

## **Green Paper: Blended Media Strategy Communications Elements & Planning**



The fundamentals of marketing and communications are stronger than ever and expanding to embrace new digital and online media forms.

The basis for excellent communications is still great visuals and writing, except that the great writing and visuals must match the many new and emerging media forms. In a blended media strategy the approach becomes less complex because we are implementing a new discipline to the dynamics of new and traditional media alike.

The design and development paradigm for the web created a new approach to everything - a top down, get it done, then clean it up later, approach to publishing and ultimately to communications. The idea that you can design and build simultaneously without a detailed planning effort revolutionized the way users of new and traditional media react to what they see. As a result, context and visualization have become key to leveraging new media and its new, ever-changing culture.

### **Building a Community & Reputation Online through Social Media Tools**

Managing your organization's reputation online and communicating with your key stakeholders has never been more difficult. The web presents challenges as well as unparalleled opportunities to create better, smarter relationships with your stakeholders and constituents. The process requires new tools, skills and approaches to traditional public relations and communications practices. Using social media platforms to improve communications and, for businesses, the bottom line can be achieved through the development of an understanding and appreciation of the overarching reach of new media. From MySpace to Facebook, from Twitter to VSocial, from Utterz to Digg the opportunities in social networking.

1. Social Networks: maximize your resources for the greatest return.
2. Widgets: use widgets and gadgets effectively
3. Blogs: create, maintain and respond to blogs.
4. Viral Marketing: set up online communities and loyalty programs to leverage online word of mouth.

### **Search Marketing**

Every element of digital and new media communications has its own degree of importance in a blended media strategy, but there is one thing that consistently ties it all together - Search. By untangling the misconceptions surrounding how search engines work and how search optimization (SEO) and search marketing (SEM) works you can build on the following foundation practices and fully realize the benefit of an effective search strategy:

1. Create cost-effective SEO and SEM strategies.
2. Build a framework for social media press releases.

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3. Understand how your organization and brand is searched.
4. Identify "rich" search terms and keywords.
5. Track optimization effects and measure results.
6. Use linking techniques for blogs and social networking pages.

### **Managing / Avoiding an Online Crisis**

When dealing with setbacks, leveraging the Internet and email communications can be a huge plus. 24/7 news and information cycles including bloggers and citizen journalists can potentially wreak havoc on your organization. Knowing how to use the web to your advantage is critical.

1. Respond to bloggers and other negative exposure online.
2. Use dark sites.
3. Leverage social networking sites and other new media to manage your reputation.
4. Understand crisis rules and test online processes.
5. Integrate online and offline crisis management.
6. Communicate with your stakeholders online during and after a crisis.
7. Practice post-crisis management.

### **Measuring New Media**

Measurement and metrics is a must. Knowing how to continuously justify getting tangible evidence of contributions from any campaign is important to your bottom-line and business results. The growing roster of new media platforms that must be taken into account can be staggering but it is approachable using some of emerging tactics and techniques. Digital outputs, outtakes and outcomes can be measured and applied to your organizational goals using a "Five Step Measurement Process" outlined below:

1. Define organizational goals.
2. Define audiences of importance to reach those goals, and prioritize.
3. Set PR objectives against prioritized audiences that are specific and measurable.
4. Determine how you will measure each, with what tools, and benchmark.
5. Measure continuously, and adjust programs accordingly.

These measurement steps can be applied to virtually any media form in your media blend including the impact of coverage in blogs and social networks.

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