

## Communication Trends Require Marketers to Think in New Ways

### *What marketers need to know in 2006*

*by Mike Gospe*

Each year the marketer's job gets more complex, and 2006 will be no exception. With the widespread adoption of new wireless and Internet technologies allowing consumers and users to be connected at all times, marketers have new channels to consider, and higher expectations to meet. Each of these trends will have an impact on the marketing plans, strategies and tactics businesses will be using in 2006. As 2005 comes to a close, I've summarized a sampling of the year's most significant trends that will drive how, when, and where marketers will interact with their audiences. These trends will continue to take shape in 2006. How will they impact your marketing strategies and plans?

#### **Use of Internet-based collaborative networking tools will continue to become widespread.**

There is no question that Internet-based collaboration tools will continue to change the way people communicate. This affects how marketing members communicate internally with teammates, and how marketing organizations communicate externally with customers. [LinkedIn](http://www.linkedin.com) (www.linkedin.com) and [Spoke](http://www.spoke.com) (www.spoke.com) are tools that help marketing teams build focused marketing lists, for example. And, Instant Messaging and Blogs are also fast becoming new important tools for communicating with internal and external audiences.

#### **One-on-one marketing techniques will become more efficient and precise.**

Consumers want to be treated as individuals, not a mass market herd. They will continue to demand that businesses and organizations speak only to them when they have relevant, timely information. Thus, marketers will need to build better databases to understand each target market while being able to tailor messages to the individual. Dynamic, personalized marketing campaigns will become commonplace.

#### **Pervasiveness of wireless mobility will create more advertising opportunities.**

Text messaging, video on cell phones, PDAs and iPods, "find me/follow me" technologies, etc. add a new dimension to how often, when, and what devices marketers will use to communicate with their target markets. These new communications channels must be addressed as part of the marketing mix. Thus, marketing experts will be challenged to think in new ways to communicate their messages.

#### **Rise of Business Intelligence (BI) applications for profitability analysis will improve marketing operations and strategies.**

Marketers will be required to measure and track their campaigns to a greater degree, with visible dashboards to illustrate progress. BI applications have been widely used

in financial services, manufacturing and production environments. Now, many companies are looking to them to help them drive and manage marketing operations. With more focus on the marketing function, marketing experts must get comfortable with justifying their campaigns and know when, how, and where to change the marketing mix.

**Video conferencing and IP technology will unite global marketing teams.**

These tools will bring together marketing leaders and team members from around the globe and help them interact more often in a way that feels like they are "right next door." Marketing strategies will be more easily developed for a worldwide audience, and then distributed regionally for the execution of local campaigns.

**Work from anywhere; connect to anywhere.**

Blackberries, PDAs, cell phones, instant messaging, email, and "find me, follow me" technologies have made it possible for people to connect with others whenever and wherever they are. This makes it possible for marketers to conduct their work from home and other locations outside of headquarters. Thus, marketing leaders and experts will be conducting more of their work while on the road or working from a home or remote office. Physical presence in the headquarters office has become less important, and this will not change in 2006. This will continue to improve marketing productivity and accelerate time-to-market.

For these and other insights into how these trends are affecting 2006 marketing strategies and plans, please contact Mike Gospe.

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