



After the Apocalypse

6 Keys to Success in the Recovery

During the tsunami of the Great Recession, B2B marketers could be forgiven for thinking the bad times would engulf them forever. But like the tide, even the worst economy must eventually turn. Now that the recovery has begun and marketing is starting to resurface, it's an ideal time to think about the right—and wrong—moves to make next. At Alexander Marketing, we've seen four decades of good times and bad. Based on our experience, here are six truths you'll want to keep firmly in mind during the coming months.

1

Don't shrink from your chance to grab share.

Every customer is a new customer when everyone is emerging from a time of non-spending. As your prospects peek out of their bunkers, the buying patterns they re-establish now will last for years to come. Now is not the time for you to sit on your cash and wait until it's "safe" to resume your marketing investment. Pursue those prospects aggressively now, and they'll repay your investment for years. Sit on the sidelines, and someone else will seize this moment of opportunity in your place.

2

Facebook and Twitter are great, but they're not a social media plan.

A decade ago, me-too marketers shouted, "Hey! We have a website!" Today those same stragglers are boasting, "We're on Facebook and Twitter!" Like websites and emails—or for that matter, broadcast and print—social media are exactly that: media. And like any other media, their effectiveness depends on whether you have a strategic plan that uses their strengths wisely to achieve clearly defined goals.

3

Surprise! Saturation email isn't free.

We see this mistake more and more. Yes, email bombardment of the known universe has very little immediate cost. But what you're losing is more insidious: an unused opportunity. Every time your emails go unopened, one of your list members unsubscribes (you do provide an unsubscribe option, don't you?), or another recipient quietly reclassifies you as a spammer, you've lost a prospect that a more considered email program could have turned into a loyal customer.

4

Direct mail is still more cost-efficient than you think.

When you have a high-value prospect, a high-margin product or service, a high-value prospect, and a clearly defined niche market, you're an ideal candidate to make money with direct mail. The right mail program can deliver messages that no other medium can, such as physical product samples, 3D attention-getters and gift premiums. It's opened at a rate that dwarfs email. And a well-managed mail program can deliver the branding impact of print or web display ads, while gathering enough direct responses to actually pay for itself. It's a combination today's top marketers still keep in their mix—and for excellent reason.

5

Yes, SEO/SEM really is that important.

Two-thirds of prospective B2B buyers start their research with a general-purpose search engine. If your competitors have optimized their websites and bought the search words those prospects type in most, they're stealing future sales right out from under your nose. But if you're the one who does it best, those prospects will find you at the top of the free listings, the paid listings and the search-paid display ads—smoothly funneling every inquiry about the category right to your site.

6

All the "old marketing" truths apply to your website, too.

The old direct mail axiom that you only have a few seconds to draw the viewer inside? The same goes for your homepage. The retail rule that if they're always asking your sales clerks where everything is, it's time to reconfigure the store? Your site search function is that same canary in the coal mine. And the ad campaign adage that you should always present the same brand face and voice across all media? True for your site and all its pages. You can say these principles are just common sense—except that on most actual B2B sites, adherence to them isn't very common.

As buying activity ramps up once again, this race will be like any other: those who grab the lead first have the best chance to keep it. By making the right moves now, you can get the jump on your sales goals—and your competitors—for a long time to come.

Alexander Marketing – Engineered to Move You

Alexander Marketing is focused on serving the marketing and communications needs of companies that use science and engineering as a catalyst for invention and innovation. We have the experience and the ingenuity to positively impact your brand and your results.

We serve clients representing technologies from chemistry to environmental, and from safety to building and construction. And we are eager to demonstrate how our mastery of the art of engineering and the science of creativity enable us to conceive and implement a fully integrated strategy across multiple marketing disciplines to produce maximum ROI.

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