



February 21-24, 2006

JW Marriott Desert Springs Palm Desert, CA

from the editors of CRM magazine

## Viewpoint

CLOSE

### Email Marketing: The Incredibly Shrinking Relevance

*Email as an independent marketing channel is growing increasingly irrelevant.*

by [Mark Organ](#)

Sunday, January 01, 2006



*Editor's note: The following Viewpoint is offered to CRM magazine readers in place of Mr. Organ's original essay for the section as listed in the January issue.*

Organizations that rely on email marketing as a key asset in the demand generation portfolio are facing a stark reality. Today, marketers face innumerable pressures and challenges: Accountability for the financial return on marketing; visibility into the specific results of each campaign; and unity of purpose and action with the sales department. Additionally, there are new channels to contend with, new technologies to embrace, and a new kind of customer that is entirely in control of the relationship. Clearly, marketing has changed; thus, our thinking around email must as well.

First, the facts. Email is a commodity. Prices are dropping, and it is getting more difficult to distinguish vendors on based on features alone. 'Batch and blast' email as a standalone lead generation tool is a failure. Marketers, increasingly measured on business results like revenue, profits, and pipeline, are struggling to grasp the value that email packages provide. The traditional measurements of success--opens and clickthroughs--cannot be easily correlated with the sales pipeline. These measurements have been deemed insufficient.

Today, savvy marketers have turned their attention to a new mantra: demand generation, the integration of email marketing, web analytics, data marts and CRM into a single platform. Email marketing can no longer stand on its own.

#### A more comprehensive approach

Email, in definition, is simply a channel for reaching a particular audience. Used independently of other tactics, it is a channel that is increasingly difficult to navigate. CAN-SPAM regulations, robust filtering technologies, and the dramatic growth in email volume have made it harder to get your message through. Clearly, email needs help.

In sophisticated marketing organizations, email is only one of many tactics used to drive demand. Email campaigns are carefully choreographed with a variety of other channels and programs like search keywords, public relations, direct mail, advertising, and telemarketing. To make this all work, marketers rely on comprehensive, integrated data that delivers quantifiable results. While this data can come from distinct products, it is organized, manipulated, and analyzed in a common data mart on a common software platform. This integrated demand generation platform combines prospect segmentation, analytics and profiling with traditional marketing channels like email, website forms and analytics, search words, direct mail, chat, and others.

Typical email data, such as email opens and clickthroughs, is easy to capture. However, without other information, its value is low. Demand generation experts need higher value data on prospect behavior. They need to know which campaigns triggered which responses, how the responses

varied by channel, the click-stream for each prospect visit to a web site, the rate of change in web activity and, if available, the search queries that resulted in the visit. Using this data, marketers can assemble a rich prospect profile that shows interest and intent over time.

### **Making email relevant again**

Pulling high-volume prospect behavior data from stove-piped email, web analytics, data marts, and CRM is difficult and costly. Only when these functions are integrated across a common software platform can the marketer begin to truly obtain useful information. The demand generation platform lets marketers move from 'batch and blast' email to sophisticated applications like lead scoring and workflow automation. It enables marketers to improve lead conversion rates at the top end of the funnel. It produces better qualified leads with deep analytics and segmentation. It smoothes the handoff of leads from marketing to sales through deep CRM integration and automated notifications. It produces a higher yield of recycled leads as companies continue to intelligently track and market to prospects that are still too early in the buying cycle. Most importantly, the demand generation platform allows marketers to finally map initial email response through the entire funnel to deal signature, delivering on the long-awaited promise of closed-loop marketing.

Email still represents one of the best values in the marketing arsenal. Great results can be delivered when coupled with other marketing techniques and channels, including: prospect profiling and segmentation to target the right audience with the right message; dynamic landing pages to move people to action; analytics and reporting to gather prospect interest and intent; and marketing automation to relentlessly educate, nurture, and qualify sales leads.

Marketers and executives at small and large organizations looking to reinvigorate their marketing campaigns must look beyond standalone email and adopt a more comprehensive solution. New demand generation platforms offer the power and flexibility of standalone email packages, and include reporting, analytics, and visibility that make email relevant again.

---

Find this article at: <http://www.destinationcrm.com/articles/default.asp?articleid=5722>

© 2004, CRM Media, LLC. Use of this site indicates approval and acceptance of our Terms of Use and Privacy Policy.
--