



Michael Weissman is currently chairman and CEO of SYNQY, the first company enabling marketers to consistently deliver and control brand experiences on websites they don't own, transforming static brand assets into a fully-functional platform that delivers relevant content and services to the consumer, right where they are already engaged online. He may be reached at www.SYNQY.com.

The marketer's antidote for consumer ADD

To overcome the limitations of the Internet, marketers rely on practices that unwittingly feed consumer ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder). It's a scenario that both marketers and consumers have learned to live with, but not necessarily like.

Because third-party websites limit a brand's presentation, marketers resort to enticing prospects to take a journey, leaving the site they're on to visit the brand-owned website where they can receive a richer brand experience. The distraction, diversion and ultimate journey itself has "trained" consumers to act and react in ways that are not always desirable for anyone.

But today, technology presents an antidote to the chaos, by providing an alternative to connect the brand and consumer in ways everyone will like.

DISTRACTION RULES

Marketers spend \$100 billion annually banking on the notion that consumers want to journey to a brand-owned "destination." But the process actually belies efficiency on many levels. Let's consider the steps toward customer

- Links are often broken or out of date.

- Getting to the specific item or topic of interest can take multiple steps.

The result: people have a short attention span and can often get "lost" in the process. Think of how many times you've started searching for something online, only to poke your head up an hour later to discover yourself looking at totally unrelated content. Taking people on this kind of rabbit trail poses a considerable challenge for acquiring customers who are already predisposed to lack focus.

Getting prospects to stay attentive and follow this long journey has not been effective or beneficial for anyone. The marketer spends more resources on driving people to their message than on the message itself. That's because they market twice: once

marketers to engage people in a rich, complete brand experience at the very first consumer touch point. Marketers need to deliver relevant content—in an engaging and entertaining manner—at the precise moment when people are the most receptive to it. This calls for a new Internet marketing model that reduces the digital distance—the distance a customer journeys, as measured in the number of steps it takes from initial interest to meaningful engagement with the brand.

Consider the following example (a real-world case) where an apparel brand is featured in an online story. Once the brand captured interest on the featured product, consumers were led through a total of six steps before getting to the point of purchase. This path was both inefficient and costly: each subsequent click results in an attrition rate of two-thirds of the prospects. By the time prospects get to the actual offer, most of the audience has been lost along the way.

Today's technology provides the potential for prospects to receive a positive, interactive experience at the very first touch point, in the midst of the third-party website, without ever leaving to receive the experience. This dramatically changes the game—no longer sending consumers down the rabbit trail, but enabling a quicker path to engagement and the ability for marketers to capitalize on a prospect's interest and curiosity, at the first point of interaction. Delivering an experience at the exact time and place they are most attentive and receptive to it, without the distraction and diversion of having to leave the original website.

Continued on page 56

Getting prospects to stay attentive and follow this long journey has not been effective or beneficial for anyone. The marketer spends more resources on driving people to their message than on the message itself. That's because they market twice: once to get people to the brand site, then to actually engage them once they get there.

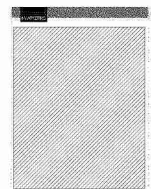
engagement: first, marketers will waive their arms and distract. Got their attention? Well good, because they'll need a lot of patience for the next step. Second, marketers ask people to click on a link to take them away from what and where they're currently engaged to the brand's marketing site. Now here's where it's tricky:

- People don't trust links. Think: dragged to a place they don't like or worse—a virus.

to get people to the brand site, then to actually engage them once they get there. This is a publisher's nightmare, too. Publishers want people to stay on their site, because once a consumer leaves a site it's very difficult to get them back.

REDUCING DIGITAL DISTANCE

New technology available today can change all of this by presenting new ways for



Continued from page 14

ENGAGING CONTENT IN CONTEXT

Instead of making prospects divert to another location, why not entertain and inform them right where they are? This provides the distinct advantage of increasing relevance of branded content by connecting it with the context of the third-party site. According to the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) Council's recent research findings, this can be a defining element for impacting trust—and driving performance—across the purchase funnel.

B2B marketers alone spend \$16.6 billion annually in content publishing to acquire leads, educate and influence customers, but generally lack the delivery network to make them effective. As a result, brand-generated content ranks low on trust and relevance—factors that customers reveal as critical elements of the purchase decision.

In addition to how you deliver content, *what* you deliver matters. In a world where even our news has become “infotainment,” why not make your

branded content captivating too? By delivering multiple layers of content that doesn't just sell, but engages at various points along the customer journey, we can potentially reduce the risk of losing prospects to distraction... or before they've had a chance to build an interest in the brand.

Turning to technology can solve the problem with a user experience that is not only seamless, but captivating. Now that's a better brand experience that pays for everyone. 🌐