

## Using Technology to Market Smarter

By Melissa Farmer

Firms should use technologies including customer relationship management (CRM), web presence and blogging to market smarter, according to two true authorities on technology and marketing, Joe Rotella, SPHR, CTO of Delphia Consulting, LLC, and Anne Stanton, MVP-CRM, MBA/ACC, President of The Norwich Group. The following summarizes each of those technologies:

### CRM

Customer relationship management or CRM “entails all aspects of interaction a company has with its customer, whether it be sales or service related,” as defined by Webopedia. On average, it takes six touches to develop a relationship, and CRM can be beneficial because it tracks those touches. CRM’s many other potential benefits include shortening the sales cycle, increasing key sales performance metrics, decreasing costs, increasing campaign rates, decreasing lead generation and acquisition costs, increasing customer retention and decreasing service costs, response times and resolution times.

We all have heard stories about firms implementing CRM software but not getting the results they wanted. Stanton summarizes some of the reasons for the failure (because it is **not** due to the actual software packages) as procedures and policies, management commitment, team commitment (as in the entire office), lack of clear vision and strategic focus, inadequate implementation plan and failure of end user adoption and training.

The key to success — crawl, walk, run — take it slow in small, digestible bites.

### Web Presence

The purpose of Web sites is to help bridge the gap between marketing and sales. Branding is secondary. Some tips for your Web site content include:

- Use lots of strong offers and easy-to-use response forms that will transfer data to your database.
- Have landing pages for specific campaigns (this will also provide you with ROI information).
- Optimize your site for search engines (check that you have titles embedded on all pages and that you are using metatags).
- Focus on the relief — not the pain.
- Customer testimonials.
- WIIFM (M is the reader)
- Be sure it’s easy to use and easy to print.

When looking at Web site stats, look at the pages no one is going to and think about why they are not finding those pages and how you can drive them there. Remember, sites are never “done.” They need to be continually updated. There are numerous choices for Web page design tools, and they range in feature set, complexity and end result quality control. Firms are encouraged to outsource the design of your Web site to a firm who has a strong reputation and a cutting edge eye toward the new technologies. The end result should be that you have the ability to update a news page regularly, but that the rest of the site is controlled for consistency of look and feel.

### Blogging

A blog is a Web page that serves as a publicly accessible [personal] journal for an individual. Typically updated daily, blogs often reflect the personality of the author. Blogs are updated using software that allows people with little or no technical background to update and maintain the page. A blog does not have to be a lengthy article every day. It can be just a small statement or

idea each day or week. It is a technique for Non-technical people and doesn't require quite the level of first impression that a web page demands.

You should note that if you want to develop a blog, then you need to develop a policy about who will be reviewing posts. You will then need to have your HR department or an attorney review the policy to be sure no freedom of speech laws are being violated.

To view great posts and review of a number of tools including a really nice list of all the associated blogging terms, such as comments, trackbacks, permalinks, etc. Stanton suggests you check out <http://www.ojr.org/ojr/stories/050714gardner/>.

According to Rotella and Stanton, "The jug fills drop by drop. Don't get overwhelmed trying to do everything; make small steps one at a time."

*This article is a summary of material presented by Joe Rotella, SPHR, CTO of Delphia Consulting, LLC, and Anne Stanton, MVP-CRM, MBA/ACC, President of The Norwich Group during their "Using Technology to Market Smarter" presentation at the 2006 AAM Summit: Mile High Marketing.*

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