



How to Increase Offline Advertising ROI With The “Online Marketing Force-Multiplier Effect”

Introduction

Many businesses underestimate the tremendous marketing advantage of synchronizing their offline advertising (print, broadcast, outdoor, and direct mail) with their website and other online marketing assets. The most common reason for this is that most businesses simply do not know how to do this effectively. Others have the idea that if they simply include their website address in offline advertising that this is all that is needed to generate more traffic to their website and calls to their stores or offices. While this strategy may have worked five or ten years ago, it is no longer an effective strategy today.

The Relationship Between Online and Offline Marketing

In order to leverage the benefits of online marketing while running offline marketing campaigns it is important to understand the potential relationship between these two forms of marketing. A well-planned online marketing strategy can be used very effectively to continue a marketing message that was initiated by the target audience's exposure to an offline advertisement. We refer to this as the “Online Marketing Force-Multiplier Effect” of retail online marketing.

The term “force-multiplier” is one that has its roots in military battlefield strategy. The term basically refers to the strategy of leveraging one element for the purpose of multiplying the overall effectiveness of another element. In modern retail marketing we leverage online marketing assets including websites, social networking, email marketing, etc. to enhance the overall effectiveness of offline retail marketing.

The 'Online Marketing Force Multiplier Effect' More Bandwidth for Communicating a Marketing Message

The “Online Marketing Force-Multiplier Effect” is a powerful influence on the effectiveness of offline advertising for several reasons. First, most offline advertising is limited by either time, space, the advertiser's budget, or a combination of all three. A radio or television ad, for example, is typically limited to 30 or 60 seconds of (expensive!) air time. A direct mail or outdoor ad is limited by both space and time. Finally, the effectiveness of traditional advertising is relatively difficult to track with any great precision.

Most forms of online advertising such as a business' website generally do not suffer from the

same constraints imposed on offline advertising strategies. Furthermore, online marketing media usually offers more ways to communicate the marketer's advertising message than could ever be possible with traditional offline advertising. Plus, the results of most forms of online marketing are highly trackable by the marketer.

Leading to a "Conversion"

The "Online Marketing Force-Multiplier Effect" is valuable to businesses in offline advertising because it offers a way to lead the advertising target audience closer to a sale, or "conversion". An effective call to action in the offline advertisement draws the target audience to the marketer's website by using a compelling incentive in the form of an offer. Once the target audience is at the website they are one step closer to a conversion – however that is defined by the marketer.

Capture Customer Information at the Website

The "Online Marketing Force-Multiplier Effect" is valuable because once the target audience is led to the marketer's website the an opportunity to capture valuable customer data becomes available. If a compelling offer has been made in the offline ad and the target audience arrives at the website, the marketer can then ask for some basic customer information before delivering on the offer. Basic information could include the online visitor's name, email address, and permission to add the customer's information to the marketer's email database. The online visitor will usually provide such basic information if the retailer is perceived as trustworthy and the offer is perceived as legitimate, valuable, and compelling.

Conclusion

By taking advantage of the "Online Marketing Force-Multiplier Effect" when integrating offline/online marketing campaigns it is possible for marketers to multiply the return on investment in their offline advertising. At the same time the marketer has an opportunity to build a profitable online customer database at the website for use in future email marketing and other online marketing campaigns.



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