

# The Hidden Rewards of Print Management

BY JONATHAN SHEAN



**A**s you consider implementing a print management program, cost savings are only one part of the picture. While saving money is a top priority for many direct

marketers, print management partnerships offer other equally valuable rewards. Instead of viewing a print management program solely as a cost-saving effort, try to see it as a method of increasing ROI by extending your marketing budget and re-investing into other marketing initiatives. Whether you are a business or a nonprofit, this type of program can significantly boost the efficiency of your direct marketing team.

## Focus Attention Where it Matters

A print management program allows employees to focus on their core competencies and strategic business initiatives. As organizations have been forced to become leaner, many marketing teams find themselves moonlighting as print buyers. This has a negative effect on cost and productivity and leaves less time to create effective campaigns. Your print management partner can help boost productivity by shifting print procurement responsibilities away from the marketing team so they can focus on marketing. By working with a partner whose core competency is solely print management, you will get more from your internal resources and gain access to objective ideation and innovation from high-caliber subject matter experts who can improve time-to-market for your critical print communications.

## Keep Up with Your Audience

Your business must evolve and adapt as

your needs—and those of your customers—change, and a print management program provider can help your program keep pace. A great partner will help your company adapt to changes in the marketplace, enabling you to focus on uncovering growth opportunities without distraction. An outside perspective can help generate positive change not only in your print-related processes, but also within the organization itself.

## Streamline Operations

Print management programs also enable your organization to streamline operations. The transition of this work to a partner who fully understands the nuances of your business (and can act as an extension of your team) allows you to revisit outdated processes and organizational structures. The transition gives you an opportunity to redefine job roles and responsibilities for your marketing team by shining a light on potential areas of improvement. This could lead to restructuring the way various groups work together, ultimately improving productivity.

## Find an Advocate for Change

An effective print management initiative is highly dependent on executive sponsorship. Your program won't get very far without it. Successful transitions are pioneered by higher-level marketing executives. An internal champion will increase support and sponsor change throughout the organization — from other members of the C-suite to those whose roles are directly affected by the transition. This "ownership" will help uncover the additional benefits of a print management partnership and drive results.

When considering a print management program, think big. Go beyond your immediate desire to save money and think about the long-term benefits this solution can offer.

Jonathan Shean is president of Continuum, a leading print management firm headquartered in Chicago. Locally, the Continuum team has delivery services to clients such as Healthy Directions and CustomInk, helping them realize measurable and sustainable value on their direct marketing spend. For more information, visit [www.continuum-mps.com](http://www.continuum-mps.com).

## Seen and Heard

### Show Me On That Page, Too!

"Video literacy is replacing text literacy. It's a culture change that is accelerating ... All websites have a homepage and several key category pages, typically four to six. The highest percentage of site visitors land on the homepage, but the same number again land on the keypages as part of their route to visit-fulfillment. A video on your homepage and on each of the keypages will substantially increase their engagement."

*Kevin Rossiter, managing director, Rossiter & Co Ltd.*

### Let Marketing, Sales, and PR Do Their Jobs: Separately

"The unfortunate reality is that most marketers can't effectively generate new audiences, and for good reason: generating new audiences is not a marketer's responsibility, nor is it their area of expertise. Marketing's responsibility is lead generation. The responsibility for generating new audiences comes from media: Let advertising and public relations handle the process of generating new audiences through media, and let the sales team do the job of closing the deals. When you let each specialty work to its potential, two results should drastically improve. This is why public relations still matters."

*Christopher Penn, Shift Communications*

### Pin It!

"Pinterest users share content via mobile at three times the rate as on desktop, and [Pinterest] was the most overall popular sharing channel for iPad users."

*ShareThis, "Mobile vs. Desktop: A Cross Device User Study," via Contently*

### Treatment of "Others"

A "lasting leader" expresses leadership five ways: is open to others; invests time in others; listens to others; offers encouragement to others; and, expresses appreciation for others' abilities.

*Barry Banther, founder and CEO of Banther Consulting and author of "A Leader's Gift: How to Earn the Right to be Followed"*