

Vertical is celebrating its 25th anniversary!

We're delighted to be celebrating our 25th anniversary!

This past quarter of a century has been quite a journey. Thank you to all our staff, customers, partners & colleagues for helping us have such a successful history. With all the current exciting changes in the world of marketing, we're just as excited about the next 25 years too.

Anixter Component Solutions appoints Vertical for an integrated marketing approach

Anixter Component Solutions, specialists in the supply and distribution of industrial metal and plastic fasteners, plastic enclosures and components, has appointed Vertical Marketing to work with them to provide integrated marketing communications services.

As well as wanting to raise general awareness of the company with new customers, Anixter Components has a number of communications-related objectives that they want to achieve. These include co-ordinated campaigns to launch new products to existing, lapsed and new customers, to raise awareness of Anixter's custom design and manufacturing service, and to further enhance the quality of the design and copy of existing communications materials to reflect the quality of the brand.

Using our experience, and following consultation and analysis, Vertical will adopt an integrated approach to deliver targeted messages through all communications channels, including both traditional methods such as PR and email, combined with newer methods such as social media and other online/digital channels.

Andrew Fletcher, managing director of Anixter Components said, "We chose to work with Vertical due to their industry knowledge, media contacts, and their skills and experience, which I believe will help drive our business forward to meet our objectives over the coming months."

[A chance meeting on the golf course...](#)

At Vertical we are never off duty, and that includes the golf course. A chance meeting with the commercial director of LCL Electronics at another client's corporate golf day has led to this leading contract electronics manufacturer appointing Vertical for full marketing services to increase awareness within the industry of their manufacturing capabilities.

Over the past few months we have worked with LCL Electronics on a number of marketing deliverables, starting with a website re-launch. The new website is clean and clear, with detailed information and videos to demonstrate LCL's full capabilities. Website visitors are increasing steadily month by month and the feedback has been very positive.

To support the website and to drive traffic to it, Vertical has created regular PR, written articles for key industry magazines, and carried out a social media programme. This has

included full coverage from trade shows and exhibitions through Twitter and LinkedIn, with follow-up emails.

Trevor Pope, commercial director at LCL Electronics said, “We haven’t really used a professional marketing agency before, but by working with Vertical we have seen the impact that this has had. Our website looks fantastic and we have been impressed by the coverage we have received in industry press.”

[Marmon Group launches new European company](#)

When the Marmon Group decided to launch a new European division, Marmon High Performance Cable Group Europe (Marmon HPCG) , it turned to Vertical to deliver its launch deliverables.

Initial requirements for the launch including new branding which reflected the Marmon Group but that could work on its own, a new website, corporate literature and exhibition materials. The new company was officially launched at DSEi in September 2013, at which point the new website was put live.

It’s still early days with Marmon HPCG so check back soon for further updates on how we are working to make this new company a success.

Vertical Client Wins Award for Creativity

Creativity knows no bounds at Vertical Marketing, as demonstrated with a key client, Rebound Electronics, winning the accolade of 'Most Creative Marketing Campaign' at a recent industry dinner.

The award was presented as part of ES Live 2012, an exhibition specifically focused on the UK electronics component industry, held on 24 May this year. Readers of Electronics Sourcing (ES) magazine voted for the campaign as 'Most Creative Marketing Campaign'. The campaign aimed at driving visitors to Rebound's stand at the exhibition.

Campaign elements included competitions relating to the Olympics, email marketing, editorials, adverts, social media, design materials and giveaways, all combined into an integrated creative marketing strategy. It was extremely successful, with readers of ES rating Rebound's activities as more creative than any other exhibitor's pre-show publicity.

David Myers, Rebound Group Marketing Director said, "We've worked with Vertical on many marketing initiatives, and creativity is definitely one of their strong points. As business becomes more and more competitive, a company needs to stand out from its competitors for all the right reasons," said David. "Working with Vertical, we've been able to do this, achieving some remarkable growth over the past 5 years, and I'd like to thank their creative team plus Electronics Sourcing's readers' for recognising this and voting for us."

Paul Barlow, Vertical's managing director said, "It's fantastic that Rebound has been highlighted nationally through this award, and to be recognised by the readers of one of the UK's leading electronics trade magazines. We strive to help

all our clients develop their brands to stand out from the crowd and increase sales in their respective markets, not only through creative design, but also creative strategies, unique solutions and inspired marketing activities.”

Vertical is an integrated strategic and marketing communications agency, providing services to clients in B2B technology industries globally. With over 24 years' experience, Vertical works with clients to create intelligent, customised marketing strategies and solutions. For more information [click here](#) or call 01202 842250.

[Enter B2B blogging...](#)

Think of your blog as a better, more immediate, version of the monthly email newsletter. First of all there are no time constraints. If you have news, blog it now, not next month. And you don't have to wait until you have a pile of news to publish. Have one item? Post it.

From a marketing perspective, it makes little sense to wait a month to communicate with customers when you can do so now. Because blog posts are short, you can take one article, slice and dice it, and post bits of it every day.

Blogs boost your Google rankings. This is because each blog post is new content, so search engines rate the post higher than a static email newsletter page. Email newsletters sometimes have a difficult time getting through spam blockers and antivirus software but blog announcements don't.

Blogs can spread via syndication and social media. Your blog can provide an RSS feed that can be used by blog aggregators, news sites and other feed-reading mechanisms. They can also

leverage social networks such as Facebook and YouTube, to increase your footprint even further. On the other hand, email newsletters are limited in reach to the number of customers on your mailing list.

Blogs can strengthen your online presence within Vertical Markets.

[Read more on Pyramid websites Vertical Markets](#)

Finally, a blog can double as an email newsletter! You can bundle up your blog posts for the last week or month and send them out as an email newsletter.

B2B Marketing Efforts Must Work To Shorten Procurement Cycles

According to research (SiriusDecisions), B2B procurement cycles have lengthened 22% over the past five years: a significant increase that must be addressed by B2B agencies and their clients, this according to B2B specialists Vertical Marketing (Wimborne).

The reasons for longer cycle lengths are many and include the fact that the number of stakeholders has increased. Further, reduced budgets mean tighter purse strings and an increased reticence to spend without complete due diligence.

The trend is not likely to abate in the current economic climate; so the challenge for B2B agencies and their clients is to develop strategies that can help shorten the process and speed the final sale.

“Our technically-oriented clients, in particular, are finding the longer cycle to be a drag on profits and growth,” explains Paul Barlow, MD of Vertical Marketing. “As marketers we want to help speed the cycle by delivering the right information needed to the right person, in the right format at the right time at any point in the process. In the recent past, it wasn’t cost effective to personalise, if you will, the product offering and concomitant information: every primary stakeholder got the entire information package, usually at the beginning of the cycle. That was that. The information didn’t change to address particular questions or individual data needs. Today, with the advent of social networking platforms, it’s possible and necessary to identify each persona and his or her information requirements, and then deliver a customised package in the preferred format as soon as it’s needed. Not before, not after.”

B2B offerings tend to be complex and purchase decisions are rarely impulse driven; buyers usually spend a lot of time on upfront research. It’s important for companies to be a part of that information gathering process. Social networking tools offer exceptional avenues for knowledge sharing that can educate prospects and facilitate faster decisions. By providing this almost real-time, two-way communication, companies not only inform but also build trust and credibility that can work to complete sales in less time.

Achieving a shorter procurement cycle has a direct impact on the bottom line, of course; and there’s an additional advantage: a shorter cycle reduces the chances of things going awry during the process.

“Clients and marketing professionals have questioned the use of social platforms in B2B and rightly so,” notes Barlow. “With increasingly longer procurement cycles we are confronted with a substantial obstacle to profitability. It’s a challenge and one that social networking and integrated marketing can help resolve.

From the perspective of shortening the procurement cycle, social networking and marketing strategies can be used to:

- Enhance the prospect's confidence in the company, in part, by establishing thought leadership and positively affecting preconceived notions;
- Position the product for easier acceptance by 'preselling' advantages, features, costs and financing options and addressing concerns early in the cycle;
- Explain product benefits to each participant in terms they understand, citing only those benefits that are of interest to that stakeholder and made available on the platform each prefers;
- Standardise the sales force behind a consistent message.

Barlow continues: "In the current economic climate, there is nothing more critical to our clients' success than helping to make each step of the sales/procurement process as efficient, smooth and, in a sense, as enjoyable as possible to all stakeholders. The narrative we tell each persona and the clearly personalised information we deliver comprise the essence of what's been dubbed 'the new marketing.' Honestly, we believe it's either adapt and prosper or... well... there's really no other alternative, is there?"

Twitter Statistics... Believe at Your Own Risk

Like Internet stats in general, these numbers may not be true but there is some truth in them.

What they seem to say is that Twitter can be a good platform for reaching emerging countries; and since 2009, Twitter has become more of an international phenomenon and not just another USA fad.

The top country for Twitter use as a % of the Internet population isn't the US, or indeed the UK, it is the Netherlands where 22.3% use the micro-blogging service.

This is according to Comscore, which also shows significant Twitter penetration in emerging markets with around 1/5 Internet users in Indonesia (19%), Venezuela (21.1%) and Brazil (21.8%) accessing it.

Comscore says that in the UK, 1/8 (12.9%) of the Internet population uses Twitter, while a separate Pew study in the US at the end of last year put the figure at 8% – with non whites, women and urbanites most likely to use the service

All this makes Twitter much more of an international and multi-cultural service than what it once was. Consider that back in June 2009, Sysomos found that over six in ten (62%) of Twitter users were in the United States.

LinkedIn #2 Social Media Platform in US

This July, LinkedIn become the No. 2 social networking site in the United States.

LinkedIn had 33.9 million unique visitors in June in the U.S., compared to MySpace's 33.4 million; Facebook had 160.8 million. Short messaging blog Twitter is closing in on

MySpace, with 30.6 million, and Tumblr had 11.7 million.

“I think we’re seeing the U.S. social networking market come of age,” Andrew Lipsman, comScore’s vice president of industry analysis said in an email to msnbc.com. “While Facebook has clearly emerged as the dominant player in this market, several other social networks – LinkedIn, Twitter and Tumblr – are carving out strong niches.”

Also of interest was his comment that given Facebook’s size – it now has 750 million users worldwide – that its future growth in the U.S. is “likely to come more from increasing usage per visitor than its ability to attract new users in perpetuity. One impressive stat to note is that Facebook’s average U.S. visitor engagement has grown from 4.6 hours to 6.3 hours per month over the past year, so it appears to be succeeding in that regard.”

Whether the same will hold true for LinkedIn – where people tend to get in and out quickly to check or make connections – remains to be seen.

The rise of LinkedIn is good news for B2B marketers, particularly those in high-tech industries. In the UK, particularly, LinkedIn is the one platform that B2B companies understand... they know that their customers are driving LinkedIn. If the rise in the US LinkedIn usage reflects what’s happening in the UK and Europe, and it should, B2B companies now have a powerful marketing ally.

Bottom line: LinkedIn participation, joining groups, starting groups, responding to pertinent questions, etc., should be central part of your social media plans.

And notice the Facebook numbers: 3/4 of a billion users!!!! How can B2B marketers continue to ignore this audience? Sure, you may not like Facebook or understand its value, but you can’t argue with the numbers.

What's the #1 Skill You Need To Be an Effective CEO?

A recent IBM survey polled 1,541 CEOs, asking respondents to rank in order of importance a list of the most essential qualities needed by effective business leaders.

Surprising results, really.

One would think that things like 'fairness,' 'openness' and 'humility' might score very well – after all, no one likes to work with an arrogant, arbitrary dictator. Guess again. In fact, humility and fairness were last on the list.

What scored highest? Creativity... yes, creativity.

It seems that in the topsy-turvy, constantly changing world of international business, we're looking for a leader who offers out of the box solutions: new ways to work, new places to do business, clever ways to promote that business and more efficient ways to turn a profit.

To quote IBM:

"CEOs recognize that leading creatively will require them to shed some long-held beliefs. Their approaches need to be original, rather than traditional. They must be distinct and, at times, radical in their conception and execution, not just marginally better than existing models or methods."

The second most important trait was 'integrity.'
