



Today's Media Mix Conundrum

Welcome to the next digital decade. Smartphones are popping up in more palms, tablet PCs are enticing crowds to tap more apps and social media is speeding ahead. Transformative trends continue to shape-shift the world of communications. Clearly, business communication in the decade ahead will look nothing like that of the past.

These fundamental changes are altering the way people, processes and technologies interact. Consequently, businesses are scrambling to catch up with the way their customers communicate. What's more, they're confronting a media mix that has never been more challenging or critical. Managing that mix is imperative for success in the digital days that lie between today and 2020.

Constantly Changing Channels

The first step toward understanding the new media mix is to recognize its many changes. At one end of the spectrum lie traditional communication channels like direct mail and broadcast television. These channels are going interactive, exploring digital media to drive two-way customer conversations.

At the same time, channels that were born interactive, such as social media and computer games, are maturing and moving from consumer to business use. Meanwhile, new channels continue to emerge, stirring the pot with technologies like location-based services and augmented reality.

Consumers are embracing this channel diversity at lightning speeds—so quickly, in fact, that businesses are having a hard time keeping pace. In Q4 2010, for the first time ever, sales of smartphones and tablets exceeded sales of PCs and laptops. And 4 out of 5 adults now participate in social media. Even so, many Fortune 1000 marketing budgets continue to favor conventional media like magazines and broadcast.

To fully leverage modern channels, businesses must align media spending with consumer media viewing habits, creating the right media mix for the right purpose. But how?




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Make Every Message Personal

Regardless of the channels you choose, communication should always be personalized. The days of “Dear Resident” or “Head of Household” labels are long gone. Drawing on today’s sophisticated analytics can turn your data into real-time actionable insights. Moving beyond customer names creates highly relevant, 1-to-1 communications while streamlining production and distribution—internally and externally. Rather than market share, the new goal is customer share—captured one customer at a time.

3-Steps for Effective Media Management

Although the new media mix is complicated, there is a life order to its management. I’ve simplified the process, but it essentially involves three steps:

1. **Get your data in order and capture your customers’ preferences.** Understand which customers favor which media channels. For example, does your customer prefer receiving their billing statement as a printed invoice, or an e-mail or possibly through their mobile device? Then begin creating a “data ladder” where each activity builds on the next.

For example, start with all your customers, segment them by common attributes, further differentiate them based on their response to an activity, track who received what, and so on. Each step will offer a greater opportunity to gain insight, measure effectiveness and reduce costs. Equally important, your communication will become increasingly more personal, eventually enabling you to predict a customer’s response. Bottom line, it’s all about the ability to treat different customers differently for the best results at the lowest cost to serve.

2. **Take control of your content and its distribution.** Collect, catalog and centralize your content and digital assets in a single repository, including brand assets, identity materials, marketing collateral and real-time field data. This will improve content management while facilitating collaboration, content sharing and reuse.

In addition, you can take advantage of digital media convergence, creating customized communications such as personalized URLs (PURLs) and individually targeted collateral materials. With both data and content moved into the digital world, the power of personalization can finally be realized. Your company will reap the benefits of integrated, enterprise-wide marketing, improving its lead management, acquisition and customer retention/loyalty programs.

3. **Create awareness and drive traffic.** Search and social media do not exist independently but coexist in a dependent fashion. As soon as conversations are generated, preference data is being created, helping you better discern likes and dislikes. Ford, for example, used a variety of social media tactics to solicit feedback on the design of its new Fiesta and Chrysler hired college students to blog and tweet during a cross-country Challenger journey. The results are unchallengeable. Ford started their digital awareness program earlier than most automotive companies and is reaping the benefits of top-line revenue at twice the rate of its competitors.

But above all, the key to awareness is authenticity. Consumers are far less trusting of marketers and far more willing to listen to their peers. The secret to selling? Minimize the sales pitch.

Positioning Your Business for the Next Digital Decade

It's critical for marketers to embrace the next digital decade and deeply understand its channels. Putting it simply, if you hope to hear the voice of your customer or speak to your target, it helps immeasurably to know where the conversation is most likely to happen.

To find out more about positioning your business for the next digital decade, contact your local Xerox Sales Rep or e-mail me directly via the [Ask a Thought Leader a Question](#) link.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Kelly', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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