



Marketing Messages

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YouTube and other new media are rewriting marketing's rulebook

New technology is dramatically affecting media channels and how marketers interact with customers. That was the predominant message made at the recent **BCAMA (BC Chapter of the American Marketing Association) VISION** Conference.

Think back for a moment to 1997. The English Patient won an Oscar for best picture, Princess Diana was killed in a car crash, and eBay and Amazon were new and unknown. Microsoft owned the desktop, and Mac was on its way to extinction. Google wouldn't exist for another 2 years. Technology is doubling every 12 months. The way we approached marketing and advertising just 10 years ago is very different than today. As a marketer it can hard to keep up. New technology has altered the way companies choose to communicate with their customers.

1. Loss of the intermediary

The internet has introduced a world where intermediaries are not required. In traditional advertising vehicles such as TV, print and radio, the role of advertising was to interrupt and catch attention. A network or publisher controlled these media. Now online vehicles such as Youtube, Myspace, e-newsletters, blogs, and interactive websites are being used to connect conversations. Intermediaries used to control time and content. Now the consumer controls both content viewing and creation. This shift fundamentally changes not only what our advertising message should be, but also how it gets delivered. "There are 71 million blogs out there and 120,000 new blogs started every day," notes Mitch Joel, President, Twist Image. "Because of technology, individuals have a platform for a one to many conversation."

2. The empowered consumer

What used to be a one-way company to customer message has now become two way. "The consumer is in control. They have equal voice. You can't outspend them to get noticed," says Mitch Joel. And technology has given consumers real power to effect change. Witness the recent move by Forest Ethics environmental group to use Google Earth mapping software to produce video, subsequently posted to Youtube to show viewers West Fraser Timber Company logging operations which the group felt were endangering caribou habitat in BC and Alberta. Or check out www.biggreenpurse.com which is encouraging 1 million women to use the power of their purse, and influence on over 80% of purchases, to shift \$1,000 of money they already spend to environmentally conscious products. Their goal is to have a 1 billion dollar impact. Empowered and knowledgeable consumers are savvy and more resistant to marketing. This is your new reality. Bloggers have influence. You cannot control your message alone.

3. New media

New media such as Youtube and Myspace have given ultimate control of message and content to consumers. And it's not just youth using these sites. According to Marketing Vox, half of Youtubes's audience is over 34 years old. These vehicles are user driven, and although the production value on most Youtube spots is reminiscent of the early days when desktop publishing promised to make everyone a designer, viral word of mouth about entertaining spots spreads incredibly fast. **Hunter Madsen, Director of Marketing, Yahoo Canada**, sited a contest to launch Shakira's new album based on contestants submitting their own 30-second music video for her "Hips don't lie" single. The marketing twist here was that they offered up Shakira's brand, and asked consumers to do something with it. They gave their trust. The edited music video submissions were posted as a "mash up" on Youtube. The word of mouth promotion was incredibly effective and done at very little cost. "The traditional boundaries are getting fuzzy between creators and consumers," says **Paul Lavoie, Chairman and Chief Creative Officer, TAXI**. "New media offers us an opportunity. We're no longer telling and selling in advertising. We're relationship marketing."

"The cell phone has become a technology Swiss Army Knife," says **Richard Worzel, Futuresearch**. Consumers can text, send and receive email, browse the web, listed to music, podcasts, view TV programs, play games, activate mobile message codes, and oh yes, place a phone call. According to Juniper Research, the mobile entertainment market is forecast to reach \$47 billion by 2009. Mobile devices make media accessible 24/7.

"When new media arrives, the old media usually don't go away, but the way people use it changes," notes Richard Worzel, Futurist. Youtube, Apple TV, TiVO, and DVR's have changed the way people view and use broadcast TV. Craigs List has changed the use of newspaper classifieds. E-newsletters have changed the role of direct mail. Blogs and citizen web reporters have altered the role of columnists and reporters. The old media didn't go away, but their use is being significantly altered.

"Creating great content and experiences for consumers, that's where the future is, not advertising," states notes **Mitch Joel, Twist Media**. Bold words? Yes, but right on target.

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