto those new devices as possible. The question is “how” to unwind the equipment that was purchased at a time when the print market was quite different than it is today, and redeploy that capital to more productive and flexible equipment. None of this means that print businesses need to be marginalized or lose power. Healthy, well-run printing businesses with low debt and highly productive processes that attract volume from unhealthy print businesses will grow even though the total industry volume might be declining. These topics were discussed from a strategic perspective in *Renewing the Printing Industry*.

Stop! No Preaching Allowed

We’ve said all this before, and this book has been designed to go in a completely different direction. When we first sat



down to discuss this book, we decided that our primary mandate was no preaching. The foundation of our outlook was well-established in *Disrupting*, so there’s no reason to go over all of that again. *Disrupting* is still available, and it’s still current, so anyone who wants to dig into the thoughts and prescriptions detailed there still can. The foundation for the strategy was *Renewing the Printing Industry*. Even though that was written all the way back

in 2007 before the social media tsunami, its concepts are still valid, and the book is still free.

A secondary mandate⁵ was *no data*. No charts showing declining printing shipments or a dying newspaper or magazine industry, no convoluted three-axis graphs that look like squashed mosquitoes, no rotated bar graphs with hundreds of data labels that look like HAL's⁶ fever dreams. We did this for three reasons.

The first is that everyone knows what the data are and what they show. It's obvious and all too negative and depressing. Depressing readers at this point will just distract and detract from the objective of this book (about which below).

The second is that data series that end in 2008, 2009, or 2010 date the book almost immediately, and since it's designed to be a reference book, our goal was to give this book longer "legs."⁷ The third was akin to what physicist Stephen Hawking wrote at the beginning of his popular bestseller *A Brief History of Time*:

Someone told me that each equation I included in the book would halve the sales. I therefore resolved not to have any equations at all. However, I *did* put in one equation, Einstein's famous equation $E = mc^2$. I hope this will not scare off half of my potential readers.⁸

Likewise, we have found that when giving presentations based on *Disrupting the Future*, data-filled slides tended to cause people's eyes to glaze over, so we decided not to have any charts or data in this book.

⁵ Dr. Joe doesn't know about this one yet. If he gets separated from his data, it's like taking Linus' blanket away in the comic strip *Peanuts*.

⁶ You remember HAL 9000, the computer from *2001: A Space Odyssey*. It's been conjectured since the movie came out (1968) that the name "HAL" came from a one-letter shift of the initials of the biggest computer company of that time: IBM. However, both writer Arthur C. Clarke and director Stanley Kubrick have repeatedly denied that it was intentional; HAL actually stands for *Heuristic ALgorithmic*, as stated in Clarke's novel.

⁷ We acknowledge that the rate at which media channels emerge and change is one potential "dater" of this book. However, one of the primary advantages of print-on-demand book publishing is that updates and revisions can be made effectively and economically.

⁸ Stephen W. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time*, New York: Bantam Books, 1988, pp. vi–vii. If it *did* scare off half his readers, then if he had excluded it, the book would have sold 20 million copies, rather than the 10 million it has sold to date.

Getting Business—What a Concept!

So what is this book then? Essentially, it is a look at marketing and communications strategies that are being, or can be, used by a cross-section of businesses. We created a representative sample of several businesses of varying sizes and markets, and thus different marketing needs. An industrial parts manufacturer (rubber gaskets), a Web services provider, a retail store (a beauty salon), a professional services provider (a plumber), a medical services provider (a dentist), and two types of commercial printers (a quick printer and a mid-size sheetfed shop). In the introduction, we will look at how these companies' marketing strategies have changed from the 1970s to the 2000s, and the "case studies" that comprise the bulk of this book will detail what we think their optimal marketing strategies will be in 2015.

The introduction will also provide a overview of the three basic kinds of marketing communications—push, pull, and participation—and the division between the online and offline variations of each. These vary a little bit from what you might have seen in marketing textbooks, but we're trying to present the concepts in ways that make sense the way things are today and are likely to evolve in these next years.

Since this new media age has no real rules except experimentation, constant activity, and consistency, no one really has experience with these things. This is both scary and exciting.

It's Not the Tweet, It's the Emotion⁹

It's easy to find information about marketing media, formats, and channels. But it's not easy to find information about *how* to craft things so they work together. Since this new media age has no real rules except experimentation, constant activity, and consistency, no one really has experience at these things either. This is an idea book, especially for small business owners who want to use new media but don't know how or why, and some reassurance that being uneasy about the choices is normal.

⁹ "Tweet Emotion"—wasn't that an Aerosmith song?

The goal of this book, therefore, is to provide printers—or any company, really—a practical overview of how marketing communications works today, compared to how it worked yesterday, and how it will likely work tomorrow. If printers are to take that next step toward becoming effective providers of marketing and communications services, they need to understand the strategy aspect of it, and not assume that there is some machine or piece of software they can buy that will automatically produce these things.¹⁰ They also need to feel comfortable with the idea that every business needs a communications strategy because there are too many media and too little time to do them well.

It's also a tactical book. We know that many printers and print sales people feel uncomfortable talking about

There is no reason to overspend in new and social media while experimenting on the right approaches for your own business or for clients. Digital media requires some spending on doing things correctly, but it does not have the risks that traditional media have had.

marketing and communications. We have tried to diffuse some of that fear and offer some ways to break the ice with clients and prospects. After all, most of the small and mid-size businesses, believe it or not, are just as con-

fused about these things as we are.

We want to be sure that the media plans are created in a way that ensures the use of resources in a wise manner. There is no reason to overspend in social media or new media while experimenting on the right approaches for your own business or for clients. Digital media requires some spending on doing things correctly, but it does not have the risks that traditional media have had.

Yes, one of the reasons you need to have a plan for all of these media, even as a small business, is that dollars and time are limited.¹¹

Ad Contrarian blogger Bob Hoffman, a well-known San

¹⁰ At least not yet.

¹¹ <http://whattheythink.com/articles/50448-shocking-news-gas-one-fifth-price-it-was-1980-heres-why/>

Francisco ad executive, wrote a marvelous piece¹² about Pepsi's devastating decisions about social media. The next day he posted summaries of his previous posts about Pepsi,¹³ and a brief follow-up entry.¹⁴ Together, they explain the absolute chaos that media selection is in. His entries might be misused by some to assert that social and other media are hogwash and fads, but his actual bottom line is that each medium has its place and its purpose. Pepsi's mistake was in budget allocation and the belief of its marketing managers that they were indeed smarter than everyone else.

These are highlights of his first blog post, prompted by a *Wall Street Journal* article¹⁵ about Pepsi's loss of market share (the items in bold are my emphasis):

- The results are now in. It has been a disaster.
- The *Wall Street Journal* reported that **Pepsi-Cola and Diet Pepsi had each lost about 5% of their market share** in the past year.
- If my calculations are correct, for the Pepsi-Cola brand alone this represents a **loss of over \$350 million**. For both brands, the loss is probably something in the neighborhood of \$400 million to half-a-billion dollars.
- For the first time ever, Pepsi-Cola has **dropped from** its traditional position as the **number two** soft drink in America **to number three** (behind Diet Coke.)
- In 2010, Pepsi's **market share erosion accelerated by eight times** compared to the previous year.
- The Refresh Project accomplished everything a social media program is expected to:

¹² <http://adcontrarian.blogspot.com/2011/03/social-medias-massive-failure.html>

¹³ <http://adcontrarian.blogspot.com/2011/03/pepsi-follies.html>

¹⁴ <http://adcontrarian.blogspot.com/2011/03/social-media-hysterics.html>

¹⁵ <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703818204576206653259805970.html?KEYWORDS=pepsi+market+share>

- Over 80 million votes were registered;
 - almost 3.5 million “likes” on the Pepsi Facebook page;
 - almost 60,000 Twitter followers.
- **The only thing it failed to do was sell Pepsi.**

Yes, even the big companies can make big mistakes in media. Small and mid-size businesses may actually have an advantage in this regard. They are used to squeezing every bit of value they can from their budgets, and those dollars are rarely taken for granted.

So just playing in social media is no guarantee of success. Other case studies abound (which we will be sharing throughout this book) which show that digital media as part of a broad communications strategy can benefit from a combination with print. This is true for most businesses, but not all. Amazon and Google can gain little from using print in their businesses. But small retailers can benefit from print as a means of making their digital efforts more effective.

The nature of print has changed radically, even in the past two years. Print is no longer mainstream for most

Print is no longer mainstream
for most audiences.
Print is now a specialty
communications medium.

audiences. Print is now a specialty communications medium. This means that print will be used when it is the best synergistic or catalytic tool

available. Divining what that is for each customer and situation is a new skill that requires a good understanding of business advertising and communications options. Let's start now.

Get the Business

- Marketing and communications today have become less about producing something on a device, and more about thinking strategically.
- The issue is about how different media and communications channels interact with each other to reinforce a brand or message.
- New and social media have no real rules except ongoing experimentation, constant activity, and consistency.
- No one has any vast experience with these things. Even rigorous studies on best practices have yet to catch up the speed at which new and social media channels are evolving.
- There is no reason to overspend while experimenting with new and social media.
- Digital media requires some spending on doing things correctly, but it does not have the risks that traditional media have had, such as spending thousands of dollars on a print campaign that didn't work or an ineffective TV ad.
- No one wants to hear this but we'll say it anyway: print is no longer mainstream for most audiences. Print is now a specialty communications medium.

“What Was It You Wanted to Sell Me?”

Getting business—or, perhaps more correctly, *creating* business—surely isn’t some arcane process, known only to a scant few. After all, if getting business were so hard, our economy would have crashed and burned a long time ago. And yet it can’t be denied that some companies and individuals are better at it than others. What differentiates the leaders from the laggards? It’s not just access to marketing budgets—although that helps. It’s not just time—although having access to a stopwatch that can stop time would be a great boon for many of us.¹⁶ But more than money and time, it’s also talent, ideas, creative thinking, persistence, and diligence. These latter items supersede time and money any day.

This introductory section will outline some of the essential concepts of marketing, and set some of the conceptual stage for the case studies to follow.

The Man in the Chair

Back in 1958, McGraw-Hill magazines ran an ad that remains a classic. The “Man in the Chair” ad still appears in marketing textbooks.

¹⁶ Your next stop, the Twilight Zone.



*"I don't know who you are.
I don't know your company.
I don't know your company's product.
I don't know what your company stands for.
I don't know your company's customers.
I don't know your company's record.
I don't know your company's reputation.
Now—what was it you wanted to sell me?"*

MORAL: Sales start **before** your salesman calls—with business publication advertising.

McGRAW-HILL MAGAZINES
BUSINESS • PROFESSIONAL • TECHNICAL

It pictures a middle-aged executive wearing a bowtie and a suit, with a scowl that implies that he's missed his daily dose of Metamucil. To the left of his picture is a list of questions:

- I don't know who you are.
- I don't know your company.
- I don't know your company's product.
- I don't know what your company stands for.
- I don't know your company's customers.
- I don't know your company's record.
- I don't know company's reputation.
- Now—what was it you wanted to sell me?

These questions are timeless, not just for B2B marketing, but for all marketing, and all communicators.

Here it is, more than fifty years after the appearance of this ad, and it's still very useful for outlining a comprehensive communications campaign, and it is all the more powerful because of digital media.

I Don't Know Who You Are

Advertising was always the traditional way of getting a marketplace to be familiar with your name or brand. Today, public relations has a new role in light of search engines and social media. This recognizes that all sales require a familiarity with a brand or a person prior to a transaction being concluded. Personal selling made that tangible. Now, however, sales people spend less time on cold-calling, so that familiarity has to come from somewhere else.

I Don't Know Your Company

Once someone finds out about your company, they can get to know it without your even being aware of it. Word of mouth was always important for developing businesses, but today, it's not as necessary. Google searches and Web sites now make it possible to learn about a business. Call-

ing the company and asking for a brochure or to speak with a sales person is not necessary. This means that Web sites and searches have to be up to date and well-planned, otherwise sales leads may die before they have a chance to be nurtured by a sales representative.

I Don't Know Your Company's Product

Personal selling is still an important part of marketing, but not in the way it used to be. Word of mouth was always important, too. Hearing from others about products that work well for them increases the possibility of sales when they have a situation that requires it. Much of this occurs online today. Potential customers and shoppers are looking for product information in search engines, forums, social media, and other places. No more calls. They often get word-of-mouth advice from friends online they have never met in person. No more office visits, either. They want the information right away, and if it's not available, they'll look somewhere else, and you won't even know that they looked.

I Don't Know What Your Company Stands For

The main value of the graphic communications industry, from public relations to advertising, has been to transmit the message of a company to the marketplace. Corporate image has always been a key part of communications. In recent years, the emphasis on return on investment (ROI) has drawn attention away from corporate image. This short-term focus weakens brands in the long run. What's sad is that it doesn't have to be this way. New media that have lower cost than older advertising methods can communicate essential aspects of corporate image through repetition and consistency.

I Don't Know Your Company's Customers

New media offer numerous opportunities for prospects to "meet" customers through video and also by linking to their own businesses through Web sites and social media. In the past, referrals were personal, or references were

checked. Today, a Google or Bing¹⁷ search can find referrals quickly, especially the ones than you'd prefer not be found. New media require a degree of constant vigilance that most companies are not fully aware of. Most companies also neglect to include information and testimonials on their sites, especially video testimonials.

I Don't Know Your Company's Record

Potential purchasers seek assurance that their purchase will be worthwhile and have the value that they expect it to provide. Those referrals and a carefully maintained corporate image need to convey that more than their trust is well-placed. Nothing undermines that than poorly prepared communications, old brochures, and a Web site that says "Copyright 1997."

Offering information about your company's record is easier today than it used to be. There are more media that can be used, and it's easier to ensure that the message is delivered in a consistent manner, unlike having fifty sales people relate their own versions of it. New media offer a degree of access and a level of control and consistency that is not usually realized.

I Don't Know Your Company's Reputation.

Reputation is what others think about what we do and the way that we do it. Today, forums, social media, and many other digital formats make it easier to find out something about a potential provider's reputation. From Amazon reviews to TripAdvisor to Yelp!—it has never been easier to find out what experiences past customers have had with a product or provider.¹⁸

Sure, there may be situations where a business might prefer that testimonials and forum posts and Facebook

¹⁷ Don't know what Bing is? Go Google it... Hint: It has nothing to do with that Crosby guy.

¹⁸ However, the danger with customer reviews is that they tend to reflect the "extremes" of experience—either very good or very bad. Fair to middling service rarely stimulates customers to post a review so crowdsourcing can reflect more of the outliers' opinions rather than a true average.

pages not include these items. The pendulum has swung in the other direction, however. If you can't be found online, that now makes potential buyers all the more suspicious. If you're not online, then where are you?

Now—What Was It You Wanted to Sell Me?

This is the final point of the McGraw-Hill ad from 1958. Familiarity makes people more open to hear your message or associate your business with the solution to a problem they have.

But how does a Web page fit into that? McGraw-Hill was promoting the importance of magazine advertising (and, of course, there was no Web in 1958).

If everyone sees a plumber's truck in town, and it's in front of businesses they know, they'll be more inclined to call that plumber when they need one.

Here's the point of all this. A basic marketing plan can be created by asking the same questions as the man in the chair.

Think about how a particular business finds its customers and how customers find them. Walk through their needs, their actions.

Think about how a particular business finds its customers and how customers find them. Walk through their needs, their actions. How do clients know they need this service, and what are

they going to do to find out about which supplier to choose?

Historically, there have been two—and eventually three—types of strategies by which businesses and customers got together: push, pull, and participation marketing. As we will see in the next chapter, there are online and offline versions of these items, and in fact some media channels (like, say, broadcast advertising) can be either push or pull depending on a specific implementation.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Let's look at pushing, pulling, and participating.

A Different Look at Pushing, Pulling, and Participating

The concepts of push and pull can be used differently today. Now, because of new media channels and formats, it

can be joined by the concept of participation.

Traveling to a foreign country, particularly one in which you don't speak the language, can be a challenge. Guidebooks often recommend certain key words and phrases, such as "hello," "goodbye," "please," "thank you," "where's the emergency room?" and "my hovercraft is full of eels."¹⁹ While these are useful and practical, or at least polite, personal experience has led us to conclude that there are two foreign words that are absolutely essential to learn in order to avoid embarrassment in a public place. Those words are "push" and "pull." We have found that knowing the foreign versions of these two words opens many doors.

Likewise, in this book, we need to make the distinction between "push" and "pull" marketing. While at first glance, there may seem to be little distinction, there really is quite a big difference. You can think of them in a general way as push being selling and pull being marketing.

The same media channels can sometimes be used for either, which can be a source of confusion. The distinction is important because one of the biggest trends in marketing today is the continuing shift in emphasis from push to pull. There is also a third called participation²⁰, which doesn't really translate into door signage, but has become a vitally important type of marketing nevertheless. In the past, we used the phrase "collaborative media" but we decided that "participation" was a better word. In selecting the word, no participation was allowed. You will like it, or else.

Traditional Push and Pull

Back when marketing was a new idea, the idea of creating demand among customers was new as well. Business owners knew it could be done, of course, but it wasn't called marketing then. Remember, advertising didn't really get going as a profession until the early 1900s. But store

¹⁹ Or that may have just been Monty Python's English–Hungarian phrasebook.

²⁰ In *Disrupting the Future*, we referred to this as "collaborative," but the desire for alliteration got the better of us.

owners knew they needed signs and business cards, and might put up some posters or notices around their towns. Even in the Middle Ages, farmers, textile merchants, and others would travel to specific towns and fairs—or markets—to sell their wares to prospective buyers. This was *marketing* in the original sense: bringing products and services to an actual market.

As distribution became more important for moving goods from place to place, companies started to use dealers to sell their products. Again, this was nothing really new, but no one called it marketing the way we would use the word today.

Product manufacturers began to realize that if they ran promotions to the dealers, they would sell more. This was a “push” strategy, but they just didn’t really know it at the time. It’s the same idea as paying sales people more so that they sell more.

As the U.S. economy started to grow, especially after World War II, producers realized that it became harder to sell their goods because there was so much competition. Market research had been around for quite a number of decades, and executives began to understand that markets consisted of segments (such as gender, age, income, family size, and others) that they had unique needs. The more they understood their customers’ problems, or the problems of a segment that might be potential customers, the easier it was to design new products or sell them in a different way. Television was a new opportunity to show products in actual use. TV ads could have a story line of a problem at home. For example, “ring around the collar” was an embarrassing laundry problem solved by Wisk. Sure, other products could be used, but Wisk was promoted as being specifically formulated to solve that problem. Magazine ads in *Woman’s Day* and *Good Housekeeping* would reinforce the TV campaigns. Consumers who had that problem—or were terrified of being exposed to their neighbors as suffering with that problem—would start buying the product.

This was a pull strategy, because the demand for the

product was created at the consumer end of the distribution process. The product was associated with a problem the consumer had, not the dealers or distributors. More Wisk was sold because consumers wanted it, not because dealers of Wisk were pushed to stock up on it in inventory and then convinced retail store owners to stock it. If they didn't have the inventory at the time the consumers looked for it, they couldn't get the sale.

The consumer goods industry began to rely more and more on pull marketing through the 1960s and 1970s. The early years of its implementation are told well in the AMC series *Mad Men*. The turn of a phrase, a cunning use of language and imagery, made advertising agencies seem like magicians and critical to the establishment of brands. They knew how consumers thought about themselves and others, and would craft their campaigns to reach them on an emotional basis through advertising. Sociologists and psychologists started to play key roles in consumer marketing.

Gradually, pull marketing became more popular in business-to-business markets, but it would not be applied in the same ways. Pull marketing did not replace push marketing. Both are used today. Dealers need incentives, sales people need commissions, still, if only to keep their attention focused or to just stay competitive with what other manufacturers are doing.

Online Marketing Arrives

All of past marketing was what we would now call "offline." The biggest development prior to the Internet, as far as marketing communications was concerned, was the telephone. In 1967, the advent of the 800 number was a momentous occasion for sales and marketing, probably on a par with the advent of e-commerce.

Initially, online marketing²¹ wasn't especially different from offline marketing. The real distinction was that it su-

²¹ Those of us who recall the USENET days of the early 1990s remember that the idea of using the Internet for sales and marketing was one of the biggest taboos ever. People got over that in a hurry.

percharged the marketing process, making it faster, more timely, and more convenient. Oh, and less expensive. Think of the difference in speed, timeliness, convenience, and cost between a printed postcard mailing and a comparable direct e-mail campaign. You can convey the same message, using the same graphics and branding, but relatively instantaneously and for a fraction of the cost.

Eventually, as the online world evolved, what ultimately developed was a greater emphasis on participation marketing. Discussion boards, online forums, blogs, and eventually social media and Twitter all became ways that providers and consumers could take part—participate—in the marketing process. At one time, businesses used to vigorously defend any besmirching of their image.²² Now, instead of dispatching lawyers, they (ideally) respond in sympathetic ways via social media. If you read TripAdvisor to get hotel reviews, you have seen that some hotel representatives monitor the comments and respond to bad experiences, usually in a helpful, non-combative way.

Here's a closer look at pushing, pulling, and participating.

Modern Push, Pull, and Participative

Let's define each of these so we can frame the discussions to come. (See the offline/online push, pull, and participative table on pages 28 and 29.)

Push

Push marketing is perhaps the oldest and perhaps “original” form of marketing, and refers to the fact that you as a company reach out to the market. You *push your message* through the distribution channel, and they take it out to an audience, often interrupting them in some way.

The process is focused inside a business. A company makes a product, and then it starts to work with dealers and sellers to find ways to increase demand for the product. The product is of the company's own choosing,

²² For example, late comedian Alan King was once sued by an airline for naming them on live television after he had had flight problems. As the story goes, the judge threw out the case because he had also flown on that airline.

and the company essentially goes knocking on doors to find out if someone wants it.

Display and broadcast advertising are the emblematic examples of push marketing, but others include direct mail, telemarketing, and even signage and billboards. You have a message and you beam it out to as many potential customers as you can, and some percentage of them will, ideally, catch sight of it, pay attention, and take some sort of action.

Today, the push campaigns rely on a concurrent pull campaign. Lexus may run national ads with an emotional appeal of luxury and speed, but the local dealers are putting up billboards with the dealer name, a picture of the vehicle, and the address of their dealership.

Push marketing comprises the following stages:

- **Conception**—*The campaign is created.* The business, and perhaps its agency, determines what will make its dealers and end-users act in a particular way that the business would find economically pleasing. Informing the dealers and possibly the end user target audience would be done in many formats, but it's mainly focused on "getting the word out."
- **Deployment**—*The campaign is physically disseminated.* A TV ad runs in its scheduled time slot, or a direct mail piece is printed and enters the mail stream. A print ad runs in a magazine. Brochures and selling materials are sent to sales forces.
- **Reaction**—Depending on the level of reaction, additional steps are taken, such as follow-up phone calls to dealers by sales people. There might be events like dinners or training sessions about selling.
- **Response**—Sales are taken, and then those who do not buy are followed up with, or ignored, depending on the situation. Another campaign or another product promotion is started.

	OFFLINE			ONLINE		
	Push	Pull	Participative	Push	Pull	Participative
advertising (broadcast)	x	x		x	x	
advertising (space)	x	x				
advertising (Web)				x	x	
smartphone/tablet apps				x		
associations			x			x
blog					x	x
brand name/company reputation/image		x			x	x
brochure	x			x		
business development/consultation		x	x			
catalog	x	x		x	x	
coupon	x			x		
crowdsourcing					x	x
dealer-distributors		x	x			
direct e-mail				x	x	
direct mail (static)	x					
direct mail (variable)	x			x	x	
directory	x			x		
event/trade show	x	x	x	x	x	x
in-game advertising				x		
local deals	x			x		
location services				x	x	x
loyalty programs		x				
market research			x		x	x
newspaper inserts	x	x			x	x
newsletter	x	x		x	x	
organizations	x		x	x		x
outdoor (billboard, etc.)	x					
POS/POP	x					
product placement	x			x		
product/service reviews	x					x

and Participative Marketing

	OFFLINE			ONLINE		
	Push	Pull	Participative	Push	Pull	Participative
public relations		X		X	X	X
radio program, podcast				X	X	X
RSS (like news feed)				X		
sales personnel	X	X	X			
search engine optimization				X	X	
search, paid				X		
search, mobile				X		
signage	X					
SMS/MMS (texting)				X	X	X
social bookmarking					X	X
social media (Facebook, Twitter)					X	X
social media (mobile)					X	X
specialties	X					
spokespeople	X			X	X	X
sponsorship	X	X		X	X	
storefront	X					
store, in-store environment/int. design	X					
telemarketing	X	X	X			
training	X	X	X	X	X	X
transactional/transpromotional	X			X		
user groups		X	X		X	X
vehicle wraps	X					
Web site				X		
Web site (mobile)				X		
Web storefront				X		
Webinars				X	X	X
white paper	X	X		X	X	
word of mouth		X	X		X	X
YouTube video				X	X	

Lately, push marketing is also being associated with “outbound” marketing. Still to this day, the most common form of push marketing remains as personal selling. That sales process can occur in a visit to the customer or a customer visiting the sales floor of a retailer or a dealer.

Pull

Pull marketing involves getting the market to come to you. How does that differ from push marketing? With pull marketing, you use a media channel to get prospective buyers to seek you out because they are *already* looking for the products or services you provide, and you are simply making it easy for them to find you.

A key part of pull marketing is the development of a brand. The creation, development, and nurturing of a recognized brand is an attempt to have potential buyers see your company name often and in the right context so that they remember it when they need your product or service. Most products are used in a particular circumstance or time, so having your product associated with the experience of that time is important. A plumber that specializes in new construction would promote himself in one way, but one that deals with household emergencies would promote himself in a different way. The same is true for your business.

Because they’ve seen your name often and in a favorable way, ideally they wouldn’t seek out other companies like yours for “comparison shopping” or at the very least engage in only a limited search prior to purchase.

The pull marketing process comprises the following stages:

- **Research**—As much information as possible about potential target audiences are gathered. This information is used to get an understanding of the sizes of the audiences, what they are most interested in, the way they would use the product, and what their expectations are for pricing and other key marketing elements. There’s a lot of financial work in this stage, as

marketers determine what sales levels they might achieve and at what marketing costs.

- **Campaign**—There isn't one campaign, but probably a few potential campaigns. Based on the research, and possibly some research in showing the campaigns to potential customers, a single campaign approach would be selected. Today, a single theme might be selected but then altered for use in different media.
- **Deployment**—The message is then used in different media, but is consistent. The print ad is consistent with the TV ad; the Facebook page builds on the other campaigns, and so on.
- **Demand**—A potential customer has a need to find a provider of a product or service. He consults the phone book. She does a Google search. They mention their problem on Facebook. They check their blogroll.²³
- **Identification**—The potential customer finds the marketer. He sees the phone book entry. She gets a list of top Google hits. They read a relevant blogpost.
- **Response**—*The potential customer responds to the campaign and takes some action.* The phone book entry produces a phone call. The top Google hit sends the user to a Web site. The blogpost generates an e-mail inquiry. Ideally, these responders are converted to actual customers.

Pull marketing is also being referred to as “inbound” marketing in many cases today. Some have referred to it as “the art of being found.”

The distinction between push and pull is this. Push

²³ A blogroll is a list of related sites that bloggers add on their own blogs. We use it here to refer to the list of blogs a user has bookmarked. It is not related to an eggroll, which is something else.

marketing is about interrupting people and getting them to react or respond to a message. Pull marketing assumes that there is already a group of ready, willing, and able customers, and you are simply making it easy to find you.

Participative

On the third hand, participation-based marketing is a way of interacting with customers and prospects in more or less real time, a strategy that the Internet has greatly facilitated, but has in fact existed well before. We just never thought of some of these tradition forms of public relations or selling as participation media before. Seminars, user groups, trade shows, and other in-person events have long fostered interaction and collaboration with prospective customers.

You may have seen this referred to as collaborative media, especially in the case of blogging, social media like Facebook and Twitter, and other forms. We thought about it for a while, and *collaboration* requires some kind of planned interaction, and the collaborators know each other. Collaboration also means that those involved are working toward the same objective, even though they may not have the same reasons to do so. Collaboration is also a commitment of time.

Participation is broader than that; collaborators work in parallel and in a complementary way. Those who participate may not have the same desires at all, which is why social media has become a key real-time medium because you hear both from people who like you and those who don't. Participants can also enter and leave at times of their own desire. They don't have to finish thoughts or actions. They can participate for good results, or be destructive, or benign. Nonetheless, other participants share information about their experiences, provide advice, or leave comments for others.

It's important that businesses be aware of participation venues online. Companies have found that clients start Facebook pages without them, sometimes for venting about how bad the company experience has been. Other companies have started Facebook pages on their

own, to cultivate their brands, and offer promotions and discounts to their loyal customers, making them feel like insiders.

Participation media are particularly prone to being done in a half-hearted way by businesses, as their expectations for results were either too high or more accurately, misplaced. Participation media are for exactly that: participation.

The goal of participation marketing strategies is enhanced customer loyalty, because the customer feels like they are part of the brand, or the brand provides some other value other than the brand's primary product or service. A good example of this is smartphone apps. If you fly a lot, as some of us are forced to, you may rely on airline apps to check gate information and flight status whilst in transit, or get special airfare deals pushed to you. Southwest Airlines, for example, has an excellent iPhone app, and you can even check in using it and receive an iPhone-based electronic boarding pass that can be scanned right at the gate. The Southwest Airlines app adds convenience—and thus value—to the travel experience, and fosters loyalty to the brand.²⁴ (Other airlines' apps—which shall remain nameless—can't even get gate info correct.) Other brands also have apps that add certain degrees of value—UPS's lets you schedule pickups or get rates, Starbucks' lets you place orders via the app and even pay, and so forth.

Crowdsourcing is another emblematic example of participation marketing. A variety of crowdsourcing is also known as user-generated advertising whereby your customers actually create ads or other marketing elements for you.

The participation marketing process comprises the following stages:

- **Deployment**—*The participation “forum” is identified and strategized.* A company decides which trade show(s) to attend and purchases booth space. A company representative agrees

²⁴ Not charging extortionate rates for checked luggage also helps.

to participate in a seminar panel discussion or deliver a presentation. A company blog is set up and invites user/customer comments. A Facebook page is developed, tying all of the concepts together.

- **Interaction**—*The company representative participates in a dialogue with potential customers.* Trade show exhibitors provide one-on-one demos at their booths. The seminar participant provides the “As” in a “Q&A” session with audience members. Company bloggers read and respond to user/customer comments—even (or especially) negative ones. Conversations via Facebook are propagated.
- **Lead Acquisition**—*The company acquires a high-quality set of potential customers.* The trade show exhibitor has a badge-scan database or business cards of interested booth visitors. The seminar participant has exchanged business cards with attendees. The blog comments section captures the e-mail or Web site information of registered users. Facebook friends or “like”-ees are engaged customers.
- **Follow-Up**—*A company representative makes subsequent contact a short time after the event.* The trade show exhibitor calls or e-mails the leads s/he collected. Likewise the seminar participant. The blogger continues the online dialogue with the commenter, especially addressing any concerns that may have initiated the comment. The Facebook interaction continues.
- **Response**—*The leads respond positively and take some action.* The trade show booth visitor buys a product or service. The seminar attendee also becomes a customer. The blog commenter or Facebook friend remains or becomes a satisfied customer.

We will get a better sense of how these three types of marketing strategies differ when we get to the entries later in this book.

Online vs. Offline

As you can see in the table presented earlier, we can divide push, pull, and participation channels into online and offline varieties. Some of these items are most effectively deployed via the Internet, while others are best handled in the so-called “real world,” wherever that may be.

From Two to Six Cells

Over time, communicating with the market went from push, to push and pull. In the mid-1990s, the Internet split push and pull into online and offline. Then, social media, or rather, participation media, had its own push and pull, both online and offline. Participation media allow us to think of older media in a new way. Trade shows are now offline participation media, and we are able to connect with attendees in both online and offline ways. Trade associations are also participation media now.

Different Strokes

Different types of companies have different needs and thus approaches to marketing, which will be a function of the market they are in, their size, and whether they are business-to-business or business-to-consumer. The nature of each channel doesn't change, but these factors will determine the mix of channels to use.

The nature of each media channel doesn't change, but different factors such as the type of business, size of business, whether they're B2B or B2C, the intended audience, etc., will all determine the mix of channels to use.

In fact, there is no “right” allocation. Allocations change over time and would be different because of the unique characteristics of a geographic area, its ethnic make-up, and many other demographic factors. The ability of the business to execute the media plan is also a key factor. An ad in a weekly newspaper requires little

management. A plan involving Facebook might involve posting something new every other day. Participation media require rigid discipline. The weekly newspaper ad is more likely to be “once and done,” at least for the duration of the contract.

As a result, we will be discussing each of the items in this book in the context of several hypothetical companies²⁵ that run the gamut of size and market:

- **Blown Gaskets, Inc., a business-to-business manufacturer:** Blown Gaskets, Inc. is a Monkey’s Eyebrow, Kentucky-based rubber gasket manufacturer. They specialize in molded rubber, extruded rubber, die-cut rubber, and lathe-cut rubber parts. You want rubber, they got it. They serve various markets including appliance, automotive, and construction manufacturers.
- **Problematic Solutions, a business-to-business service provider:** Based in Gnaw Bone, Indiana, Problematic Solutions is a Web-hosting company that grew from two seemingly hamster-powered servers in a garage to a large enterprise with more than 120,000 customers throughout North America. They offer several tiers of service for any size business, from large corporations to individuals and sole proprietors. By providing a robust technological base, reasonable pricing, and non-patronizing technical and customer support, Problematic Solutions is able to offer customers an unbeatable value and guaranteed 99% uptime.
- **Harry’s Hair Emporium, a retail business:** Harry’s Hair Emporium is a Toad Lick, Arkansas-based hair salon. Harriett “Harry”

²⁵ We *say* hypothetical, but some of these may actually be out there somewhere!

Delvecchio has owned the salon for more than three decades. The salon is located in a well-traveled strip mall on a main drag, and Harry rents out five chairs to independent stylists. Although she has moved five times in 30 years, it has never been more than a mile at a time. At 75, Harry is still a top stylist, still chain smokes Pall Malls, and has a voice that could sand the paint off a sailboat.

- **D. Rain & Sons, a professional service provider:** D. Rain & Sons is a Flushing, New York-based plumber. Claude Rain is the sole proprietor, and although he occasionally subcontracts to one or two colleagues, he does most jobs himself. The company was founded by his father Derek (1927–2003) and Claude and his brother Archibald were for two decades the company's only employees. (Archibald was killed in a freak plumbing accident in 1991.) Claude's own two sons are 9 and 13, the elder poised to enter the business, flush with youthful enthusiasm and an aversion to belts.
- **Ferris Fang, Dentist, a medical service provider:** Ferris Fang, D.D.S., is a dentist located in Bicuspid Plains, Iowa. His practice includes him and his wife Phyllis (also a D.D.S.), two hygienists, and a receptionist. He has a small but regular roster of patients, but could always use more. Getting new clients for Dr. Fang was always like pulling tee— well, you know.
- **Great D. Press, a mid-size commercial sheet-fed printer:** Founded in 1974 and located in Deadwood, South Dakota, family owned and operated Great D. Press does about \$1–2 million a year (way down from its heyday in the 1980s), has a 28-inch 5-color Heidelberg Speedmaster,

a 20x28-inch 5-color Komori, a 26 x 40-inch 4-color Komori, a 2-color AB Dick 9870, and a Canon imagePRESS C6000 Color Digital Press. They also offer a wide range of prepress and postpress services. (Be sure to visit their Web site for a complete equipment list and a picture of their plant with the cars they owned in 1997 parked out front.) They have been seeing an increase in demand for digital work and what they can't run in-house on their Canon, they out-source to other local digital printers.

- **Rapid Reproduction, a small quick print shop:** Located in Toast, North Carolina, Rapid Reproduction started as an offset duplicator shop in the early 1970s, aided and abetted by an Itek photographic platemaking machine. They specialized in basic job work for local businesses—letterhead, business cards, parts lists, sell sheets, and other such work. In the 1990s, they began adding digital printing equipment, including color and black-and-white copiers, as well as a Xerox DocuColor. Business has been rough over the past few years, but a focus on color presentation graphics has helped.

Okay, we may be getting a little overly creative here, but these companies represent a cross-section of businesses out in our large economy—or at least the kinds that most commercial printers are likely to be working with.²⁶

Media have obviously changed since the 1960s. Here is how our cross-section of businesses would have been most likely to have marketed themselves in the 1960s and '70s, vs. the 2000s and '10s:

²⁶ Note that we have not included amongst our examples the super-immense, multinational corporation like a WalMart or McDonald's. These companies have a much different approach to marketing and tend not to be the kinds of businesses that the "average" commercial printer comes into direct contact with, or is likely to be able to assist with marketing services.

B2B Manufacturer (Blown Gaskets)

1960s/'70s	2000s/'10s
<p>printed catalogs of product lines maintained a healthy database of buyers at companies in the markets and industries they supply; that database started on index cards, and eventually ended up in a computer spreadsheet program</p> <p>parts lists, brochures, sell sheets, and other printed collateral materials; the company issued new printed materials every six months, and gave each of their clients a company-labeled binder to keep them in</p> <p>advertising in B2B publications of their key industries</p> <p>trade show and other event attendance</p> <p>cold calling and traditional shoe-leather salesmanship (w/ printed collateral materials)</p>	<p>printed catalog/sell sheets (infrequently or POD); they're also up on the Web site</p> <p>e-commerce and online catalogs and parts lists; there's even a database where the dealer sales rep just has to enter the brand name and model number of the product, and all of the possible pieces appear in a list with their prices</p> <p>advertising on Web sites of relevant B2B news sites</p> <p>organic (via search engine optimization) and paid search</p> <p>more limited and judicious trade show and other event attendance</p> <p>videos featuring their best service people demonstrate complicated assembly or installation procedures, all up on YouTube</p> <p>name brand and reputation</p>

B2B Services Provider (Problematic Solutions²⁷)

1960s/'70s	2000s/'10s
advertising in trade publications of target industries cold-calling prospects by phone or in person trade show and other event attendance printed brochures and other collateral materials word of mouth and brand identification custom printed proposals for each client	search, esp. paid search banner advertising on top technology news sites and blogs some small display print advertising in strategically chosen techie publications Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn blog and e-newsletter that share news and technology updates word of mouth and professional recommendations

²⁷ Being a Web-hosting company, Problematic Solutions would not have existed in the 1960s and '70s, and in fact its principals may not even have been born yet. However, other types of B2B service providers at the time would have included early software vendors and programmers, payroll management systems providers, and other nascent information technologies companies.

Retailer (Harry's Hair Emporium)

1960s/'70s	2000s/'10s
<p>word of mouth and/or location</p> <p>attractive signage in prominent retail location</p> <p>display advertising in local newspaper</p> <p>Yellow Pages advertising</p> <p>sponsoring local events or Little League teams</p> <p>diner placemats</p> <p>other types of retail businesses (restaurants, e.g.)</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">advertising</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">printed brochures in local hotels and motels</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">advertising on local radio and TV stations</p>	<p>word of mouth and physical location</p> <p>attractive signage</p> <p>some advertising in local newspaper</p> <p>Yellow Pages advertising</p> <p>Web page that tells the history of the salon/Harry, and profiles the current stylists, lists the services available, provides directions</p> <p>Google search</p> <p>Superpages online entry</p> <p>sponsoring community events</p> <p>Facebook pages attract likes</p> <p>location services like Yelp!</p> <p>QR code in window that generates new customer promotion</p> <p>other types of retail businesses:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">more involved with social media (restaurants have "Friend us on Facebook and get 10% off" deals)</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Foursquare and other location services</p>

Professional Services (D. Rain & Sons)

1960s/'70s	2000s/'10s
<p>Yellow Pages advertising word of mouth some advertising in local paper vehicle graphics (hand-stenciled graphics or those adhesive letters)</p>	<p>Yellow Pages advertising Superpages online site word of mouth Web site provides services offered, contact info, and testimonials from satisfied customers more sophisticated vehicle graphics location services like Yelp! QR codes on truck Video on site "meet the owner"</p>

Medical Services (Dr. Fang)

1960s/'70s	2000s/'10s
<p>Yellow Pages advertising word of mouth and personal and professional referrals signage location in a large medical building Medical and dental specialists like periodontists and oral surgeons: referrals by family dentists, GPs</p>	<p>Web site location services like Yelp! location in popular medical arts building/walk-in traffic sponsors local events like 5K runs and other fundraisers for local charities and organizations some social media printed brochures—with their contact info—that offer information about various dental problems promotional mailings to new home buyers in area video of Dr. Fang explaining oral care, new procedures</p>

Commercial Sheetfed Print Shop (The Great D. Press)

1960s/'70s	2000s/'10s
<p>Yellow Pages advertising</p> <p>word of mouth and referrals by designers/print buyers</p> <p>advertising in trade publications</p> <p>signage</p> <p>trade association listings</p>	<p>Web site</p> <p>social media</p> <p>company blog offering graphic design and file formatting tips, industry trends, etc.</p> <p>online video of company owner demonstrating printing process, not screaming psychotically about how much he loves print advertising on WhatTheyThink.com</p> <p>trade shows/events (like Print Buyers Conference)</p> <p>active membership in local chapters of various marketing organizations</p> <p>sponsorship of local events and organizations</p>

Small Quick Print Shop (Rapid Reproduction)

1960s/'70s	2000s/'10s
<p>Yellow Pages advertising</p> <p>word of mouth and referrals by designers/print buyers</p> <p>signage</p> <p>trade association listings</p>	<p>Web site</p> <p>location in well-traveled strip mall</p> <p>some social media</p> <p>sponsorship of local events and organizations</p>

This section has provided a quick look at how marketing has changed for several companies that represent a cross-section of American businesses. The majority of this book consists of case studies of these companies' marketing strategies four years from now—2015. Of course, the first question you may have is, why don't we offer case studies of actual companies? Two reasons. First, no company around today has experienced 2015 yet. And second, what we describe are best-case scenarios existing in some contrived situations. The idea is to examine all the *potential* marketing strategies, which necessitates the sort of composite approach we have taken. In other words, the companies profiled in this book are composites of several different real companies. Got it? Good.

Oh, Just One More Thing...²⁸

Before online media came to be, there were demands put on media to deliver certain response rates in terms of changes in sales volume or other metrics. There is one important point to be made before you go through the case studies.

The number of media formats has grown significantly, but the size of any business' target audience really has not. Most traditional media have lower response rates than they did twenty years ago. To be successful with the new digital media requires patience, consistency, a program for near-continuous activity, and diligence. The same total response rate to a campaign is now split among many media and activities.

When you review the cases, please take note of the numerous media formats employed. For print businesses, that workflow diligence and repeatability that is embedded in our culture and in our plants, is something that can be transferred to digital media campaigns.

Later in this book, we will discuss the issues of how to bill for these efforts, and also come to terms with the question of whether or not these are right for all print

²⁸ It helps to read this with the voice of Peter Falk's Columbo.

businesses, and also the dreaded issue of whether or not a printer should become a “marketing services provider.”

And finally, the cases are written from the perspective of 2015, not 2011. So the businesses are looking back to today’s period and what they did in 2011–2012 to make themselves successful in 2015.

Get the Business

- All sales require a familiarity with a brand or a person prior to a transaction being concluded. Traditionally, that meant advertising and/or public relations. Today, that can involve social media.
- Word of mouth was always important for developing businesses, but today that has become word of mouse—Google searches, Web sites, and other online resources.
- Corporate image has always been a key part of communications. Low-cost new media can communicate essential aspects of corporate image through repetition and consistency.
- New media offer numerous opportunities for prospects to “meet” customers through video and also by linking to their own businesses through Web sites and social media.
- If you can’t be found online, that makes potential buyers suspicious. If you’re not online, then where are you?
- The nature of each media channel doesn’t change, but different factors such as the type of business, size of business, whether they’re B2B or B2C, the intended audience, etc., will all determine the mix of channels to use.

Case Study #1: Business-to-Business Manufacturer

Company Name and Location: Blown Gaskets,
Monkey's Eyebrow, Kentucky

Founded: 1948

Company Background: Rubber gasket manufacturer, specializing in molded rubber, extruded rubber, die-cut rubber, and lathe-cut rubber parts. Sales network comprises 1500 distributors nationwide.

Markets/Industries Served: Appliance, automotive, aerospace, and construction manufacturers.

Interviewee: Harry O. Ring, VP Marketing



The Story So Far

Blown Gaskets' Kentucky location was strategically chosen to be near the Louisville International Airport, a UPS Worldport hub, which allows the company to take orders until late in the evening and still be able to overnight them.

A business-to-business manufacturer like Blown Gaskets has made the transition from pre- to post-Internet with aplomb, maintaining the same basic strategy, but adapting to new media as they have emerged. Blown Gaskets' marketing before the Internet days would have been a combination of **print advertising** in the trade publications of the industries of their largest customers, **catalog publishing**, and **in-person sales reps**. Also, much advertising and marketing was handled by their distributors. Today, in 2015, print advertising has been substantially

pared down and is largely **banner advertising** or some form of **rich media advertising** on different industries' top business-to-business Web sites and information portals. **Catalog publishing** has been reduced, and exists to complement an e-commerce site. New media exist comfortably alongside print, which is still important, but print is used more sparingly.



Harry O. Ring

“We really trimmed our catalog publishing,” says Mr. Ring. “Where we used to publish a thick catalog at least monthly, now we are more likely to produce an eight-page ‘catalog-ette,’ perhaps less frequently, like every two or three months, often tied into special

events. Our customers are in many different industries, and thus have different needs. We’ve managed to use our database to generate versioned catalog-ettes that are increasingly relevant to specific companies and industries.” As a result, the company has managed to save costs and increase sales.

At **trade events**, like the annual MegaConventioCon-ExpoRama that serves as the company’s top event of the year, Blown Gaskets’ booth would include a sampling of the most recent catalog-ettes. They also host a cocktail party for clients and the media, and also require **printed invitations, banners, napkins, ID badges, and signage** for the party, in addition to banners and other **trade-show graphics** for the event itself.

The trade event also includes specialty **brochures** and **sell sheets** that provide more detail and specifications about specific product lines. “We completely changed our approach to sell sheets about fifteen years ago,” says Mr. Ring. “The problem we had was that we were locked into mass-printing and storing all our sales materials. As often happens, specs or prices or other information would change and we would have to make sure that the change was conveyed to all the reps and dealers. Or we changed

the branding. It often meant a great deal of reprinting and trashing of inventoried materials, which was a big waste. In 2000, our printer came up with a great idea.”

That idea was to create an online “Web-to-print” portal that had templates for all the sell sheets, brochures, product photos, company logos, and other collateral materials Blown Gaskets reps and dealers used. The templates were linked to a product database, so information was always up-to-date. Reps and others simply ordered what they needed when they needed it—the printer was using a digital press, so could print as few copies as possible. “We saved a fortune on warehousing, shipping, printing, and we improved the accuracy of the materials we were sending out, which also averted some potential legal issues.”

The latest iteration of this is supplying these sell sheets and other materials to mobile devices like smartphones and tablet PCs. They can be printed as (or if) needed using mobile-to-print at a specific rep’s office or via a kiosk at an AlphaGraphics or perhaps FedExOffice-like location or an office superstore.

Other print initiatives are usually conducted in conjunction with special events, like the MegaConventioConExpoRama. “We do a **postcard** mailing six to eight weeks prior to an event that has our booth number, the show hours, and other info about the event itself. We also use **personalized URLs (PURLs)** to schedule appointments and compile leads before the show. Post-show, we can see who actually did turn up, and verify those that did. It’s a much more efficient process, and helps our reps put time and effort in the right places.” They also follow up the postcard mailing with follow-up **direct e-mail** blasts. “We use the same graphics in print and online to reinforce the brand. The combination of print and electronic is a one-two punch that really makes our messaging recognizable and recallable.”

It also bears mentioning that Blown Gaskets has worked with industry **trade associations** to sponsor and host various types of educational and networking events.

Business cards are also a mainstay of any business, but especially Blown Gaskets. But the business card has changed dramatically in recent years. “There are more ways than ever to communicate, so how do you get all that info on a business card and not have it be either poster-sized or crammed with 4-point type?” Where once, a business card only needed to include name, title, phone number, and address, over the decades it grew to include telex numbers, fax numbers, pager numbers, cellphone numbers, e-mail addresses, Web sites, instant messaging screen names, Skype names, LinkedIn or Facebook handles, Twitter feeds, QR codes, and more. Even though some of those items went into obsolescence, still, “It was just a case of too much information,” says Mr. Ring.

“So we sat down with our sales and marketing teams and thought about what *really* needs to be on a business card? Having more than one phone number is confusing for customers; all our reps have cellphones, so that became the number we gave out. Many don’t have an office or land line any longer, so we can eliminate phone clutter. No one uses faxes anymore, so we can get rid of that. We use one e-mail address. But what really helped was the evolution of what used to be called a **QR code**. Boy,

A Quick Response (QR) code is a type of bar code that, when scanned with a smartphone camera and QR reader



app, launches a Web site, video, or some other type of interactive or immersive experience.

was I glad when we finally got rid of those big, ugly black-and-white squares. I mean, I like crossword puzzles and all, but still...” The solution was “invisible” QR codes that can be embedded like watermarks in text and images, but

can still be read by a **smartphone app**. So if you scan, say, a sales rep’s name on her business card, it will automatically launch an e-mail program with her name inserted in the ‘to’ field, or goes to a landing page that lets the customer access a Twitter feed, Facebook account,

and so on. Scanning our company logo goes right to Blowngaskets.com.²⁹ It has really saved a great deal of business card real estate.”

The Transition to New Media

Mr. Ring was brought into Blown Gaskets in 2002 to help the company develop a more robust online presence, and leverage all the new and emerging ways to communicate with customers, and cultivate leads. “Obviously, we developed a **Web site** early on, and tied that to e-commerce,” says Mr. Ring. “What helped us tremendously was our content management system that had all our products in one database that fed all the spin-off materials—sell sheets, catalogs, the e-commerce site, you name it. That way, changes only had to be made in one location, and they rippled through everywhere. That was huge for us.”

The Web site also needed to function as a customer support tool. Live **instant messaging** chat, **Skype** video, **user forums**, etc., are all accessible from the Web site, and support is available literally 24/7. Investment in **search engine optimization (SEO)** has also helped with inbound marketing efforts, getting Blown Gaskets to the top one

Skype is an application for sending and receiving phone calls over the Internet.



If one or more users has a Webcam installed, they can make video calls. Skype also supports conference calls, as well as basic text messaging. And when calling Skype to Skype, calls are free.

or two Google hits for relevant **organic search** terms. “Other companies we know use **paid search**, but we find that organic search works better for us,” says Mr. Ring.

One of the early decisions the company had to make regarding its Web site was how to capture visitor information. “We wrestled with the idea of whether to require users to register before they could download product information,” says Mr. Ring. “My brother-in-law works for a printing equipment manufacturer and they

²⁹ Surprisingly, this domain is actually available.

would require that any visitor at all register on the site before they could obtain any product information. Turns out, their reps wasted a lot of time calling industry media writers who were just trying to get product specs for stories about equipment roundups. They were obviously never going to become customers, so we decided that that was not an effective strategy.” The company desired to offer a free e-newsletter to its target prospects while they were on the download page. “This way they were getting the information they needed without jumping through hoops and we were giving them a chance to get more.”

But Mr. Ring’s involvement went beyond mere functionality and making new media initiatives more of a proactive marketing tool. “Rubber gaskets are not that sexy—for most people—and there’s really only so much anyone can say about them. Unless you have a weird fetish, you’re not going to spend much time reading a blog about gaskets. So the idea behind new media and other online initiatives is to serve as a general business information resource for clients, and develop the Blown Gaskets name as an educational resource, and not just a supplier of parts. We think of it as ‘educational marketing.’”

The earliest manifestation of this was the sponsoring of industry **Webinars**, which associates the Blown Gaskets name with valuable information, and gleans sales leads from Webinar registrants. “If you’re taking the time, or spending money, to participate in a Webinar, you’re probably a better-than-average sales lead.” Company-produced **downloadable white papers** also complement other educational marketing initiatives.

The advent of social media has also not gone unexplored by Ring and his marketing team. “Many of our employees are on **LinkedIn**, and participate in groups and discussions. It takes some effort to get everyone synced; we really wanted to avoid having different people talking at cross-purposes out there, which is a common social media trap. So we have an internal social media site that helps standardize the messaging.” Mr. Ring is personally on **Facebook** but has

yet to think it a good fit for Blown Gaskets. “It’s important to be familiar with these things, but also to recognize when something is not entirely appropriate.” The strategy with social media is not just to “be there to be there” but to create an “elder statesman” approach that lends the initiative and the company credibility.

Most of the company’s social media efforts go into the company’s various **Twitter** feeds. Blown Gaskets has one primary feed @blowngaskets, which provides company information and product updates, but a variety of other feeds that are industry-relevant. “We have one Twitter feed that offers information about the aerospace industry. We have another that serves the automotive industry. We have about half a dozen feeds for the top industries we serve. And of course we have a feed that ties together our distribution network.”

The company also uses its Twitter feeds to “live tweet” events (like the MegaConventioConExpoRama) and press conferences. They also stream their own press conferences live via their Web site. They are also looking at unique applications of **location services** such as **Fourquare**. “When we are at trade events, like the MegaCConventioComExpoRama, we set up a location on Foursquare and encourage customers and clients to ‘check-in’ with us,” says Mr. Ring. “We can also track them around the show floor, using location apps, as well.”

One of the latest initiatives has been an emphasis on **online video**. Blown Gaskets used to infrequently produce training and demonstration films, but the cost of doing so was prohibitive. Today, that situation has changed. “The tools for shooting, editing, and distributing video have improved in quality and cost,” says Mr. Ring. “Even if we didn’t demand a high level of perfection, we could still

Foursquare is a smartphone app that determines



the user’s geographic location and finds nearby businesses. Users can upload reviews or tips concerning that business, “check in” at that location, and receive points or other virtual awards for visiting that location.

produce something of reasonable quality using little more than a smartphone or a tablet computer.” Even so, the Blown Gaskets video department (“basically a freelance video guy we know,” says Mr. Ring) comprises some simple lighting gear, a prosumer-level video camera, a lavalier microphone, and a “lite” version of Apple’s Final Cut editing software. “I’d be surprised if everything totaled more than a couple grand.” The company produces short, three- to five-minute demo videos which it posts online or on a special YouTube channel. “Again, it’s about that educational marketing thing.”

Joanie Loves Tchotchkes³⁰

We discussed Blown Gaskets’ use of conventional print earlier, but they also do small amounts of speciality printing. “**Signage**, obviously, is important for us, especially at events like the MegaConventioConExpoRama,” says Mr. Ring. In addition, they have **truck decals** and other **vehicle graphics**. “You can’t measure the ROI of a truck graphic, but anything that keeps the name out there is a positive branding effort.” To that end, Blown Gaskets also uses various **specialty printed objects**, like logo-emblazoned pens, and, especially, rubber o-ring keychains, mousepads, and coasters. “People like little tchotchkes, particularly when they perform a useful function. And, again, it gets the brand in front of people.”

The Distributor Network

One of Blown Gaskets’ recent challenges was standardizing its marketing efforts through its network of 1,500 North American **distributors**. Part of this effort was co-sponsoring events for the customers of its dealers and distributors, such as sales and support training, as well as handling the registration, since the company as a whole

³⁰ Pronounced “chatch-kuhs,” it’s a Yiddish word that everyone seems to know, referring to giveaways and promotional items, but no one dares try to spell it. The correct spelling is whatever letters you can get to sound like it’s pronounced, which would drive any anal retentive proofreader crazy.

already had an event registration infrastructure in place. This also helps serve a lead-generation function. Blown Gaskets also supplies dealers with e-mail messaging templates, as well as desktop publishing and presentation templates, to help standardize and make consistent the overall branding.

A recent initiative has involved creating an elite “Gold Level” for its twenty-five biggest distributors. One of the conspicuous elements of this elite status was that these distributors get more elaborate printed materials—brochures, calendars, and other materials that use coatings; gloss; specialty inks and papers; UV inks, coatings and effects; and other “high-class” printing processes. They also get enhanced “e-stuff,” offers to participate in special sales contests, and more.

“Basically, our default communication method is electronic, but print as a tangible medium has value in that it is seen as something special and unique. A high-quality, specialty printed product seems like a gift.”

Twin Tracks

“One epiphany we had was recognizing that we have two kinds of customers,” says Mr. Ring. “One group just buys our parts to use as is, but another group comprises engineers who are designing products that include our gaskets.” This not only motivated Blown Gaskets to become involved in custom-producing gaskets to certain specifications based on what those engineers were designing, but it also affected the company’s approach to marketing to these two groups. “We used to treat everyone the same, but now thanks to the different costs associated with digital media, we can create different ways for the different people who use our products to get information about what we make.” One initiative has been to require users to sign up to receive documentation, which includes basic information about job title, the type of work they do, and so forth. “A little **market research** can go a long way.”

The Final Word

All of these marketing initiatives have proven highly successful for Blown Gaskets, but there is one final thing the company has going for itself: “By dint of the fact that we have been a leader in rubber product manufacturing for more than forty years, we have high **brand recognition** and **corporate reputation**. This gives us a high visibility.”

How the Channels Have Changed

What They Used to Do: 1960s/1970s

- printed catalogs of product lines
- maintained a healthy database of buyers at companies in the markets and industries they supply; that database started on index cards, and eventually ended up in a computer spreadsheet program
- parts lists, brochures, sell sheets, and other printed collateral materials; the company issued new printed materials every six months, and gave each of their clients a company-labeled binder to keep them in
- advertising in B2B publications of their key industries
- trade show and other event attendance
- cold calling and traditional shoe-leather salesmanship (with printed collateral materials)

What They Do Now: 2000s/2010s

- printed catalog/sell sheets (infrequently or POD); they're also up on the Web site
- e-commerce and online catalogs and parts lists; there's even a database where the dealer sales rep just has to enter the brand name and model number of the product, and all of the possible pieces appear in a list with their prices
- advertising on relevant B2B news Web sites
- organic (via search engine optimization) and paid search
- more limited and judicious trade show and other event attendance

- installation of some of the parts that were difficult to explain over the phone have videos with their best service people explaining how to do it, all up on YouTube
- name brand and reputation
- online product videos, especially related to proper maintenance and installation in common products

Case Study #2: Business-to-Business Service Provider

Company Name and Location: Problematic Solutions, Gnow Bone, Indiana

Founded: 1998

Company Background: Web-hosting/Web services company that started with

two servers in a garage, growing to a large enterprise with more than 120,000 customers throughout North America.

Markets/Industries Served: Companies of all sizes, with an emphasis on small to mid-size businesses and individuals and sole proprietors in a wide range of industries and markets.

Interviewee: Howard Thomas Michael Lovell, Chief Cook and Bottle Washer (yes, his business card says that)



The Story So Far

“I will be the first to admit that most Web services companies have traditionally had terrible marketing,” says Howard Thomas Michael Lovell, the aptly initialed principal of Problematic Solutions. “Other B2B service providers like shipping companies—FedEx and UPS come to mind—are all over the place, with **print advertising, broadcast advertising, event sponsorships**—ever been to a college basketball game and a UPS guy delivers the game ball to the head official? It’s goofy as all get out, but it gets the brand out there.”

Web hosting—the typical “Web service” provided—has always been subject to cutthroat pricing, but customers have started to find that sometimes “cheap” is “too cheap.”



*Howard Thomas
Michael Lovell*

“It’s all about the uptime,” says Lovell. “If you can’t keep your customers online, or if their customers’ e-mails bounce, you’re hurting their business.” It’s also about timely and helpful customer support. “Also remember, for the most part you’re dealing with an Internet-savvy bunch that is not shy about flaming³¹ their Web hosting companies on online forums. There will always be problems, but how you help

solve those problems can mean the difference between a happy customer and one that will jump to someone else.”

The number one promotional tool for a company like Problematic Solutions is its **Web site**. “We’re a Web hosting and Web services company. If our site is badly designed, or loads slowly, or something doesn’t load or work, or is defective in some way, that casts us in a very bad light. It’s like a commercial printer whose business cards are badly printed and cut crooked. So we put a great deal of effort into staying on top of the latest in Web design and development. We have to.” Speaking of **business cards**, naturally Lovell and other employees have business cards, although they incorporate the latest invisible watermarked QR codes that allow e-mail application and Web site access via a smartphone app. “It’s getting

³¹ We might already be showing our Internet age here. “Flaming” usually meant lashing out at someone on a Web site, blog, or some other public Internet place. “Flame mail” meant you did it in an e-mail. “Old flame” meant someone you had the hots for years ago, and has nothing to do with the Internet (if you’re lucky). “Keeper of the flame” refers to someone who maintains their faith in a devout way when others cannot. “Keeper of the old flame” is the person who marries your ex.

to the point where people don't even need to see the little icon next to a QR watermarked image anymore. They just automatically check these days. And of course printed blue underlined text is a good giveaway." (Blue underlined text is the universal indication for a hyperlink. Once it became possible to embed invisible QR codes in printed ink, blue underlined text started appearing in print and was an indication that it was a hot link.) They have also embedded their printed business cards with an invisible QR code that, via a smartphone app, will automatically scan and load the contact info into the smartphone's Contacts list.³² "Visual business card scanning and importing has been around since 2010 or so, but this new system is far and away a vast improvement."

Companies like Problematic Solutions have tended to rely on **organic search** or, for some, **paid search**. **Word of mouth**—or referrals from current customers—is also an important element in drumming up new business. "As more graphic designers migrate from the print world and become

Organic search is a search marketing strategy by which a Web site is optimized for search engines by carefully crafting the content on a Web page to contain specific keywords that someone would search for. Search Engine Optimization also embeds keywords in the page code itself so that the site will come up toward the top of the first page of hits. This differs from **paid search** in which the advertiser pays for certain keywords.

Web designers, at least in part, they often have no idea how and where to find a Web host for their clients. Sometimes, they'll be taking over Web work that has already been done, so the client already has a hosted site, but for designers creating new sites for customers, it can be tricky to find a reliable host." Just as print designers often get recommendations for printers from colleagues, so, too, do they get recommendations for Web services providers.

One of the unique challenges of a company like Problematic Solutions versus a traditional business-to-business

³² How do you know there's a QR code there if it's invisible? A small icon next to the image indicates that it's scannable. At least, that's how Digimarc handles it; www.digimarc.com/discover.

manufacturing company like Blown Gaskets (see Case Study #1) is that the trend is not so much to ferret out sales leads *per se*. And it's also not so much about getting people to switch Web hosting companies ("It can be a real disruption"), but simply to get more people online. "You'd be surprised how many businesses out there still don't have a Web site, or if they do, a current one," says Lovell. "But these days, not having a Web site is almost worse than not having a business card."

Another problem Lovell faces is competition from services like Wordpress and other blogging and electronic publishing platforms. "And, ironically, VistaPrint competes with me, as they now offer templated hosted Web sites for businesses." One of the company's strategies has been to work with the local Chamber of Commerce, to get listings of local businesses, and then investigate if they have a Web site. If not, they're a top prospect. If they do have a site, Problematic Solutions will do a preliminary analysis of the site, see how it ranks in search engines, and then write up a short proposal on spec to the potential client about how they can improve their site and increase traffic. "We have an employee whose sole job function is performing these kinds of analytics."

Problematic Solutions also takes an integrated approach to offering client services. They work with local graphic designers and printers, so they can offer a full gamut of marketing services—not just Web hosting and Web design, but also complementary printed collateral materials, logo design, and other services.

The company has occasionally made forays into **print advertising**, taking out small display ads in computer and graphic arts magazines. "This was back in the day when there were a ton of them." They now do some **banner advertising**, but not a lot. "Gnaw Bone has a local art-house 'film forum' that published a monthly newsletter and we take out a small ad in it to show our support for the local arts community. We also have a banner ad on their Web site—which we also host for them gratis, as they're a non-profit. That type of *pro bono* work for local organizations

is good PR for us. Prospects get to see our work, and the organizations are pleased to send referrals our way.”

An Emphasis On Events

Web services don't have to be local, but Problematic Solutions has found that for marketing and promotion services, the local market is easy to tap into. Lovell works with the Gnaw Bone Chamber of Commerce and its monthly *Gnaw's News* **print newsletter** and **e-newsletter**. Lovell includes an insert in the print mailing, and is a cosponsor of the e-newsletter. He also sends periodic **direct mail** and **direct e-mail** to the Chamber membership, often with a phone call follow-up. Lovell does some out-bound **telemarketing**, “but so many people have come to despise telemarketing that I have found that it can really work against me.”

He has had more success with hosting or sponsoring Chamber **events** and **seminars**. “Table-top expos or expos where we talk about best practices for Web design, mobile marketing, social media, or augmented reality have been extremely successful for us. People have lots of questions.” Problematic Solutions has also held some other types of **special events**, such as a contest for best Web design.

“We train everyone in our company to avoid technical terms whenever they are with customers. It takes some getting used to, but the clients really appreciate it.”

Cutting Edge New Media

Speaking of social media, Problematic Solutions is also highly active in **social media** of all varieties, especially **Facebook**, **Twitter**, and **LinkedIn**. The company has long maintained a **blog** that offers Web design tips, search engine optimization strategies, and service updates. The company also has a strong presence on **location services** like **Four-square**, and offers discounted pricing to customers to mention they saw the company on Yelp! or Foursquare. They are also exploiting the latest in **augmented reality**. “Our building is tagged, so if you view it in an AR app you can learn

more about our company. There are a few Easter eggs on there, too, but I don't want to give away any surprises."

The Final Word

As a technology services provider, it's vital that Problematic Solutions stay on the bleeding edge of technology-based marketing and promotion initiatives. "It's really the key to

Augmented reality (AR) refers to any of a variety of ways of "overlaying" information, video, audio, graphics, etc., over a physical location when viewed through a smartphone camera and AR app. A very simple application of AR is the Yelp! app's Monocle feature that shows you what is near you.



our credibility," says Lovell. "If we're not far ahead of where the client is technologically, what use are we? But at the same time, our whole industry is based on interactivity. I think I read somewhere that this is called 'participation marketing.' And online or offline, that's the goal of our marketing strategy. To interact."

How the Channels Have Changed

What They Used to Do: 1960s/1970s³³

- advertising in trade publications of target industries
- cold-calling prospects by phone or in person
- trade show and other event attendance
- printed brochures and other collateral materials
- word of mouth and brand identification
- custom printed proposals for each client

What They Do Now: 2000s/2010s

- search, especially paid search
- banner advertising on top technology news sites and blogs
- some small display print advertising in strategically chosen techie publications
- Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn
- blog and e-newsletter that share news and technology updates
- word of mouth and professional recommendations
- public relations *pro bono* work
- special events

³³ As we pointed out in the Introduction, a Web services company would not have been around in the 1960s and 1970s, but other types of business-to-business service providers would have been.

Case Study #3: Retail Location

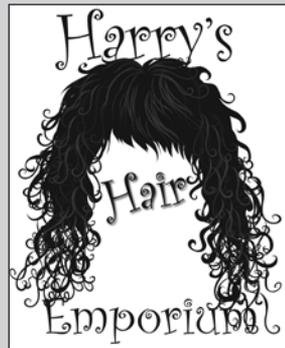
Company Name and Location: Harry's Hair Salon,
Toad Lick, Arkansas

Founded: 1974

Company Background: Beauty salon that has served the community almost 40 years.

Markets/Industries Served: People with hair (that might exclude Dr. Joe).

Interviewee: Harriet "Harry" Delvecchio, owner



The Story So Far

"Sweetheart, I've moved six times in forty-one years and every time it's like hide-and-seek," says Harriet "Harry" Delvecchio. "So this time, I wanted to make it so people could easily find us. Now in her 70s, Harry turns most marketing decisions over to her twenty-five-year-old niece, Holly Hirsute, but she still stays on top of what Holly is doing.

In the first two decades the hair salon was in business, marketing was a pretty straightforward affair. Harry had a display ad in the **Yellow Pages**, which was one of the primary generators of new business. "Remember when people let their fingers do the walking? They used to walk right over here and take the rest of the body with them. Especially the hair," she says. "Now you've got fingers,

toes, and every other limb running in all sorts of crazy directions.” She also took modest advantage of **print advertising**, mostly in church bulletins, as well as once or twice a week in the *Daily Toad*, the small community newspaper. “Remember that paper? It used to be subtitled ‘All the news that’s fit to lick.’ Now it was bought by some big conglomerate and it lost its personality.” In the 1980s, she experimented with **broadcast advertising** on a regional independent TV station. “Even though those ads cost—for back then—a fortune, they still looked cheap.”



*Harriet “Harry”
Delvecchio*

Harry also made sure her salon was located in well-traveled retail locations, so **physical location** was always an important aspect of attracting walk-ins. Unique **signage** was also part of her strategy. “Neon was the greatest human invention ever,” she says.

Harry is also a big proponent of community involvement, and since the late 1970s actively pursued **local event sponsorships**, such as the local Little League Team (the Toad Lick Toadstools—“Not the greatest team name in the world but they always had spunk”) as well as other events, such as an annual 5K run to benefit cancer research.

Harry is also a member of the local Chamber of Commerce and often included inserts in the chamber mailings, or hosted chamber networking **events** and meetings at the salon.

By the end of the 20th century, Harry’s was such a fixture in town that **word of mouth** became a top driver of new business.

The Hair Grows

Throughout the 1990s, Harry was initially oblivious to the Internet. “I thought it was just some fad for the kids, like, you know, Pac Man or something. I was into CB radio in

the 70s, so I know from fads like that.” As the 90s drew to a close, she could see it was getting more serious than CB radio ever had been. “It was getting crazy. I’d be cutting some guy’s hair and he’d be sitting in the chair on a cell phone day trading. And those horrible ‘dot-com’ commercials they used to have! That stupid Pets.com sock puppet made my cheapo ads in the 80s look like some blockbuster Super Bowl spot. Saw that bursting bubble a mile away.” Still, she did become one of the first local businesses to start a **Web site**, although it wasn’t much at first. But she quickly realized that she needed to attract new—and younger—clients. “Look, most of my customers had been with me for decades. But the problem I started having as we got into the 2000s was that my customers starting kicking the bucket or worse, moving to Florida,” she says. “2000...remember that stupid Y2K bug thing? My grandson told me that as a result of it hair would stop growing. And I believed him!”

As a result of an infusion of new stylists into the shop, and getting younger members of her family involved in the business, marketing the salon has been revitalized over the course of the 2000s and 2010s. “Hey, I still like real things like **business cards** and **appointment cards** or things like **refrigerator magnets**.” Indeed, Harry has always given away such **specialty printed objects**.

Enter Holly. The first thing she did was revamp the Web site. “It looked like it had been designed in 1994,” says Holly. “I had to change that to make it look slicker and more contemporary. It’s a moving target, but I took Web design in college so I have a pretty good idea of what to do—and what not to do.” At this stage in the salon’s existence, Harry is a highly recognizable figure in the community, so **online video** seemed a logical option. “Getting my aunt to stick to a script is like getting cats to walk in a straight line, if you remember those commercials she did in the 1980s. She became a local character because of those. Anyway, we thought we’d just go with that, and every couple of weeks we put up a two or three minute, sort

of **video podcast**. We get a lot of in-store foot traffic from those.” Each video would feature Harry talking in her own inimitable style about hair care tips, the latest styles, how and when to get your nails done, and so forth.

The salon also started doing **direct e-mail** around this time. “While customers were checking out, we would ask them to sign up to be on our mailing list, and we’d e-mail them discounts, coupons, and things like that,” says Holly. “We have a field in the database indicating when they were last in. Given that we pretty much know how fast hair grows, we can trigger the database to send a reminder about when they’d be getting a little shaggy.” Adds Harry, “Yeah, it’s like if George Orwell was a barber. But, hey, it works.” Harry’s also offers **gift certificates**, and offers seasonal specials such as “back to school” discounts in August, as well as graduation and/or wedding season in May and June. “For those kinds of things, getting the birthday of your client really helps. It lets us do all kinds of interesting promotions.”

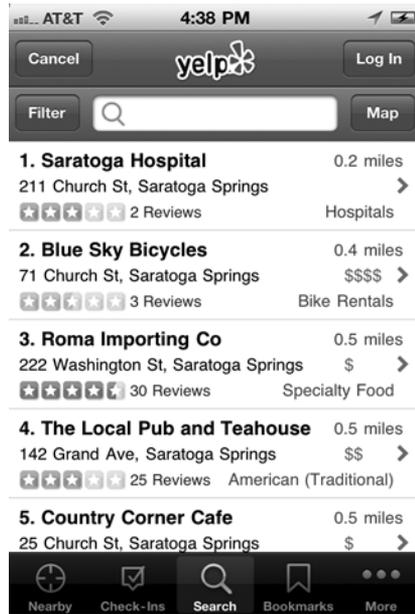
Holly also set up a **blog** to which all the stylists in the salon could contribute. Although it primarily concerns hair care tips, the idea is to make it youthful, hip, and edgy, focusing on nightlife and the Toad Lick “scene.” Holly realized that many of the stylists were not good at blog posts, so she interviews them, and ghostwrites their short posts. “It really helps the consistency of the blog and keeps it on schedule.”

“The blog evolved into a social network of local businesses like nail salons, tattoo parlors, body piercing specialists, and so on. We have one guy who invented what he calls ‘dental scrimshaw,’ which he insists is going to be the next craze in body decoration, but I have my doubts.” “Hey, I still can’t figure out why everyone these days wants to look like a comic book, so go figure,” adds Harry. Much of the blog content is inspired by things that Holly picks out of top hair styling magazines. To some of it, she adds her own spin or a local angle, and links to online versions of those publications where relevant.

Social media like **Facebook** is a natural fit, and the salon has 853 friends and 341 “likes” as of this writing. A sign in the salon reads, “Friend us on Facebook and get a free gift.” “Call me old-fashioned, but for me social media is happy hour at the Wart of the Toad on a Friday night,” adds Harry. “In fact, so go ahead and call me an old-fashioned.³⁴ Actually, I’ll take two.”

The salon gets generally good reviews on **Yelp!** (although for some newbies, Harry herself is an acquired taste) and other **location services**, and Holly has been taking advantage of **Foursquare’s** Merchant Platform to offer specials for frequent visitors. “I got the idea from an ex-boyfriend who was a manager at the Toad Lick Diner, which had a Four-square ‘Flash Special’ with which included ‘One free appetizer for the first 3 guests to check in Monday through Friday between 4pm and 6pm.’ So we now have a Loyalty Special on Four-square where you get ‘\$10 off any service every 10 check-ins,’” says Holly. As

Yelp! is a Web site and complementary smartphone app that functions as a user review site. Not only does it let users find businesses by ZIP code (or using the location of the mobile device), but it also lets users add reviews.



³⁴ An “old fashioned” is one of the earliest cocktails, and it’s basically whiskey, a sugar cube, and some bitters over ice, garnished with a lemon or cherries. Look for our “Getting Business Bartenders Guide” coming soon to a download site near you.

of this writing, Jennie D. is currently the Mayor of Harry's. Harry also participates in **deal-of-the-day Web sites** like **Groupon**.

A Moving Experience

All of the foregoing was brought to bear when Harry decided to move the salon again in the spring of 2015. "Someone bought the building we were in and do you know what that little [creep] raised my rent to?" fumes Harry. "I've got varicose veins older than that [not nice person]."

Holly and Harry planned out every aspect of marketing and promoting the new move, which would start three months prior to the move, and continue for three months after the move. The first thing they did, was print up **moving cards** that they gave to all customers during checkout that indicated the date of the move and the new location. It also included an invitation to a special "new location party"—a dessert party—celebrating the move. The same information was sent to the e-mail list.

The move also tied in with other events the salon sponsored, such as the 5K run. "We sponsored the registration and sign-in table with a **banner** for the 5K run that year, and had a 'run to our new location' sign prominently displayed," says Holly. In fact, as luck would have it, the run actually ran past the new location, so Harry set up a water station for the runners. "We wanted to sponsor the finish line and put up a banner but that was too expensive," said Holly. "Plus, registration was better in case some number of them didn't make it to the finish line," adds Harry.

A series of the online videos toured the new location. "We actually have a lot more space than we did at the old place, and added some new chairs and new services," says Holly. The blog, Facebook, Foursquare—all were used to promote the move. The new location has allowed Harry's to add more stylists, so the blog also features a monthly "stylist profile." **Window and wall signage** are also used at the new location to tout new products and services.

After the move was complete, Harry cut a deal with the owner of the business that moved into the old location—

“we had a thing in the early 1990s and he felt like he owed me something,” she says—to put a sign in the window directing people to look for Harry’s at the new location, which also had an embedded QR code that linked to Google Maps.

After Harry was ensconced, Harry held the celebratory dessert party, and got coverage on local news stations, as well as in the local paper and on regional “What’s Going On” blogs.

As a final move, Harry hosted a Chamber of Commerce networking cocktail hour at the new location. “It was a bunch of middle-aged bald guys, but they all know people with hair, so we got a lot of referrals,” she chuckled.

The Final Word

“The move was a successful one,” said Holly, “and we retained just about all our old customers and picked up many new ones.” “This time, I *bought* the building, so I’m not at the mercy of greedy [unpleasant] landlords anymore,” says Harry. “I’m not moving again.”

Marketingwise, Holly is staying on top of the latest developments in social media, and refining her Web design skills. “It’s a constant learning experience,” she says. “The one thing I have found is that the biggest mistake you can make is to think you’re done.”

How the Channels Have Changed

What They Used to Do: 1960s/1970s

- word of mouth and/or location
- signage in prominent retail location
- display advertising in local newspaper
- Yellow Pages advertising
- sponsoring local events or Little League teams
- advertising on local radio local TV stations

What They Do Now: 2000s/2010s

- word of mouth and physical location
- attractive signage
- some advertising in local newspaper
- Yellow Pages advertising
- Web page that tells the history of the salon/
Harry, and profiles the current stylists, lists the
services available, provides directions
- Google search
- Superpages online entry
- sponsoring community events
- Facebook pages attract likes
- location services like Foursquare
- QR code in window that generates new custom-
er promotion
- social media (restaurants have “Friend us on
Facebook and get 10% off” deals)
- video

Case Study #4: Professional Services Provider

Company Name and Location: D. Rain & Sons,
Flushing New York

Founded: 1953

Company Background:
Family owned plumbing
company.



Markets/Industries Served: Mostly homes, some
businesses.

Interviewee: Claude Rain, owner/master plumber

The Story So Far

“Why do I need a Web site?” was one of the primary questions that Claude Rain of D. Rain & Sons used to ask. “Now, it’s perfectly obvious. But back in 2011, it really seemed unnecessary, or the kind of thing you just did because everyone else was doing it. It took me some time to see the value in it.”

Historically speaking, marketing and advertising for plumbers, electricians, or other types of professional service providers was fairly straightforward. There was **telephone directory listing**—and perhaps Yellow Pages display advertising—and **word of mouth**. Plumbing, as the emblematic example of this business category, is almost by definition classic pull marketing: no amount of push marketing is going to impel someone to hire a plumber unless they need one. It’s usually the homeowner in an emergency situation—the basement is flooding, the toilet doesn’t work, the shower leaks, “my husband went nuts with the

duct tape”—that needs a plumber. Therefore, being able to be found readily is a very large part of the battle.

Vehicle graphics have thus been a vital way of becoming conspicuous. Seeing trucks around town, or in an unfortunate neighbor’s driveway, is a good way for professional service providers to get the names of their businesses out there. The original implementation of vehicle graphics—adhesive letters and numbers typically used on mailboxes—was not highly sophisticated. “But it got the job done.”



Claude Rain

Reputation is another part. Despite the emergency nature of demand for plumbing services, potential customers are leery of “cold calling” service providers. “Am I going to get ripped off?” “Should I trust this guy with my investment, that is, my home?” “What if they’re creepy?” “Can’t they afford belts? I mean, come on.” So for many service providers, **professional reputation** is extremely important, which is why D. Rain & Sons’ Yellow Pages ads have always included the line “Known and respected since 1953.” “The idea is,” says Mr. Rain, “that if we had a bad reputation, we would have gone out of business decades ago.”

D. Rain & Sons—now, technically, C. Rain & Sons, as Claude and his two sons are the company principals—operated on old man Derek Rain’s marketing M.O.^{35 36}

³⁵ Dr. Joe always loves when Richard uses Latin, since Dr. Joe took two years of it in high school and can barely remember “The farmer is good not bad.” M.O. means *modus operandi*, or the method of operation. It’s fallen out of use since *Dragnet* went off the air. No, Dr. Joe’s not related to star and producer of *Dragnet*, Jack Webb. I mean, c’mon, if he was, don’t you think he’d be spending his day as a trust fund baby wandering aimlessly on some Caribbean island, calling the bank and the trust officer on his satellite phone and complaining about how hot it is and there’s way too much sand everywhere? No. He’s stuck in New England, pounding away at a keyboard all day, trying to sound interesting by writing snarky footnotes that he hopes escape the edits of that Romano guy. You know, the funny and smart Romano guy, not the other one.

³⁶ Richard is Googling “Rhode Island therapist”...

Pipe Dreams

However, as Claude's sons are starting to come of age and become interested in the business, and specifically growing it, they are seeking to become the very model of a modern plumbing company, using all the old and new media tricks of the trade—even trying some things that Claude has never heard of.

"It was around 2011 that I started asking why we need a Web site and my thirteen-year-old son Dwayne said that more and more people were looking to get information about their service providers, and even schedule service calls that way, so I guess it seemed to make sense." "It seemed obvious to me it was the way we needed to go and stuff" adds Dwayne. On the company Web site, they began to add testimonials from satisfied customers and a list of references, touted that they were a Better Business Bureau member, and included a lengthy history of the company, stressing that they have been active members of the Flushing community for generations. Younger son Kane produced an **online video** of the family and the company.

"One of the things we wanted to stress was that we were what has become known as a 'clean' plumber," says Claude. "That is, we wear **official company jumpsuits**, we have plastic shoe covers so we don't track dirt into people's homes, we lay down mats to keep kitchen and bathroom floors clean. Heck, we're cleaner than a lot of the homes we go into." The company also produced a **broadcast ad** for the local cable system promoting themselves as a new kind of plumbing company. In one memorable moment, all three of them—Claude, Dwayne, and Kane—turn around and squat in front of the camera, demonstrating the lack of "plumber butt." "I've actually been kind of sensitive to that," says Claude. "Early in my career I had that problem and one customer stood across the kitchen and started throwing quarters in there....It was uncomfortable and embarrassing, so it's something I have fought against ever since." The full jumpsuits serve another purpose: "We spent some money and had an

elaborate company logo stitched on the back. The boys have cheaper versions; they're still growing and it makes little sense to go all-out on a company jumpsuit they'll soon outgrow, but it still reinforces our brand."

Claude also went all out on **revamped vehicle graphics**. "I thought those stick-on mailbox letters and numbers started looking a little chintzy, so when I bought a new van, I had professional vehicle wrappers add much better graphics. The company's logo, a take on the medical profession's *caduceus*³⁷ only using a plumbing snake instead, is rendered in full color on both side of the van, with the company name (which is also repeated on the back doors).

D. Rain & Sons still uses printed **business cards**, with embedded QR codes as well as a litany of printed contact information. "Customers don't expect plumbers or other service providers to be very high-tech, so they're surprised when we show them the QR code access, the e-mail address, and the fact they can schedule appointments online." The company also maintains both a postal mailing list and an e-mail list, and they send out occasional **direct mail** and **direct e-mail** reminders for routine maintenance—"we service furnaces and air conditioners"—and other special offers. D. Rain & Sons also started providing regular **e-newsletters** that customers can sign up for. "We don't write and produce them, but we subscribe to a service that uses our brand but syndicates content. I had never heard of it, but Wayne came across it while poking around online. Our competition is other local plumbers, sure, but also big national franchises like Roto-Rooter or Roland J. Down. So we have been trying to emulate what they are doing as best we can. Content syndicates help, but it turns out that Kane has a flair for writing—Dwayne is the mathematical one—and he has been coming up with ideas for our own content. So we'll see where that goes."

³⁷ You know, that strange logo that physicians have with the snakes. Only Richard knows that it's called a *caduceus*. Everyone else calls it "that thing with the snakes." If doctors have it on their business cards or on their luggage tags when they fly, it is known as "That Thing With Snakes on a Plane."

Dwayne and Kane Tap Into Newer Media

“Once we had the Web site, the boys started looking for even newer media to use, and they, like many kids their age, are into **social media** like **Facebook**, so it was a no-brainer to set up a page for the company,” says Claude. “We have a surprising number of ‘likes.’” Kane also set up a **Twitter** feed. “It’s a work in progress,” admits Claude. “No one really wants to follow a plumber. Thankfully, we have the jumpsuits.” A cousin who is an expert in **search engine optimization** taught Dwayne how to tailor the site so as to come up in the top five hits of an **organic search**.

Location services like **Foursquare** and **Yelp!** are proving effective, and they are using those venues to offer special deals. The trick, says Claude, is to not make any coupons or deals too time-sensitive. “No one’s going to deliberately wreck their plumbing just to get 10% off fixing it. That would be weird.” They try to schedule promotions of maintenance during slow times. “Dwayne analyzed our sales by week over a few years, and we found out that by offering promotions for those slow times, it allowed us to be more responsive to emergencies. We make sure to keep those first really cold days in November and early December open for emergency calls, and also late May for air conditioning calls, so we don’t offer coupons at those times. Whenever we make a call, we leave them a business card suggesting when to get maintenance, and also to sign up for our promotions.”

The goal is for D. Rain & Sons to become a “next-generation plumber.”

Flush With Success

It’s not just new media initiatives, but also good old-fashioned **events** that help as well. Every year, D. Rain & Sons participates in a local home show, where they have a booth at which they partner with a local TV station to provide a “kids’ weather map,” green-screening booth visitors, having them give the weather. “We take part in seminars and other local events and offer tips for cutting

your water bill, lowering heating and cooling costs, how to protect your pipes in the winter, and things like that. It all helps keep our name out there.” Although no homes or businesses in Flushing have wells, a colleague of Claude’s runs a plumbing company upstate, and he and Claude participated in a water softening tutorial. “As I get older, I’m thinking of relocating out of the city so I need to learn about this stuff.”

The Final Word

“The question ‘why should I have a Web site’ has been answered to my complete satisfaction, and I think a very large part of it was that I have two creative, forward thinking sons in the business. Gosh, I hope they stay in the business... Someday, I plan to change the name of the company to C. Rain & Sons, and that will require a major rebranding effort. So I need to learn a bit more of this stuff before we go down that road.”

How the Channels Have Changed

What They Used to Do: 1960s/1970s

- Yellow Pages advertising
- word of mouth
- some advertising in local paper
- vehicle graphics (hand-stenciled graphics or adhesive letters)

What They Do Now: 2000s/2010s

- Yellow Pages advertising
- Uniforms/jumpsuits
- Superpages online site
- word of mouth
- Web site provides services offered, contact info, testimonials from satisfied customers, and on-line scheduling
- more sophisticated vehicle graphics
- location services like Yelp!, Foursquare
- QR codes on truck
- video on site “meet the owner”

Case Study #5: Medical Services Provider



FERRIS FANG, D.D.S.
CREATING BETTER SMILES THROUGH PAINLESS DENTISTRY

Company Name and Location: Ferris Fang, DDS,
Bicuspid Plains, Iowa

Founded: 1976

Company Background: Family dental practice includes Dr. Fang and his wife Phyllis (also a D.D.S.), two hygienists, and a receptionist.

Markets/Industries Served: Families, especially those with teeth.

Interviewee: Dr. Fang, owner

The Story So Far

For two decades, marketing and promotion were not items that especially worried or concerned Dr. Fang. After all, there were not very many outlets. His primary three methods of gaining new business were **Yellow Pages advertising**, **word of mouth** (so to speak) from current patients and other doctors, and walk-in traffic thanks to his **physical location** in the town's primary medical center. **Signage** was a part of this, but the only "sign" he had was a listing on the medical center's main directory. He had **business cards**, as well as **appointment reminder cards** that he would mail several weeks before a patient was due in.

Dr. Fang has always specialized in family dentistry and for most of his career he was buoyed by the fact that the small town of Bicuspid Plains was steadily growing, bringing an influx of new families, most of whom had teeth. He maintained a generally full appointment book and life was good. “It was a tooth fairytale life for many years,” says Dr. Fang, with a wry smile, and a toothy one at that.

Bridge Over Troubled Water

The demographics of the town started to change for a while in the late 1980s and 1990s, as people left town for more lucrative (and more pleasant sounding) locations. Dr. Fang himself moved locations to a newer part of town where new home construction was booming. He was no longer in a medical center, but a detached office just off a main drag in town, and he realized that he needed to think about being proactive in marketing and promotion.



Ferris Fang, D.D.S.

The first habit he got into was monitoring property transfers and he would send **direct mail** promotions to new homeowners in the area. Chances are they were new to the area, and starting families, and needed to find service providers in the new area. It was a strategy that generally worked, and as the new residents became his patients, they would refer their new neighbors. These referrals, combined with the direct mail, also helped tremendously. He also needed new signage for his location—he wanted it to seem family friendly, so a big smiling tooth was just what the doctor ordered.

Other modest promotional strategies involved **specialty printed items** like refrigerator magnets. “One thing I have been wrestling with is that more and more homes are installing stainless steel refrigerators, and magnets don’t work on them. It seems like a trivial thing, but most people don’t realize this. So I include a piece of double-sided tape with the magnet, just in case.”

He carried a line of **printed brochures** in the waiting room on such subjects as proper flossing techniques, the truth about gingivitis, and so forth. He purchased these in bulk and attached his own custom “courtesy of Dr. Ferris Fang, D.D.S.” labels on them.

He has a colleague who experimented with vehicle graphics, but even Dr. Fang had to admit that it went too far. “They kept trying to turn the front grill of the van into a big smile. It was creepy.”

The Gums of Navarone

Dr. Fang had not thought too much about the Internet as a marketing strategy. In fact, it wasn't until 2008 that he even set up his own **Web site**. For a few months it was little more than a single page containing office hours, location, and directions. After a while, he began adding content to the site to promote the fact that he practiced so-called “painless dentistry.” While at a dental conference, he heard about Boston cosmetic dentist Dr. Helaine Smith³⁸. She wrote an e-book called *Healthy Mouth, Healthy Sex*, which she gave away for free on her Web site. The topic—the connection between dental hygiene and sex—caught people's attentions, and they started forwarding it around, and eventually it went viral. As a result, Dr. Smith's name began to shoot to the top of organic search results; when actor Ben Affleck chipped a tooth while on a movie shoot in Boston, a search for “Boston dentist” turned up Helaine Smith at the top of the results. Dr. Smith is also a prolific blogger, YouTube video producer, and public speaker. She increased her visibility when her story was cited by David Meerman Scott as a prime example of social media marketing.

So, Dr. Fang tried to write a “periodontal action thriller” called *The Gums of Navarone* but his wife gently pointed out that it was “massively ridiculous.” But he did begin to see the value of offering different types of content online,

³⁸ <http://helainemithdmd.blogspot.com/>. Yes, this is a real example. This might be the only true thing in this entire book.

so he started a **blog** on his site to discuss such topics as “the truth about fluoridated water,” “why spit sinks are disappearing,” and addressing other concerns based on questions his patients were asking him and his hygienists. Some were more successful posts than others, but they always brought traffic to his site, and helped secure some local speaking opportunities at schools, libraries, and family events.

Crowning Achievements

Dr. Fang is a member of professional dental associations and attends **events**, gives talks, and writes articles for a lay audience, online and in print, to explain procedures, discuss the latest dental practices, and so on. As a family dentist specializing in pediatric dentistry, he gives talks to local schools, produces **printed handouts**, and has begun producing **online videos** aimed at educating children about proper dental care, why they shouldn’t be afraid of the dentist, and how the Tooth Fairy adjusts for inflation. (The kids love that one.)

He also contributes to some national and regional dentistry blogs and content aggregators, and he has become heavily involved in **social media**. He has launched a **Facebook** page, and has encouraged his patients to write on his Wall, like his own page, and so on, and some actually do. He links to his online videos educating about dental practices and procedures, and has just started a **Twitter** feed. He is on **LinkedIn** to stay connected to other dental colleagues, which is also where he finds new employees and hygienists. His weekly **print ad** in the local newspaper encourages people to sign up for his e-newsletter.

Dr. Fang has begun using **e-mail reminder cards** and patients will soon be able to schedule or change appointments online.

The Final Word

While it took some time for Dr. Fang to take his dental practice into the 21st century, he has now embraced all the various ways to not only promote and market his

practice, but also educate the public about dentistry. Like many other medical practitioners, he had a concern about advertising. "Many of us felt there was a certain stigma attached to it, or that somehow it was a breach of professional ethics," says Dr. Fang. As he began investigating new marketing initiatives, he had a change of heart. "By using advertising and marketing communications to not specifically promote myself, but rather to offer tips about preventive care and other practical matters related to dental health, I think it's more of a public service than advertising."

How the Channels Have Changed

What They Used to Do: 1960s/1970s

- Yellow Pages advertising
- word of mouth and personal and professional referrals
- signage
- location in a large medical building

What They Do Now: 2000s/2010s

- Web site
- online video
- location services like Yelp!
- signage
- sponsors local events; talks to school groups
- social media

Case Study #6: Commercial Sheetfed Print Shop

Company Name and Location: The Great D. Press,
Deadwood, South Dakota

Founded: 1974

**Company
Background:**
Sheetfed
commercial print
shop.



Markets/Industries Served: Local businesses and ad agencies, with some major national accounts. Does all printing for local visitor's bureau.

Interviewee: S. Lyman Hoth, owner

The Story So Far

"I have to spend all my time trying keep my presses busy. I don't have a lot of time to think about weird marketing schemes," says S. Lyman Hoth, owner of Deadwood, South Dakota's The Great D. Press. When the company started in 1974, the **Yellow Pages display ad** was the primary marketing strategy for most businesses. The company also had a prominent **physical location** in town and elaborate **signage** involving a stylized gold D mounted atop an antique printing press. "That sign cost almost as much as my first press," says Mr. Hoth. As he built up his clientele, he began to get more work via **word of mouth** referrals. Wanting to get more national accounts, he began buying **print advertising** in the major trade publications. Hoth was also heavily involved in **trade shows** and other

events, and printed up **brochures, equipment lists, business cards, flyers**, print samples, and other promotional materials. He was also a member of the local PIA affiliate, and attended regular events.

“We began to get on the radar of some big ad agencies so we started getting some of that work,” says Hoth. Local



S. Lyman Hoth

networking events also hooked Hoth up with the director of the Deadwood Visitor’s Bureau, and The Great D. Press became the default printer for all the local travel info.

“Business was good throughout the 1970s, 80s, and most of the 90s,” Mr. Hoth said.

“Around 1999, we noticed things starting to slow down. The recession of 2001 was very bad for us.” As a result, The Great D. Press started cutting back on its advertising. “We were told that we needed a **Web site**, so I put one up. It’s got a great shot of our building on it. I updated it...oh, let’s see...about five or six years ago, when I bought some finishing equipment.” The Web site offers the ability for print buyers to request quotes, but it takes his sales reps a few days to respond to e-mail. “The more serious customers use the phone. The Internet is for people just looking for a cheap deal.” Today, he relies on his sales reps **telemarketing** efforts, cold-calling local businesses to ask about their printing needs. “One of our vendors—a paper merchant—used to like to take us out and entertain us for an afternoon at the local country club, but we can’t afford to leave the phone for a minute, lest we miss a important customer.”

Hoth cites pricing as his biggest challenge. “We lost a lot of work to other shops that could undercut us on price. It’s really quite cutthroat.”

The Great D. Press still has some long-term customers, but admits they have been cutting back on their volume. “The recession of 2008–2012 was very bad for us.” Has

Hoth tried any new or social media initiatives? “Some colleagues of mine insisted I be on **LinkedIn**, so I have an account but don’t really do anything with it. My grandson is on **Facebook**, but I don’t really see the point of it. Isn’t it just all about sharing gossip about Lady Gaga or something? And I’ve heard about **Twitter**, but honestly, I have no time to waste with that nonsense. All these people who are chattering incessantly at each other...don’t they have real jobs?”

One of Hoth’s primary competitors in town recently revamped its Web site, allows online estimating and job tracking, Web-to-print services, and even some compelling **online video, blogs, podcasts**, and other media that put a face on the business, and educated customers. “He must be getting even less work than us to have the time for all that [stuff].”

A Change of Mind

Hoth wrestled with the idea of handling total communications logistics for customers, but ultimately had a revelation. “I came to the conclusion that neither I nor my business was prepared to deal with a continuous communications environment. It just went counter to everything in my genetic make up,” he says. “Basically, we are adept at making sure that posters and other items come off press on time and with excellent quality. That’s what we do. We are not ‘built’ for updating social media every day or every hour.”

Hoth recognized that not every printing company has to adopt a full “marketing services” paradigm. “I thought, well, if everything else is online media, why can’t we carve out a niche and specialize in offline media? So we promote the stuff we are really good at: wide-format printing, posters, tchotchkes, and other physical products.” What helped was Hoth’s decision to work with a print management firm, which helps them get work from out of town, and allows their salespeople to become familiar with new printed products.

“I just had to be honest about what I wanted from the business. I understand why a full communications logistics approach is vital for a lot of companies, but adopting an offline media strategy really was the best thing for us.”

How the Channels Have Changed

What They Used To Do: 1960s/1970s

- Yellow Pages advertising
- word of mouth and referrals by designers/print buyers
- advertising in trade publications
- signage
- trade association listings

What They (Could) Do Now: 2000s/2010s

- Web site
- social media
- company blog offering graphic design and file formatting tips, industry trends, etc.
- online video of company owner demonstrating printing process, not screaming psychotically about how much he loves print
- advertising on WhatTheyThink.com
- trade shows/events (like Print Buyers Conference)
- sponsorship of local events and organizations

Case Study #7: Small Quick Print Shop

Company Name and Location: Rapid Reproduction,
Toast, North Carolina

Founded: 1970

Company Background:
Small quick print shop.

Markets/Industries

Served: Local businesses
and individuals.

Interviewee: Larry Lepus, owner



The Story So Far

“I started Rapid Reproduction in 1970,” says owner Larry Lepus. “I had a Ph.D. in biology—specializing in lagomorphology, that is, the study of rabbits. To pay off my student loans, I opened a print shop. Everyone told me it was a hare-brained scheme, but within a few weeks of opening, business was hopping. The name Rapid Reproduction seemed to bridge both my professions.” It was clear that Larry’s reputation as a punster among his friends at the Chamber of Commerce was well earned, and he’s been quite a hit at their annual dinner.

Rapid Reproduction was one of a new breed of “quick print” shop that had been enabled by new prepress technologies, such as the Itek photographic platemaker. They started with a few offset duplicators and specialized in fast-turnaround mostly black-and-white job work. “It was letterhead, business cards, envelopes, price lists, stuff like that.” Early promotional efforts included

telephone directory advertising, **print advertising** in the local newspaper, membership in a **trade association** (the local Printing Industries of America affiliate), and, predominantly, their **physical location** in a well-traveled strip mall coupled with distinctive **signage**. “My initial concept involving rabbits was a bit too racy for the early 1970s,” says Mr. Lepus. “It worked for that Hefner guy, but it didn’t make sense for me.”

Over the course of that first decade, business was brisk, and Lepus found that he didn’t really need to do a lot of outbound marketing and promotion. “There wasn’t a lot of real competition at that time. There was a big sheetfed shop across town, but they served a completely different, higher-end niche than I did. We were a real resource for local businesses.” Lepus joined the local Chamber of Commerce, and over time started adding



Larry Lepus

inserts to Chamber mailings. By the end of the decade, he had adding mailing services, and to “test the waters” did his own **direct mail** campaign to Chamber members.

Rapid Reproduction also gets substantial **word of mouth** referrals from current or past customers.

Doing It On the Desktop

Over the course of the 1980s, things started to change. “When desktop publishing first appeared around 1985, I saw immediately how everything was going to change, and we quickly sought to get up to speed. We used to outsource all our typesetting, but this seemed like a great way to offer that ourselves. Not that ‘RageMaker’³⁹ made it easy at first.”

³⁹ Designers and others always have special names for their software, especially if it can’t do things that they want or are hard to figure out. RageMaker was obviously PageMaker, and QuarkXPress has been called Quirk. It’s the same way business travelers call certain airlines UseLessAirways, NorthWorst, etc. PageMaker did usher in desktop publishing in a big way in the mid-1980s.

In 1990, Rapid Reproduction had a 20-year anniversary party, requiring printed **invitations, signage, banners,** and other related accoutrements. “We were just starting to do four-color printing, so this became our test case. In fact, for most of our new initiatives, we served as our own guinea pigs, to bring up another type of rodent. ‘Rabbit test’ probably wouldn’t be appropriate here...”

The 1980s and 1990s were the golden age of the **user group**, for hardware and software, and Rapid Reproduction participated in growing Mac and Adobe user groups, and other groups that were forming, such as a QuarkX-Press users group. “They used to host a ton of events; we co-sponsored as many MacFairs as we could. For a time, we hosted the monthly Photoshop User Group meetings at our shop. I recall—this must have been around 1993—most of our members had just mastered Photoshop 2.5, and I came into our monthly meeting clutching a CD-ROM and announced, ‘Photoshop 3 is out, and everything is completely different!’ There was a lot of initial sighing at first. But Layers...man, how did we ever live without that? So everyone was introduced to it at our shop, and we looked like we were experts because of it.”

Events like user group meetings and small local computer fairs required **printed sales materials** like “services offered” and the like, **leaflets and flyers, business cards, banners, signage,** and so forth. “During the 1990s, we were always adding new things—we became a PostScript service bureau, we had the first color copier in the Carolinas, and we started adding more digital equipment. All this stuff required that we keep updating our promotional materials.” What helped keep Rapid Reproduction’s service list current was also a wake-up call to Lepus. “We had a **Web site** early on, and I realized that I could save time and money, and at the same time keep our services roster up to date, simply by regularly updating the Web site. Then I sat back, thought for a moment, then went ‘Uh oh.’”

Why Don't We Do It In the Information Superhighway

The first thing Lepus did was hook up with Web designers and developers. “It seemed obvious to me—and this was around 1996—that things were going to change. Print-to-Internet seemed like a radio-to-television sea change. I knew that the road to survival was to not only become involved in what was called ‘new media’ at time, but also figure out how to keep print relevant. Digital printing seemed the obvious route.” Lepus got rid of all his offset equipment and replaced it with digital. “We had a DocuTech, an Indigo, and a couple of Canon CLCs.” Rapid Reproduction was one of the first quick print shops to offer variable-data printing (VDP). “Again, we were our own guinea pigs. We hosted a seminar for local businesses on VDP and used the Chamber of Commerce mailing list as the basis for a **variable direct mail** campaign of our own. Essentially, I produced a post card that had each recipient’s name look as if it had been painted on the side of a white rabbit. There was a whole *Alice in Wonderland*/down the rabbit hole analogy behind the campaign and the seminar... I was also able to map each business’s address in relation to the event’s location and use as a headline on the back of the card, “You’re just 2.5 miles from Wonderland’ or whatever the headline had been. I think it was something more clever than that.”

At the time, there were also a number of trade publications, often with local editions. “We used to **advertising in print** in publications like *Southeast Graphics* and there was also a Southeast Edition of *Micro Publishing News*, which had been a great publication. It’s a shame what happened to it.”⁴⁰

Rapid Reproduction also started to compile an e-mail database, and began doing **direct e-mail campaigns**. They also started a regular **e-newsletter** that replaced the thrice-yearly **print newsletter** the company used to

⁴⁰ Yeah and they had a good editor named Romano once, too. Last we heard, he was hanging around ne'er-do-well Ph.D.s.

produce. “I used to subscribe to TrendWatch Fast Facts, so I would take their data and basically just do my own riff on it. It was quick and dirty, but our subscribers thought we were sharing great info.”

Harder and Faster

As the millennium turned in 2000 (“actually, it turned in 2001, but let’s not go there,” says Lepus), Rapid Reproduction stayed current with the new media and channels. “Actually, my background in rabbit research stood me in good stead, as the rapid proliferation of all this stuff was not a foreign concept to me. And in some ways the name of our company became especially apt, as we were offering all these things to our customers, as well as using them for our own purposes.” In 2001, Rapid Reproduction started a **blog** where they offered not only practical software usage and file-formatting tips, but also media trends. They started a weekly **podcast**—“The Rapid Running Commentary”—hosted by Lepus and his business partner Harvey Dowd. “I was really the face of the company; Harvey tended to be invisible.”

Today, Lepus is an active participant on **social media** like **Facebook**, **LinkedIn**, and **Twitter**. The company also uses **online video** to educate customers about the printing process, how to properly format files, as well as all the new media marketing options. “I may be in my mid-60s, but I’ve never lost my curiosity about new technologies. Look at the history of Rapid Reproductions—when has *anything* ever stood still? In fact, my company was only really made possible by a brand new technology, photographic platemaking. It transformed the industry in its day, enabling the emergence of new kinds of printers. Technologies today do the same thing—we just need to realize that instead of ‘printers’ you just need to say ‘communicators.’”

Lepus was the first on his block to get an iPhone and an iPad, and became active in app development. “I came up with an idea for a **smartphone app** for print buyers to find the nearest commercial print shop,” he says. “I tried

to license it to a major trade association but they had no idea what I was talking about. But, again, it was just a way to figure out how to do app development. So now we can offer it to other companies.”

While Lepus is active in online social networking, he also sees the importance of old-fashioned in-the-flesh networking. “I attend **local business events**, Chamber mixers, Small Business Association meetings, local American Marketing Association functions, and so forth. I can walk up to any business owner or manager and give them no fewer than five brand new ways of marketing their business.” He also draws on his own family for inspiration. “I have kids and grandkids now and I have always drafted them into working for the company, not just because they’re a great source of cheap labor, but also I get to observe how *they* interact with media and new technologies. I have a nephew who likes to text while skateboarding, which I am hoping is not the wave of the future. Fortunately, one of my clients is a local urgent care center.”

The Final Word

Lepus says that one of the keys to making it all work was setting up a separate business to handle all the non-print media work. “Rapid Reproductions has a tremendous **brand recognition** here in Toast, even if they only recognize it while driving by. But it is still predominantly a print business. I set up Fast Rabbit as a more or less independent services company to handle marketing strategy services. So far, we’ve been going gangbusters, and the print work that comes out of Fast Rabbit feeds Rapid Reproduction.”

How the Channels Have Changed

What They Used To Do: 1960s/1970s

- Yellow Pages advertising
- word of mouth and referrals by designers/print buyers
- signage
- trade association listings

What They Do Now: 2000s/2010s

- Web site
- location in well-traveled strip mall
- blogs
- online video
- social media
- signage
- location services
- sponsorship of local events and organizations
- Larry's pun of the day on Twitter

Pushing and Pulling It All Together

The one theme we hope has come through in all seven of the foregoing case studies is that “print” and “digital” are not two inseparable media, ever at odds with each other. Nor are we advocating—either explicitly or implicitly—that companies are switching—or should switch—wholly to non-print media. Sure, we’ve seen a lot of that happen over the past fifteen years. No one in the printing industry would deny that (we hope). In all of our hypothetical case studies—and even in case studies you might read about real companies—they are using print. Not as much as they used to, and arguably not as much as maybe they could or should be. What we have tried to show is that print has a place in what we call the “new communications arena.” The challenge we have is to find out what that “right place” is.

At the same time, we recognize the challenge of getting printing industry veterans comfortable talking with clients and even their own employees and colleagues about non-print media, and integrating online and offline media. And, especially, how to bill for these new kinds of services rather than discrete tasks. Thus, the goal of this concluding chapter is to walk you through some of those discussions, and try to increase the comfort level. It really doesn’t have to be painful.

But let’s start at the beginning.

From So Simple a Beginning⁴¹

The first “media” was voice. As soon as early human beings formed language, primitive as it may have been, media was born. Grunts, gestures—the dawn of communication. After that came cave paintings. That is, early humans wrote on each other’s walls. Now, 17,000 years later, we’re on Facebook...writing on each other’s Walls. See how far we’ve come? The next media was probably signs, even they were only “low-tech” signs like “This Grog’s. No touch.” Choosing which media to use was simple then.

It only got worse.

Advertising was always around as posters, notices, and signs, but it really got moving in the late 1800s as newspapers grew. Then it was magazines. Then broadcast media, the first being radio. Then television, then cable television. As highways grew, billboards dotted highways, and in the case of Burma-Shave, a series of small billboards—kind of a pre-Internet Twitter.⁴²

If you’ve read *The Great Gatsby*, you know that Fitzgerald uses a billboard advertisement for optometrist T.J. Eckleburg—two giant eyes—to symbolize God.⁴³ Even by the 1920s, advertising had become an essential part of the culture, enough that it could be used as a literary motif.

Somehow, advertisers picked the media they thought were best for what they needed, and could put their ad or any other content in a place that they selected and often paid for. Media selection was a skill, especially for big consumer companies and their agencies.

The time of certainty about what media to use ended sometime in 1995 when the Internet officially “arrived”

⁴¹ Hoo boy. Yep, you knew there was going to be a history lesson in here somewhere. We just can’t help it. But, as James Burke (of *Connections* fame—he is one of Richard’s intellectual heroes so he always turns up in these books) once said, “If you don’t know where you’ve been, you don’t know where you’re going.” Mind you, he did say this before the advent of GPS systems.

⁴² There are many sites online that give examples of Burma Shave ads. They were usually six small roadside signs with a small amount of text, such as “Every shaver / Now can snore / Six more minutes / Than before / By using / Burma-Shave.”

⁴³ Most advertising is decidedly less ambitious.

with the initial public offering of Netscape stock. In just a little more than fifteen years, media and communication choices proliferated—and advertisers and communicators are not in control of many of them, especially after social media came to the market in a big way in 2006 and 2007.

Few businesses, especially small and midsize businesses, even realize that they have media choices. The idea that they can have a strategy

for those choices is even less well-known than that.

Yet, these same businesspeople use all of the different media themselves. They read their mail, they visit

In just a little more than fifteen years, media and communication choices proliferated—and advertisers and communicators are not in control of many of them, especially after social media hit.

Web sites, they pass by billboards, they read magazines. All of these media are considered separate, and are rarely perceived as having anything in common. Herein lies the unique opportunity for anyone selling services to these businesses.

A Media Plan

Every business needs a business plan. Not always a sophisticated, intricate document of the kind needed to secure investment or other funding, but at the very least a general idea of what the business is, what the principals hope to achieve, and where they see opportunities. Basically, a road map.

Likewise, every business needs a *media* plan. It doesn't matter if the business is a one-person, part-time hobbyist business or a gigantic multinational corporation. If a business hopes to succeed, it needs some sort of marketing road map.

So what is a media plan? It involves understanding media, to be sure, but a real plan is about discipline and persistence. These two virtues are more important than ever.

Dude, Where's My Media?

The biggest problem with digital media is that it's digital media. It's ephemeral and disappears, often on its own. E-

mail inboxes always list the latest e-mails first. Unseen e-mails disappear into the abyss at the bottom of the stack. We've all had the situation where we intend to respond to an e-mail message, but if we don't do it immediately while the message is right there at the top of the stack, it will sink lower and lower and once it's off the bottom of the screen, it may as well have never come—until we get a testy second note a few days later castigating us for not having replied to the first one.

And, of course, sometimes, in our early morning deletion frenzy, while ridding our inboxes of the *really* unwanted stuff, sometimes we accidentally (or “accidentally on purpose”) delete messages we *might* at some other time be interested in, but—thanks to bad timing—into the trash it goes. And then sometimes we actually *do* delete things we want by accident.

Digital messages like e-mail are just so easy to delete sight unseen. This is the distinct advantage of print; when we get junk mail, unless we are checking our physical mailboxes in the dead of night during a power outage, we can at least get a cursory look at something before we toss it.

Like e-mail, tweets also fall down in their stacks, as do Facebook posts. And even text messages scroll away into cell phone oblivion. Woe be the tweeter who sent a really important tweet just before one of those mega-tweeters started setting the land tweet record. Likewise, online videos get hot, and then are just as quickly forgotten. While print may hang around on someone's desk or get into their to-do pile, digital media might as well be vapor.

This illustrates the importance of discipline and persistence. Where a client might print a brochure, or place an ad, these are discrete singular acts. They are tasks that happen at a specific time and are purchased at a specific

Traditional media involve discrete events—an ad, a TV commercial—that happen at specific times and places. Online media are ongoing and continuous.

cell phone oblivion. Woe be the tweeter who sent a really important tweet just before one of those mega-tweeters started setting the land tweet record. Likewise, online videos get hot, and then are just as quickly

time. And they are received at a specific time, and can linger on a desk or an in-box for some time. Sure, depending on one's desk, physical media can fall to the bottom of a stack, but it's harder to dismiss the random sheaf of papers and magazines on one's desk than the vanished e-mail missives hiding in the nether reaches of our Outlook inboxes.

Digital media, however, need to be continuous. The spigot of digital information needs to always be open. It's not a discrete task, it's a constant act. Because digital messages disappear from view, the messages need to be repeated regularly, but—and here's the rub—always in new ways so they look and seem fresh. That unseen e-mail at the bottom of the stack? You can use it again, later on, and they may act on it when it is sent the second time.

Ultimately, traditional media and new media are used together with a single purpose: to establish a place and a time in the target audience's mind to engage in a transaction.

From the Mailstream to the Maelstrom

None of this sounds like printing, does it? Printing is a series of individual tasks for the completion of a print job. The printer has no control over content, and other than being able to time its insertion into the mailstream, the printer has little influence in its distribution. Now all of a sudden, printers have to become “marketing services providers”—or at least many printers believe that, even if they're not that sure what that means. We'll talk about this in detail later, but keep in the back of your mind that there are other strategies.

In *Renewing the Printing Industry*, we highlighted two particular business strategies: “communications logistics” and “offline media.” Though *Renewing* was written prior to the rise of social media,⁴⁴ the concepts still remain the same. They are alternatives to the way “marketing services” are portrayed as being just one thing. For

⁴⁴ Which is scary, when you consider that it was only published in 2008. Look at how fast things change!

details, download the book⁴⁵ for free and check out those sections.

Are You Sitting Comfortably?

But whether or not it's marketing services or communications logistics, or offline media, many printers still feel uncomfortable about anything that falls outside the zone of what they know. It's not that they're closed-minded, as some might characterize it, it's just a certain skittishness about getting outside of one's comfort zone, which is a normal reaction. Entrepreneurs are natural risk avoiders, contrary to popular wisdom. They get into businesses they know and businesses in which they can best use their skills and resources. (They usually get that way by failing, figuring out what went wrong, and then starting again.) Back when "everybody" used printing, starting up a printing business was a better bet than many other businesses.

Times are different now, of course. Not everybody *needs* printing, and there are large sums of capital tied up in the printing business that have fallen into low use. We're talking about businesspeople being told that the skills that they've developed and honed, which stood them in good stead, and financed their capital investments, for decades, are no longer needed. And on top of that, they're being told to change their business to something that does *not* take advantage of their skill *and* that their capital is worthless. Should we be surprised that this idea is not welcomed with open arms, let alone open minds?

To make matters worse, if they do decide to take the plunge and change their business to something like marketing services, they get a serious case of "pretender syndrome." They become concerned that they can't sit in front of a client and be taken seriously in terms of their new business focus.

For the printer, this is a serious problem. This was discussed in *Disrupting the Future*, and it touches the very

⁴⁵ <http://d3a577syzx0or3.cloudfront.net/docs/renewing-the-industry.pdf>.

soul of the printing business. A basic printing business performs very specific tasks for its customers, and then bills them for those tasks. Everything about that performance is objectively measurable. If the customer received the number of items in the correct format, with the expected quality, the job is done.

Many print business owners are very uncomfortable with anything else.

Marketing Services Providers?

In the past few years, the concept of printers repositioning themselves as marketing services providers has become more prevalent. However, this has not been viewed skeptically enough, in our opinion.

Talk to a consumer packaged goods company and for them “marketing services” refers to market research providers. Talk to someone else, and “marketing services” refers to an ad agency. Someone else would define it as a mail shop or distributor of product samples. Others would describe it as independent sales representatives or dealers. And, who knows, maybe for someone else, it refers to a Wal-Mart greeter who tells you what aisle the paper towels are in. So “marketing services” never really solved anything as a business classification. It was so non-specific as to be non-helpful.

This is not to say that *some* printers weren’t able to implement a workable business strategy by heading down a marketing services path, but they were probably the first ones in their area to do it. From what we were able to observe, many times the owners or their sales managers had experience in ad agency management or graphic design or publishing. For them, marketing services was more of a natural activity, and many of them had probably been selling in the kind of consultative approach well before identifying themselves as marketing services providers. So they never felt that “pretender syndrome,” since they were naturally involved in those kinds of activities to begin with.

Our skepticism about the whole “marketing services

provider” issue came from several of our quarterly surveys of commercial printers, in which we found that print businesses that claimed to be marketing service providers (or similar businesses) had business levels that were declining in greater numbers than those who identified themselves as just being printers. This went well against the common wisdom of the time, but it was confirmed to us anecdotally by printers who said that they had real problems being taken seriously by their customers and prospects when they claimed to be some other kind of business than “just a printer.”

This is something that can be overcome through the sales process, and also by using the same media skills that you are proposing to sell to others, yourself. Any

The “pretender syndrome” is something that can be overcome by demonstrating its skill in media in promoting its own business. That is, “sell by example.”

marketing services-focused print business has to demonstrate its skill in media in promoting its own business.

Think about it this way, in reverse. Assume there is a

Web hosting or development company like Problematic Solutions in Case Study #2. They’ve only ever been online, and know nothing about print. Assume they decide that *they* want to become a marketing services provider and provide the full gamut of communication options—which includes print. They’ve never used print, they’ve never had anything printed beyond a business card, don’t have expertise in printing, and know nothing about color management, the use of fonts beyond Times or Arial,⁴⁶ or even what the difference between screen resolution and print resolution is. Would they worry about legitimacy or feeling like they couldn’t be taken seriously by print buyers? Maybe, maybe not. But all of these insecurities can be overcome simply by becoming educated, by talking to actual printers or people who work with printers, and by experimenting on their own materials and using print for their own purposes. The same would apply to anyone go-

⁴⁶ Or perhaps even the loathsome C---c S--s, the Voldemort of fonts.

ing from print to new media. It's just a matter of education, diligence, and persistence. No one is born knowing how to do these things; the ability to tweet effectively is not genetically programmed into certain people, although it sometimes seems that way.

Some of the words of encouragement we like to use when we talk to printing groups is, here are people (printers) who have successfully purchased millions of dollars worth of equipment, have learned how to run it, how to hire and manage people who can run it, know all the vagaries and arcana of color management, supply chains, etc. etc. etc. This stuff is hard. Surely anyone who has managed to learn all of *that* can figure out something that twelve-year-olds can do. Worse comes to worst, hire a twelve-year-old.⁴⁷

We discuss this in Case Study #7, the quick printer Rapid Reproduction, when our hypothetical business owner describes how he always learned to use new and newer media by applying it to his own business first, and building up a skill set before offering it to paying customers.

Co-op-etition

That all said, there is a secondary issue of slightly more criticality, that came up in May 2011 at an event for print buyers. Some comments that arose echoed something that printers had said to us at various times in recent years. To wit: if the printer sells these types of marketing services to advertising agencies and design firms, then the printer is viewed as suddenly being in direct competition with their customers.

You may have heard the phrase “co-op-etition,” a portmanteau word that combines “cooperation” and “competition,” popularized in the high-tech industries. There are examples in many industries, such as Boeing and Northrop Grumman bidding for defense contracts, one of them wins, and then uses the other as subcontractor for part of the

⁴⁷ Which reminds us of the Groucho Marx line from *Duck Soup*: “Why a four-year-old child could understand this. Run out and get me a four-year-old child, I can't make head or tail out of it.”

project. Another example is Microsoft selling Windows operating systems, but also selling office software for Macintosh computers, or Sony branding its own computers, but also manufacturing Apple's. In the printing industry, Sun Chemical sells its own branded products, but also sells compounds and chemicals to other ink manufacturers.

Although on the kind of scale of these companies, a co-op-etition strategy works, and there is less of a sense of one of the businesses being Ray Milland's head grafted onto Rosey Grier's body.⁴⁸ However, this doesn't always work well in local service businesses. In the past, printers had cooperated with ad agencies, but the agencies tended

One approach would be to merge with or create some kind of joint venture with an agency. Both organizations have to make investments in new technologies and personnel, so pooling resources makes a great deal of sense.

to get three bids for their jobs, too. Still, it was always clear that the agency was working with the account, and usually selecting vendors on their behalf. All of a sudden, the printer starts to look like they are going around the agency, not just going after the print work directly, but now starting to look for the agency's work.

One of the better approaches would be to merge with the agency or create some kind of joint venture with them. Both organizations have to make investments in new technologies and have to cultivate their personnel, and it is more likely that funding that business together and pooling resources would be received better than doing it in a halfhearted way.

Advice for Overcoming “Pretender Syndrome”

It's not uncommon for many people, when they get outside their comfort zone, to feel like dilettantes or pretenders, or even outright frauds—and to think that others perceive them that way. For some of us, all it takes is putting on a suit. But there is no reason that has to be the case. All

⁴⁸ What, you've never seen the abysmal Grade Z horror flick *The Thing with Two Heads*?

it takes is a little homework. Here, we offer some practical advice, steps print businesses can take to move into new, initially uncomfortable directions, without the itching, and burning...

Use New Media In Your Business

The best way to ensure a welcome reception to your business' sales initiatives in non-print media is to be using those media in your own business. There are two reasons for this. The first is to use them to support your sales and client interactions. The second is to prove your business' capabilities.

Print businesses should use non-print media for their own businesses to support sales and client interactions as well as to prove their business' capabilities to potential clients.

The first one is obvious, while the second is a bit more subtle. The second one means that your non-print efforts have to be top-notch, and may require that you use certain formats to prove that you can execute them, even if they're not appropriate for your sales purposes, such as maintaining a Facebook page when LinkedIn might be more appropriate. However, we should be used to that: printers always prepared capabilities brochures that showed their range of capabilities even though it might not be appropriate for use in marketing their own business.

However, keep in mind that reason number two above doesn't have to come before reason number one. By implementing these new media into your business first, you learn how they work, how they can be applied to sales and marketing efforts, and you hone your skills. *Then* you can start showing them off to the world.

The Ghost Tweeter

The owner of a print business has a lot to do, and much of it involves day-to-day operations. Yet, that same owner needs to be the face of the business. Who has the time to be on Facebook when the bindery supervisor called in sick and the press is waiting for a part? This is one of the top comments we receive when we discuss these things to

printing groups. “When do I have time for all this stuff?”

Well, first of all, the print business owner should not be personally involved in day-to-day minutiae. This is what plant or pressroom managers, or other employees, are for. It’s tempting for business owners to get micro-man-

Printers and other businesspeople often have a hard time “letting go” of social media messaging and delegating it to others. But it’s what they need to do.

gerial. Resist that urge. Delegate where appropriate.

And the same goes for non-print services from a newly configured print business. You are the face if the

business, but that doesn’t mean you have to do all the work.

Just like ad campaigns, digital media are campaigns, too, and need more active campaign management. The face of the business doesn’t need to be the actual tweeter⁴⁹ (or is it twitterer?); rather they can support “ghost posters” who put items up on sites and social media pages as part of a plan.⁵⁰ Assign or hire someone to handle social media management tasks (it can even be an intern). Sit down with that assigned person, and develop a schedule. What industry meetings will you be at? What events are coming up? Are you going to be at Graph Expo? What business association meetings are on the schedule? When are the typical slow times of the business? What products does your company offer that provide the greatest value? What projects have you been involved in that clients were really thrilled about, especially in terms of the response that they had?

In the past, a company newsletter might have had articles about all of these things. Today, social media like Twitter provide the same news and information, only in smaller bits. News items are dribbled out little by little in

⁴⁹ There used to be a retail chain called Tweeter Etc. that sold audio equipment. Too bad they went out of business just before the emergence of Twitter. Just think how *they* could have reconfigured their business!

⁵⁰ Some vendors and other large companies task their PR agents/companies to tweet on their behalf. After all, the tweet is rapidly replacing the press release for the communication of company news and announcements.

social media, and also can be mixed in with sales stories, requests for referrals, posting of job openings, and numerous other things.

Once you start using these new media tools for your own purposes, you'll become more adept with them, and, yes, more comfortable using them. So, as part of this initiative, you'll feel more confident about getting involved with your customers when they need help. So being able to send out a tweet, or a Facebook post, that says "one of our restaurant clients is looking for an experienced short order cook" demonstrates a different relationship with your client than "we printed their menus."

Look back at the hypothetical case studies in this book. They contain lots of ideas for helping print customers with their own communication efforts. Look at your client list. What are the kinds of things they might need to communicate? (For some examples gleaned from the real world, see the sidebar on pages 114–116.)

The Issue of ROI

Every business decision, and indeed every consumer decision, has some element of return on investment (ROI). We've become intimately familiar with that term being used to evaluate whether or not investment in equipment, a building, or a process is "worth it" over time. In recent years, a combination of economic conditions and the availability of real time Internet Web site traffic data have created an expectation that all media decisions and their results can be measured in a precise manner. It's not true, but that's the expectation.

Very few corporate image efforts would provide a positive ROI if judged in the short term, or if they were confined to just one single activity. As the media charts we include in this book show, the number of media formats that are now available have increased in a way that is far beyond the number of potential customers. Because those customers' time is being divided among more media, and because the number of hours in a day is still only twenty-four, the re-

Some Practical Ideas:

- If you print brochures for a local visitors or tourist bureau, what upcoming events might they want to announce via social media, and how could you help them with that?
- Many companies and organizations actively monitor Twitter for mentions and will retweet relevant tweets.
- Last year, Richard went to Grand Rapids, Michigan, for a WhatTheyThink video shoot, and the only thing he knew about Grand Rapids was that former President Gerald Ford was from there. While the plane was taxiing to the gate at Grand Rapids' Gerald R. Ford Airport, he tweeted, jokingly, "At the Grand Rapids airport, passengers are required to deplane by falling down the stairs out of the plane" or something like that. Immediately, it was retweeted by the Grand Rapids Tourist Bureau. So there are ways of automating these things—but sometimes social media management can be a little too automated.
- If you do the sales collateral materials for a manufacturing company like our hypothetical gasket maker in Case Study #1, what trade events in their industry are coming up, and how could you help them use social media to connect with their own customers at these events?
- If you are a book printer, how can you help your publisher clients develop e-book versions of their titles? (New media isn't just about social media, after all.) Cross-platform publishing isn't difficult, and the latest version (5.5) of the Adobe Creative Suite makes it easier than ever. Why not task

someone in the business, like one of your prepress personnel, to learn how to export book layouts to Kindle or EPUB e-book formats?

- Not all “new media” are all that new anymore. A Web site has become as essential to any company as a business card. And yet many still have no Web presence. Remember what Problematic Solutions (Case Study #2) did? They Googled Chamber members to see if they had a Web site. So why not Google your clients and see what their Web presence is. If they don’t have a Web site, can you help them develop one? If they do have a Web site, can you help them improve it and better optimize it for search engines?
- If you have a customer that prints direct mail campaigns, do they also do a complementary e-mail campaign? Can you help them design, develop, and execute it?
- If you have a customer that is printing direct mail, do they have a QR code on it? Can you tell them what QR codes are and how they can be used effectively? And do they have links to their own social media printed on their promotional materials?
- A winner of a PODi Best Practices Award developed an integrated multichannel campaign for Chick-Fil-A, the fast food chicken franchise, that used printed postcards to drive recipients to landing pages and their social media sites to enter sweepstakes. It went viral and “upped visit rates to over 279 percent and response rates to 120.6 percent.” Why couldn’t a printer have coordinated that?¹

¹ See <http://duky.com/2011/01/duky-takes-podi-best-practices-award-for-its-direct-mail-marketing-case-study/>. Hat-tip to Tony Hodgson for this case study.

- One exciting print category now is integrating print and mobile media. Mobile-to-print applications let you take pictures with your smartphone's camera, upload them to a print server via a smartphone app, and print and mail custom postcards or even photo-books.² In one case, a UK digital printer developed an app called PicFliks (www.picfliks.com) that let smartphone users upload photos and print custom photo booklets. In Fall 2010, they announced a special deal on booklets they sent out via Facebook, it went viral, and the company had a devil of a time keeping up with demand. Isn't that a problem any printer would want to have?
- If you do the printing for a local transit authority—like, say, the CDTA in New York's Capital District—why not come up with ideas for short, instructional videos they can put on their Web site. Like for example, explaining how someone rides a bus? Or using social media to send out announcements of route changes or service disruptions.

The possibilities are endless. An entire book could be written containing just ideas for non-print services a printer could offer. Sure, some of these things may sound incomprehensible, but nothing in any of the examples above is rocket science. Anyone who has the smarts and skills to run a printing company can figure out this stuff. All it takes is will.

² Richard blogged about his recent experiments with mobile-to-print postcards at <http://www.wausaupaper.com/DigitalSpace/post.aspx?id=8645&blogid=298>.

sponse rates to all media are less than they used to be. But, while the ROI of individual media are likely to look bad, the overall campaign ROI can be exceptional.

In the past, only advertising would have been considered as having a campaign. Today, public relations, Web sites, social media, and others, are all parts of campaigns. Because these campaigns need to be planned and organized, they often exceed the time that small and mid-size business management has available.

This is a great opportunity, especially for those print businesses that start thinking of themselves as being in the communications logistics business. Tweeting a couple of times a day is manageable. Heck, a tweet is only 140 characters. But a campaign that spans numerous media may be unmanageable, unless you're set up and have the infrastructure to handle it.

One of the comments we've often received is that all the social media and other the efforts we have been talking about work great in big cities or college towns, but not in small towns or retirement areas. Maybe, maybe not. Still, over time, the differences will disappear, in our opinion. But this is a reminder that every client is different and needs a media mix, and a total campaign, all their own. The campaign has to fit their budget, and their personality or corporate culture. We've never advocated a one-size-fits-all solution for every print business and every print customer. As we've always said, the process starts with asking clients what media they use or how they get information about their purchases.

However, that technology is changing, and the answers you get are only the answers you'll get today. We know that smartphones and tablets are growing significantly, and consumers of all ages are using these kinds of media in ways that they would have never expected even a year ago. This means that any information about media use or preference is out of date very quickly. Knowing that every time research is done it is only a snapshot of that point in time, stringing together those research results of many quarters

and years shows the trends, and they are obvious. More handheld communications devices, faster connections, more video, cheaper gadgets and cheaper connection costs.

This means that it is essential to craft the media program to take advantage of these changes. The 2008 media plan is different from the 2011 plan, which will be different than the 2015 one.

Be the Gadget Guru...Or At Least Feel Like One

As we have been saying throughout this chapter, you can't really understand new media unless you are using it yourself. For better or worse, new gadgets *are* new media.

For better or worse, new gadgets are new media. So, to understand new media, you need to be using these gadgets.

So, to understand new media, you need to be using these gadgets. Buy a Kindle. Buy an iPad. Buy a smartphone. Spend more than a day learning them. Look for your clients' Web sites and other online resources on iPads, iPhones, and other smartphones. Have they optimized their sites for these new devices? If not, therein lies an opportunity. Where to start? Learn how to optimize your own site for mobile devices.

So many print executives and sales people have BlackBerries, and they claim that because of that, they have a smartphone. For all practical purposes, they don't. The BlackBerry was an e-mail-enhanced phone, and if you still have an old model, that's what you have.⁵¹ The newer models are true smartphones, but it's important to use the kinds of devices that your customers' customers will be using.

Sit Down With Your Client and Review the Media Chart

One of the more common questions printers asked us during presentations about *Disrupting the Future* and similar discussions was how they can engage their cus-

⁵¹ The original BlackBerry used the Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) to access the Internet. If you have ever used a WAP device, and have subsequently been tempted to hurl it against the nearest wall, you know it is the very antithesis of a "smart" phone.

tomers in these conversations. Most printers are not comfortable in them.

The media chart we include in this book (see page 126) can help break the ice. Tear out, or better yet photocopy the chart and bring it with you when you meet with customers. Refer to it while asking them the following questions:

- How do you find new customers?
- How do you communicate with current customers?
- The last time you introduced a new product, how did you communicate that to the marketplace?
- What kind of events do you do nationally? Regionally?
- Are there local events that your company goes to?
- What associations does your company belong to?
- Are there magazines and Web sites that are important to your industry?
- How can I find out more information about the trends of your business?
- When you're trying to figure out if someone might be a good customer, what are the things that you look for?
- When someone buys your product, what are some of the reasons why they chose yours rather than someone else's?

Sometimes knowing what to say helps.

It's very important to show interest in your client's business, and it has to be sincere. There's an old saying that "once you can fake sincerity, the rest is easy." It's not true. Even if someone can't detect insincerity while they're meeting with someone, they'll realize it later. Remember, you're interested in their business because there are things that you can do together that will help them grow their business in sales or reputation, and by assisting them with that, your

business will be improved as well. This process of asking questions gives clues about all of the media that they use, and don't use, and whether or not they are integrated.

The media chart can come in especially handy for the next step.

If you're not sure about how to use the chart, you can plainly say something like this: "Our business is really interested in understanding some of these new ways of working online and other new gadgets like the iPad. Do you have one?" If they do, it's a great way to get into a conversation to learn more about it from someone who uses it, especially if you are new to it.

So then you can add: "I've been reading a book about media, and they break up the different kinds into this chart. I'm trying to figure out if it can help me understand your business better." Note that *understanding their needs* is a typical sales approach that's part of a sales call. *Wanting* to understand their business is a different matter. Understanding needs is determining what you can sell them at that moment. Understanding their business is a longer-term discussion, yielding information that will have to be mulled over and put in larger perspective.

So, another thing you can say to customers is: "This media book I've been reading says that there are six different ways of looking at media. Can we look at this together?" The discussion can lead to a review of their *push* strategy (how they go out to market) and their *pull* strategy (how they get customers to interact with them) and their *participation* efforts (how they collaborate with the marketplace).

You might want to circle all of the media that they use and see if you can detect a pattern. If it's all push-style media with little else, it could turn into a discussion about how to get their communications into a different balance (remember, there is no "right" balance, but there is always a better balance and a more forward-looking balance). Ditto if they rely on an all-pull approach.

Ultimately, the discussion should lead to crafting some kind of program and eventually a proposal.

Cut to the Chase: How Do We Bill For This?

One of the things we have found when talking to printers is that what scares them most about a communication logistics or marketing services approach to dealing with customers is the sea change in how these projects are billed. Again, it's the difference between a discrete project with easily identifiable timeline and tasks—and, thus, straightforward invoicing. But the “services” approach we have been talking about requires a different billing strategy. This *definitely* takes printers out of their comfort zone, but it doesn't have to.

The difficulties of selling and consulting in this manner are different than selling print in more traditional ways, as we discussed at length in *Disrupting the Future*. And we acknowledge that these

As printers, we bill for tasks. In marketing services and communications logistics, we bill for relationships, often on a retainer basis.

difficulties are perhaps the most challenging of the shift in business focus. As printers, we bill

for *tasks*. In marketing services and communications logistics, we bill for *relationships*, often on a retainer basis. A printer asked Dr. Joe, “How do we bill for all of these marketing service things?” Well, it comes down to planning and budgeting. You need to lay out a program for a month, quarter, or a year, specify the activities that will be required, and the materials and skill inputs, and arrive at a budget. To be very simple about it, if the program for a year is \$18,000, then you bill them \$1,500 a month.

That is, of course, too simple. It's more likely that you will arrive at a cost for online media and a portion of offline that is a monthly fee, and then task costs for the other items. For example—and keeping the numbers very low to make it easy to calculate here—for \$500 a month, you may manage their Facebook page, their Twitter feed, and coordinate the ghost-written company blog. The ghost writer may charge \$500 a month, which may get marked up to \$750. So that's \$1,250 per month. Then you may do a monthly postcard mailing for them, and that may cost \$1,000 in printing, plus postage and database maintenance. They may go to a local

trade show twice a year and need posters and banners. You may budget \$300 per show for \$600 and then spread it out over the year in the fee as \$50 per month. Then there may be a special promotion at the holidays, but they can't budget it at this time because it depends on what products they may have or how much budget is left. That could be figured in the monthly fee as a minimum amount or just billed separately.

For this case then, anything that is predictable can be planned to be part of the retainer. Anything that's not, like a special holiday mailing, shouldn't be. Items like postage should be billed at cost at the time they are incurred.

Keeping track of what is done every month is important, as is keeping track of the items that are coming up.

Too Close for Comfort?

The ideas we presented in this chapter—and indeed, this entire book—are designed to increase printers' comfort in adopting aspects of a communications logistics strategy.

All major steps start with some level of discomfort. That's how we grow—as individuals, as professionals, and as businesses.

But it's easy for us to say, isn't it? All major steps start with some level of discomfort. That's how we grow—as individuals, as professionals, and as businesses. We talk and write at length about all of this because it's clear that it's the way the world is changing. We may not like it, but we resist it (or ignore it) at our peril.

But, we acknowledge that this approach is not for everyone. And while we stress that these things don't *have* to be difficult, for some people, they may be. If, for example, the idea of meeting with a customer every month to review these items, or billing on a retainer vs. a task basis, is not something you find of interest, or is something you vehemently dislike, then perhaps traditional printing or offline media where you bill for tasks as they are done may be your best business strategy. After all, honesty is the most important part of strategy. The trick, though, is generating enough business for that strategy to pay off. And for some

printers, that may be harder than switching strategies.

Ultimately, it is up to printers themselves to decide what strategy is right for their businesses. All we can do is identify where the market and the culture are going, and offer suggestions for how to adapt to these changing times. The rest is up to you.

Get the Business

- “Print” and “digital” are not two inseparable media, ever at odds with each other. Rather, they work together to reinforce a brand or message.
- Every business needs a media plan. It doesn’t matter how big the business is; if it hopes to succeed, it needs some sort of marketing road map.
- A real media plan is about discipline and persistence.
- Traditional media involve discrete events—an ad, a TV commercial—that happen at specific times and places. Online media are ongoing and continuous and require persistence and discipline.
- Because digital messages disappear from view, the messages need to be repeated regularly, but always in new ways so they look and seem fresh.
- Printers who do decide to change their businesses to something like marketing services often get a case of “pretender syndrome”—can they sit in front of a client and be taken seriously in terms of their new business focus?
- The “pretender syndrome” is something that can be overcome by demonstrating skill in media in promoting its own business. That is, “sell by example.”
- At the same time, agencies can get the idea that the printer is trying to pilfer its own business rather than just go after print work.
- If this is the case, one idea is to form some kind of joint venture or partnership with an agency and pool resources to explore new technology and cultivate personnel.

- Print businesses should use non-print media for their own businesses to support sales and client interactions as well as to prove their business' capabilities to potential clients.
- Printers and other businesspeople often have a hard time "letting go" of social media messaging and delegating it to others. But it's what they need to do: assign or hire someone to handle social media management tasks (it can even be an intern).
- In the past, only advertising would have been considered as having a campaign. Today, public relations, Web sites, social media, and others, are all parts of campaigns.
- Because these campaigns need to be planned and organized, they often exceed the time that small and mid-size business management has available. This is a great opportunity for those print businesses that start thinking of themselves as being in the communications logistics business.
- For better or worse, new gadgets are new media. So, to understand new media, you need to be using these gadgets.
- The media chart we include in this book (see page 126) can help break the ice. Tear out or photocopy the chart and bring it with you when you meet with customers.
- As printers, we bill for tasks. In marketing services and communications logistics, we bill for relationships, often on a retainer basis. That often makes printers uncomfortable.
- All major steps start with some level of discomfort. That's how we grow—as individuals, as professionals, and as businesses.

The Push-Pull-Participative Media Chart

	OFFLINE	ONLINE
PUSH (you reach out to market)	advertising (broadcast), advertising (space), brochure, catalog, coupons, direct mail (static), direct mail (variable), directory, event/trade show, local deals, newspaper inserts, newsletter, organizations, outdoor (billboard, transit stations/shelters), POS/POP, posters, product placement, product/service reviews, sales personnel, signage, specialties, spokesperson, sponsorship, store, in-store environment/interior design, storefront, telemarketing, training, transactional/transpromotional, vehicle wraps, white paper	advertising (web), brochure, catalog, coupons, direct e-mail, direct mail (variable), directory, event/trade show, in-game advertising, local deals, location-based social media, newsletter, organizations, product placement, public relations, radio program, podcast, RSS (real time syndication, like news feed), search engine optimization, search, mobile, search, paid, smartphone/tablet/PC apps/widgets, SMS/MMS (text messaging), spokesperson, sponsorship, training, transactional/transpromotional, Web site, Web site (mobile), web storefront, Webinars, white paper, Youtube video
PULL (market comes to you)	advertising (broadcast), advertising (space), brand name/company reputation/image, business development/consultation, catalog, dealer-distributors, event/trade show, loyalty programs, newspaper inserts, newsletter, public relations, sales personnel, sponsorship, telemarketing, training, user groups, white paper, word of mouth	advertising (broadcast), advertising (web), blog, brand name/company reputation/image, catalog, crowdsourcing, direct e-mail, direct mail (variable), event/trade show, location-based social media, loyalty programs, market research, newsletter, public relations, radio program, podcast, search engine optimization, SMS/MMS (text messaging), social bookmarking, social media (Facebook, Twitter), social media (mobile), spokesperson, sponsorship, training, user groups, Webinars, white paper, word of mouth, Youtube video
PARTICIPATIVE (collaborative, interactive)	associations, business development/consultation, dealer-distributors, event/trade show, market research, organizations, sales personnel, telemarketing, training, user groups, word of mouth	associations, blog, brand name/company reputation/image, crowdsourcing, event/trade show, location-based social media, loyalty programs, market research, organizations, product/service reviews, public relations, radio program, podcast, SMS/MMS (text messaging), social bookmarking, social media (Facebook, Twitter), social media (mobile), spokesperson, training, user groups, Webinars, word of mouth

Afterword: Flashback to 2020

The flying car is back! In *Disrupting the Future*, we included a hypothetical flashforward to 2020 and offered a portrait of a successful communications logistics company. Because things change rapidly, and our view of the future in early 2010 is now out of date from the perspective of mid-2011. Crazy, huh?⁵² Let's take a look at AcCom and its *new new* media environment.



Harold Smith, owner and founder of Acme Communications—known to its many customers as AcCom—is no stranger to constant change. Born in 1990, Smith's family was always on the move, and he found, in his teen years in the mid-2000s, that his online social network was the only constant in his life. When he entered college in 2008, he worked part-time in a print shop owned by his uncle. This was just before the start of the Great Recession, and still ten years before the near-robocalypse.

"They were still called print shops then," says Smith, who graduated in 2012 with a degree in IT-based marketing. "But many were transitioning—some successfully some not so much—to offer communications of all types. That appealed to me since I personally used communication of all types."

His brainstorm came in his senior year in college. "There was this pizza place near campus that we used to hang out in all the time," he says. "They had printed

⁵² As Yogi Berra said, "It's difficult to make predictions, especially about the future."

menus and a real basic Web site with a good blog, some basic e-mail marketing, and a good Facebook presence, but when location-based services really hit the big time in 2012 that, coupled with some of the second-generation augmented reality, was really the way to go.”

He brought his idea to the attention of the owner, who was interested but wasn't completely up to speed on the latest technology. “They had done a pretty good job of getting a grip on social media but kind of stopped there. I see that a lot; a kind of technology fatigue sets in and someone progresses so far then gives up. Unfortunately, like a shark, you've got to keep swimming.”

And eating. So Smith and his colleagues—powered by pizza and caffeine—formed an ersatz marketing services company to handle all of these new ideas.

“What we did was we worked out of my uncle's Acme Printing shop which, as it happened, printed all their menus and handled a lot of their electronic and social media stuff, too. So they had all the pizza place's asset files and had already created a consistent brand across all these media. So we built on top of this.” Printed and electronic promotional materials could be tagged with new invisible embedded DCs (“discover codes,” named after the Digimarc Discover app that helped usher in next-generation QR codes.⁵³ “When text or an image has a code in it, one's *i* flashes, so the user knows to trigger the app to get more information or a more immersive experience.” In 2017 the *i* replaced the smartphone camera and display. Originally introduced as the Apple iEye, and now known colloquially as just the *i*, it pioneered the concept of wearable computing, with the display being at first special glasses and eventually contact lenses. By 2019, it was estimated that more than 75% of Internet users accessed it wirelessly via wearable computers and in-eye displays like the Apple iEye. “Funny, companies that used to make computer displays kind of went the way of traditional print shops. A lot of them couldn't scale down

⁵³ <http://www.digimarc.com/discover/>.

their display technology as far as they needed to fit in the human eye. There was a rumor that the monitor industry was trying to breed a race of Marty Feldmans just so they could get away with large in-eye displays, but that didn't quite pan out."

So not only did AcCom tag printed materials with DCs, but also the physical location. The *i*'s built-in augmented reality app detects these embedded codes in the physical environment and, like DCs, trigger an immersive experience. "The trick was determining what that experience should be. Slogging through melted cheese? Sitting in a pizza oven? Being slathered with marinara sauce? Technology is easy—creativity is hard!" They settled on a simulated amusement park ride in which the viewer felt like they were sliding through giant ziti. "It was more for the kids, really," says Smith. "And you really don't want to activate these experiences while driving. Or while on LSD."

The cost to the pizza place? "Initially, we considered it part of the cost of the traditional print and non-print marketing, but it gradually evolved into a whole marketing package retainer cost." The pizza place saw its business start to climb, slowly at first, but eventually in a measurable way. "Word of mouth—or word of finger or eyeball—started as the augmented reality experience caught on, which drove traffic to all these other things. Social media fan pages, Twitter and, several years later in 2013, Video-Twitter 'veets.' It was no one thing, but a combination of all these inbound and outbound strategies that grew the pizza business. Once e-mail died as a medium in 2015, we had all these other channels ready to go."

And that was how, by 2018, Angelo's Palace Pizza became the largest pizza chain in North America.

Smith didn't stop with pizza, and after his college graduation, his uncle was thinking of retiring from the print business. Smith offered to take over Acme Printing and started developing customized marketing services like he had done for Angelo's. "The first thing I did was change the name from Acme Printing to Acme Communications,"

he says. By the end of 2011, AcCom was far more profitable than Acme Printing had ever been. As news of Smith's success spread, more and more "old media" companies that specialized in printing were turning to a unified communications media approach.

Smith credits his success to his insatiable curiosity about cutting-edge technology. "I think there is such a thing as 'technological growth' in humans, or the desire and propensity to explore new technologies and gadgets. After a certain age—I would argue that it's maybe around age thirty or thirty-five—you simply stop wanting to keep up with things. And that is just death, especially if you are a business leader, and especially today when things change much more quickly than they did even twenty years ago. Back when things changed very slowly in comparison, any given individual could get away with clinging to old technologies and attitudes after a certain point, knowing that they would still be fairly relevant. No one has that luxury anymore." Smith himself is on the cusp of turning thirty; will he be as interested in new technology ten years hence in 2030 as he is now?

"I can't imagine ever becoming complacent," he says. "Maybe that's just my generation." We'll have to check back with him in ten years and see what happened.

Your Channel Line-Up: A Glossary

Advertising (broadcast)

A short presentation or program created for radio or television designed to promote a company, product, or service. It can be as short as ten or fifteen seconds, or as long as ninety seconds or two minutes, although longer ads, such as infomercials, are not unheard of. Ads run on broadcast, cable, or satellite television and radio. Broadcast ads created for offline radio or television can also be shown online, such as when television programs are streamed via network Web sites or via Hulu.com. If you watch sporting events online—such as the NCAA’s March Madness—the same ads appear online as offline. Likewise, radio stations that are simulcast online can also feature the same commercials. Audio ads that pop up between songs in Pandora blur the line between offline and online broadcast advertising.

Advertising (space)

An advertisement for a company or product appearing as a print ad in a publication such as a newspaper (local or national), magazine (local or national), newsletter, guidebook, or journal. Specific ads can be a fraction of a page (1/8-page is typically the smallest), a full-page, a two-page spread, or even a multi-page insert. Multi-page advertisements are often labeled as “Special Advertising Section” to distinguish it from editorial.

Apps

Small software applications that can be downloaded and installed on a smartphone such as an Apple iPhone, a RIM BlackBerry, or Android phone. Apps are also available for tablet PCs like the Apple iPad, RIM PlayBook, and others, and function in much the same way as the corresponding smartphone apps. Like software programs on PCs, apps add functionality to smartphones and tablets, from word processing, to spreadsheets, to games (Angry Birds, Trivial Pursuit, crossword puzzle apps), to e-book readers,

to...you name it. For marketing purposes, companies develop apps to allow customers to interact in useful ways with their brand. Southwest Airlines, for example, has an iPhone app that lets fliers check in, check flight status, find out how many gates they will need to sprint through to make a connection, and so forth.

Association

Also known as a “trade association,” an organization that serves to represent the interests of disparate companies within a certain industry or market. Associations provide educational resources like research reports and seminars, networking opportunities, trade shows, and even lobby the government on behalf of an industry. The Printing Industries of America (PIA) represents the interests of commercial printers. CTIA-The Wireless Association represents the interests of the cell phone industry.

Blog

Short for “Web log,” blogs began back in the 1990s as a kind of online diary, and since then have evolved into a hybrid magazine article/editorial. The best blogs provide information, opinion, and perspective on some area of interest. Any given blog post is typically fairly short (less than 500 words), although “slow blogging” can be the length of a magazine feature—3,000–5,000 words. A key component of a blog is the ability for readers to post comments; this becomes an important way that a dialog and a sense of community are forged. Another key component is to link to other blogs and sources of content for the purposes of commenting on them.

Brand Name/Company Reputation/Image

The overall perception of a company—usually (or hopefully) in a favorable light—by the culture at large, and/or by potential customers. The brand name either is immediately recognized and responded to in outbound communications (push) or is sought out over competitors when a product or service is required (pull).

Brochure

A printed document that contains information about a business, product, or service. Brochures can be a single letter-size sheet (often folded once or twice) or can be multiple pages staled together like a booklet (the word brochure itself derives from

mid-18th century French verb *brocher* meaning “to stitch”). Sell sheets and other marketing collateral materials often qualify as brochures. One-page flyers or leaflets can also be considered brochures. Brochures are often slickly designed with lots of color pictures and easy-to-read text to strike a balance between being visually appealing and providing essential information. Brochures are often given out in physical locations, such as at trade shows, display racks in hotel lobbies or other public places. Brochures can also be requested by mail, although that is quickly becoming passé. Although brochures typically refer to printed materials, “brochures” can be downloaded as PDFs.

Business Development/Consultation

A company or individual offers, on an outbound basis, a free sample consultation, analytics, or other type of analysis of some aspect of a company as a way to get that company to sign a longer-term contract for a service or product. An example would be a Web development company offering a free, limited analysis of another company’s Web site’s effectiveness and performance in search engines as a means of offering additional development and SEO services. The phrase “consultative selling” refers to a personal selling process that uses this technique. Old-style sales management would have asked sales people how many calls sales people made in a day. This style spends the better part of a day learning everything they can about a customer and crafting a specialized approach for their specific situation.

Catalog

A printed publication, like a magazine, that offers a collection of products for sale, and which facilitates ordering either by phone, Internet, or mail. Catalogs are printed in bulk and mailed to previous customers, or to acquired mailing lists. Although we often think of catalogs as printed publications, the term “catalog” itself is often used to refer to e-commerce sites that offer collections of products for sale and e-commerce capabilities. Some catalogers—like IKEA and Pottery Barn—have iPad-based catalogs which are little more than huge PDFs. Others are inspired by Amazon and have highly integrated customization functions in their e-commerce.

Coupons and Local Deal/Deal-of-the-Day Sites (like Groupon)

Coupons were always quite simple, offering a discount at the time of purchase of a product. The coupons were usually distributed in newspaper ads, newspaper inserts, or could be cut out of magazine ads. Now, there are many Internet sites where consumers can download coupons, and they are now standard items found in the e-newsletters of retailers. Recently, companies like Groupon have added another twist. Deal-of-the-day Web sites offer discounted gift certificates usable at local or national companies. The model used by Groupon is that of the "groupon" (or "group coupon"). A particular company—like a hair salon—offers one groupon per day in the market(s) it serves. If x number of people (x =some predetermined customer base) take the offer, the deal becomes available to everyone. If the minimum x is not met, no one gets the deal of the day. Groupon makes money by keeping approximately half the money the customer pays for the coupon. So, for example, a \$40 hair cut could be purchased by a hirsute customer for \$20 and then Groupon and the hair salon would split the \$20.

Crowdsourcing

Tapping the so-called "wisdom of crowds" or the general public to take an active role in the marketing, promotion, and advertising of a business or product. Crowdsourcing can range from encouraging "likes" on Facebook, having customers review products they have bought (Amazon) or hotels they have stayed at (TripAdvisor), comment on a specific business (Yelp!), or even produce ads for a company or a product (often referred to as "user-generated advertising"). Hewlett Packard asked customers to create video about their printers, and received some very creative submissions they were able to use online. Coca-Cola was early in recognizing the potential when some videos started appearing online where two men dressed as lab researchers would put Mentos candy into bottles of Diet Coke and watch the resultant fountain-like spray. One of the YouTube videos we viewed to create this definition had been played more than 14 million times. Crowdsourcing needs to be tapped carefully; people don't always say nice things...

Dealer-Distributor

A third-party company or individual that acts as the middleman between a manufacturer and the end customer. Dealers/distributors often develop their own sales and marketing strategies that complement or supplement those of the manufacturer. These distribution channels were always important when manufacturers could not gain access to certain geographies at an acceptable cost. Many specialize in specific markets, such as medical supplies dealers, health and beauty aid dealers, and even our own graphic arts dealers.

Direct E-Mail

A promotional e-mail message sent to a mailing list of current or potential customers to promote a product, service, or upcoming event. Some e-mail campaigns blur the line between direct e-mail and electronic newsletters. Some blur the line between legitimate campaigns and spam.

Direct Mail (Static)

A printed promotional piece mailed to a database of recipients. Typically, direct mail is a single-piece self mailer like a postcard, but also can include other types of materials included inside an envelope, such as a letter accompanying a flyer and a business card, and other items. This type of direct mail is considered "static" (as opposed to "variable" [cf.]) because each piece that is printed is exactly the same, and all recipients receive the exact same content. However, sometimes databases can be manipulated and the content of the piece tailored to target the mailing without making it variable or personalized. Static direct mail can be "versioned" such that it isn't truly variable, but recipients having certain demographic or other characteristics can get slightly different content. Static direct mail may be addressed to a specific individual or just to "Resident." A type of direct mail is called dimensional mail (or, more descriptively, lumpy mail) and comprises "gifts" like pens, refrigerator magnets, or other totchkes (cf. specialties).

Direct Mail (Variable)

A printed promotional piece mailed to a database of recipients. It is considered "variable" when the content changes from piece to piece in some way—personalizing the content for a specific

recipient. This is also called "variable-data printing," "1:1 printing," "database printing/marketing," "personalization," "customization," or any of a seemingly infinite number of other names. Like static direct mail, the variable variety is typically a single-piece self mailer like a postcard, but also can also include other types of materials included inside an envelope, such as a letter accompanying a flyer and a business card, and other items. The variable content can be as simple as a basic mail merge—"Dear Mr. Smith"—or as complex as having all the text and graphics change from piece to piece based on the data on a given recipient stored in the database. Other types of variable direct mail include personalized PostIt Notes printed using a handwriting font to appear as through the note were handwritten. Variable direct mail can also include personalized URLs (PURLs), which are Web addresses generated on-the-fly that send recipients to a personalized Web site where they can register for events, get more information, or take some other online action. A newer version of variable direct mail printing is called transpromotional (cf.), which uses the database of information owned by the producers of statements, invoices, and other financial transactions to generate personalized transactions documents with relevant promotional materials.

Directory

A list of businesses or individuals printed for the purposes of allowing recipients of that directory to find those businesses or individuals. Directories can be simple alphabetical lists, or organized by some sort of category. Directories can be all text, or can include display advertising. Many hard copy directories had great influence, such as the Thomas Industrial Directories that were found in every purchasing department until the advent of the Internet.

Event/Trade Show

A physical gathering whereby people working in a given industry gain information about new products, market trends, business strategies, and networking opportunities. An event can be a seminar (presentations and panel discussions by industry experts), an exposition (a "show floor" complete with product samples and demonstrations), or some combination of both.

Events vary in size from a small, local or regional gathering at a local hotel or local business's conference room, to a huge national or international expo held in a massive urban convention center. Forums and symposia are also different types of events.

In-Game Advertising

Ads that appear in video games, either as display ads or as "product placement." Ads can also appear as "commercial breaks" during pauses in the game. In-game advertising can also use rich media, comprising video or animation. In-game advertising can be preprogrammed into a game, or can be uploaded to the game while it is being played, and connected to the Internet.

Location-Based Social Media (like Foursquare)

A smartphone app that determines the user's geographic location and finds nearby businesses. Users can upload reviews or tips concerning that business, "check in" at that location, and receive points or other virtual awards for visiting that location. Businesses have also started awarding coupons to location service users who accumulate a certain amount of points. It's a type of social networking based on the ability of smartphones to access GPS data.

Market Research

A type of marketing that involves polling the marketplace for its opinion, either to gauge trends and thus tailor a business or product offering, or to acquire feedback about a recent experience with a brand (such as a hotel surveying a recent guest). Market research can also involve asking a potential customer to provide information about themselves via Web site registration before they can conduct some kind of transaction or download product information.

Newsletter

A short, printed publication (less elaborate than a magazine) mailed to customers or other subscribers. A newsletter can be as short as four pages (an 11 x 17-inch sheet folded in half), or as long as sixteen or twenty-four pages—maybe even longer. Beyond that, it starts to become a magazine. Frequency can be as often as weekly, or as seldom as twice-yearly or even annually. Newsletters can be either advertising-supported (at

least in part) or wholly subscription-supported. Newsletters can also be electronic—called e-newsletters—and the frequency of e-newsletters can be anywhere from daily to monthly—with some outliers publishing more or less frequently.

Newspaper Insert

A printed ad or flyer produced by a retailer—especially a grocery store—that is distributed with newspapers, especially Sunday papers. They contain lists of items on sale for the coming week, and often include coupons. These inserts—also called free-standing inserts (FSI)—are also distributed sans newspaper at the retail locations in question.

Organization

See Association.

Outdoor (Billboard, Transit Stations/Shelters)

Large-format ads prominently displayed in public locations, usually outdoors, but also in places like shopping centers, subway stations, cars, and platforms, etc. Outdoor graphics are most commonly printed, but large electronic displays have started taking the place of printed outdoor graphics, offering the advertiser to add rich media like animation, video, and audio, as well as change the message based on time of day (rush hour vs. non-rush hour) or specific environmental conditions (raining vs. sunny).

Physical Environment

Using the interior design, decorating, and ambiance of a physical location as part of a marketing effort. This can involve basic look and feel issues, as well as specific in-location signage and other graphics designed to convey a specific message.

Podcast

An audio recording, similar to a talk radio program, distributed online and capable of being downloaded to an iPod or other MP3 player. Podcasts are often short (five minutes), and can comprise interviews, reviews, drama, music, etc.

POS/POP

Short for “point-of-sale/point-of-purchase,” these are (typically) printed displays found in retail locations. They can include floor

displays, check-out-counter displays, store window displays, and other retail applications. Although usually printed, electronic displays are making inroads in the POS/POP space. Supermarket chains, for example, increasingly have in-store LCD monitors showing how to fillet a salmon, or some such "programming."

Product Placement

A marketing strategy whereby a company pays a television or movie producer to include specific products within a TV show or movie. It can range from a simple poster for Sprite seen in the background of a TV scene, to having characters use or interact with specific product brands. (The TV show *30 Rock*, for example, has all the characters use Macintosh computers and iPhones, which Apple paid for. In *Parks and Recreation*, it was Dell.) Video games also incorporate product placement.

Public Relations

Having a human representative craft press releases and interact with the media or the public directly on behalf of a company.

RSS

Short for Really Simple Syndication, RSS is a service added to a Web site or blog to which visitors can subscribe, and they will be notified whenever the content on that site or blog changes.

Sales Person

A human employee who actively promote and sell a company's products or services, either by phone or in person. There have been concerns about their extinction, but we believe that through proper environmental policies they should be able to survive for the enjoyment of future generations.

Search (Mobile)

A catchall term for a variety of related abilities, all of which involve using mobile devices to search the Internet. At its most basic level, mobile search involves using Google on a smartphone Web browser to search for certain keywords. Mobile search can also involve getting information about specific businesses or locations in the geographic vicinity of the mobile phone user. A common example of this is using a location app like Yelp! Or AroundMe to find nearby restaurants, gas stations, or ATMs.

Search (Organic)

A search marketing strategy by which a Web site is optimized for search engines (a process known as search engine optimization, or SEO) by carefully crafting the content on a Web page to contain specific keywords that a Googler would search for. SEO also embeds keywords in the page code itself so that the site will come up toward the top of the first page of hits.

Search (Paid)

A search marketing strategy by which a company pays a search engine like Google for certain keywords. If a user searches those keywords, the paying company comes up at the top of the first page of hits, typically indicating that it is a paid search hit.

Signage

Large or conspicuous graphics or even some kind of structure that identifies or advertises a place of business. A sign can be very simple, comprising adhesive Letraset lettering on a door, all the way up to elaborate neon contrivances visible for miles.

SMS/MMS

SMS stands for "Short Message Service" and is used to send text messages from cell phone to cell phone. It is commonly referred to as "texting." MMS stands for Multimedia Messaging Service and is essentially the same as SMS, except that it is used to send pictures⁵⁴ or other media from cell phone to cell phone. Marketers and advertisers can use SMS and MMS to push notifications to a cell phone user, although this is uncommon as cellular service providers charge a premium for text messaging. Often, other media—such as a billboard or magazine ad—will encourage a user to text some kind of response to a poll question, for example.

Social Bookmarking

Also referred to as "folksonomy," Web sites where users share links and articles from around the Internet. The prevailing analogy is that Internet users act as myriad newspaper editors, choose compelling content, and highlight it on these types of aggregative sites. These days, many magazine, newspaper,

⁵⁴ And they don't *always* have to be naughty.

and Internet articles—as well as blog posts—make it easy for readers to automatically flag content and post it to Digg and other sites. You may have seen buttons and other “share” links on Internet articles. These let users automatically recommend a story to the social bookmarking site of their choice. Other social bookmarking sites that one comes across frequently are called Delicious (usually rendered “de.li.cious”), StumbleUpon, Fark, Reddit, and more.

Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter)

Facebook is a social networking site where users create profiles of themselves, add friends, post status updates, share photos, videos, share their “likes” of other things, links, and make connections literally around the world. LinkedIn works similarly, but is more business oriented, and LinkedIn members can form groups of individuals with shared interests (or within a specific industry), pose questions to one’s network, etc. LinkedIn has become a top resource for both job hunters and employee seekers. Twitter is often classified as social media, but it more like “microblogging,” in that it is like blogs (cf.) but are limited to 140 characters. Twitter now supports images, which NY Congressman Anthony Weiner likely now regrets.

Social Media (Mobile)

Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc., are all accessible (usually via apps) on mobile devices. This allows mobile tweeting and updating of Facebook status on-the-go.

Specialties

Also called (by us, if no one else) tshotskes, these are small items like pens, refrigerator magnets, mousepads, coffee mugs, rulers, T-shirts, or any other gift item that has a company logo or other brand message printed on them.

Spokesperson

The public face of a company or brand, especially in the media. A spokesperson can be an actual company employee or owner, a celebrity like William Shatner for Priceline.com, or even a some kind of animated animal character like the Geico gecko or the Aflac “spokesduck.”

Sponsorship

A form of brand marketing in which a company supports an event—either by donating money or a product or service—in exchange for promotional consideration, the identification of the company as a sponsor, and a logo on promotional materials for the event. Sponsorships can also be for ongoing events or organizations, such as an arts organization.

Storefront (physical)

The exterior appearance of a physical retail location, including signage. A storefront is designed to make a good first impression and be attractive to potential walk-in customers, as well as potential customers who may have been pushed or pulled to the location through other channels. Other types of signage, posters, and outdoor graphics may also be part of the storefront designed to lure customers inside.

Storefront (Web)

Also called an e-commerce site, a Web storefront is a company's online retail presence, designed—like a physical storefront (cf.)—to be attractive and enticing, with colorful graphics, special offers, and ease of navigation.

Telemarketing

Cold-calling individuals or businesses by telephone to attempt to sell a product or service.

Training

Educational programs—which can be either in-person or virtual—designed to impart to company employees a certain skill set required by the business.

Transactional/Transpromotional

Transactional documents are materials like invoices, credit card statements, financial statements, or anything else that represents a “transaction” of some kind. Online transactions—such as a e-banking services—as well as mobile transactions are also considered “transactional.” Likewise, a bank ATM is considered transactional media. Transpromotional is a portmanteau word that refers to the integration of marketing, advertising, and promotional messages within transactional media. Examples

would be a travel offer or discount on a printed credit card statement, an ad printed on an airline boarding pass, banner ads on a bank's online banking site, or the umpteen million ads Bank of America presents through their ATMs.

User Group

An organization of users of a particular product or service designed to function as an educational and support resource for that product. User groups can meet physically or virtually, and share tips via online forums or newsletters (printed or electronic). In the 1980s and 1990s, there were many Macintosh user groups, Adobe product user groups (like Photoshop), and so forth.

Vehicle Wrap

Printed graphics (usually vinyl or a vinyl-like material) that are applied to a vehicle, often for promotional purposes. They can be as simple as car or truck signage for a specific company's fleet, or bus/train wraps that promote specific events or other companies.

Web Site

A location on the Internet that provides information, entertainment, or other content. For businesses, think of it as an electronic brochure.

Web Site (Mobile-Optimized)

This is a streamlined version of a company's Web site, stripped of complex formatting, large images, and rich media, so as to display more quickly and legibly on a mobile device such as a smartphone. As mobile devices become more powerful, there will likely be less and less need for mobile-optimized sites, but one ongoing advantage of such sites will be their ability to be easily read on a small screen.

Webinar

A portmanteau word combining "Web" and "seminar." Webinars are online events usually comprising a presentation conducted in real-time. Users typically have to register, which provides Webinar sponsors with potential sales leads. Attendees can often interact with the Webinar presenter through live chat or the ability to submit questions, which can be answered live, after the Webinar is over, or not at all.

White Paper

A document that serves as an authoritative report or guide that aims to solve some problem, explain a new technology, or provide other in-depth information about a subject. White papers can be printed (be it on white paper or not) or downloaded as PDFs or other document formats.

Word of Mouth

Perhaps the oldest communication channel, it refers to one person referring or recommending a company or product to another. Word of mouth can be verbal (a literal interpretation of the phrase) or online (where it is sometimes referred to as "word of mouse"). Word of moth is a typo, and should not be construed as referring to talking insects.

YouTube Video

Also known by the catchall phrase online video, YouTube is a highly popular site for broadcasting homemade or company-made videos. The offerings on YouTube run the gamut from uploaded TV programs and commercials from seemingly the entire history of television, concert videos (professional and amateur), training videos, home videos, pets (cats doing various things are some of the most popular online videos), and just about anything that can be done with a video camera. (Except porn; there are other sites for that.) Online video in general can be embedded on Web sites and in blogs.

About the Authors

Dr. Joe Webb is one of the graphic arts industry's best-known consultants, forecasters, and commentators. He is the director of WhatTheyThink's Economics and Research Center. His latest book, *Disrupting the Future: Uncommon Wisdom for Navigating Print's Challenging Marketplace*, written with Richard Romano, has been described as "the manifesto for a new generation of printers."



A 33-year veteran of the graphic arts industries, his "Mondays with Dr. Joe" column is recognized as a must-read feature on WhatTheyThink since 2003. His economic forecast webinars and industry presentations assist C-level executives, owners, and analysts understand changes in the economy, technology, and the industry affect their strategic decisions.

He is a Ph.D. graduate of the NYU Center for Graphic Communications Management and Technology (1987) and has served on the Center's Board of Advisors. He holds an MBA in Management Information Systems from Iona College (1981), was a magna cum laude graduate in Managerial Sciences and Marketing from Manhattan College (1978), and was a member of its economics honor society. Dr. Webb started in the industry with Agfa's Graphic Systems Division, was a marketing executive with Chemco Photoproducts, and entered consulting full time in 1987. In 1994, he founded the influential TrendWatch information service, sold to multinational publisher Reed Elsevier in 2000.

Richard Romano has been a professional writer since 1994, having concentrated predominantly on various graphic communications technologies such as digital imaging, computer graphics, and media trends. From 1999 to 2008, he was a senior analyst for TrendWatch Graphic Arts (later The Industry Measure), and from 1995 to 2001, he had been a writer and editor for *Micro Publishing News* as well as its then-sister publication *Digital Imaging*. Over the years he has also written for such magazines as *Graphic Arts Monthly*, *GATFWorld*, *Printing News*, *HOW*, and others. He is the co-author, with Dr. Webb, of *Disrupting the Future*, and was editorial director and designer of Dr. Joe Webb's *Renewing the Printing Industry: Strategies and Action Items for Success*. He currently contributes to WhatTheyThink.com, the leading news and information portal for the graphic arts industry, for which he writes occasional feature stories, news reports, and monthly market research and technology reports, concentrating on new media and publishing technologies, such as e-books.



Romano is the co-editor of *The GATF Encyclopedia of Graphic Communications*, as well as a half dozen or so other books on graphics hardware and software. Romano also speaks at various seminars and shows and to assorted printing and vendor groups.

He has vague recollections of having graduated from Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Public Communications in 1989 with a B.A. in English and Writing for Telecommunications, and has a certificate in Multimedia Production from New York University. He is currently enrolled in a Masters program through the University at Buffalo. He lives in Saratoga Springs, NY.