



DIRECT FORUM

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Direct Forum is a free e-mail newsletter containing useful direct marketing tips, news updates and how-to information. It's convenient, informative and I am not trying to sell you anything!

This month's topics include:

- 1. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS CONSUMER FATIGUE, ONLY MARKETING FATIGUE. (Continued from last month)**
- 2. NOW IT SEEMS THERE IS EVEN CREATIVE FATIGUE IN THE NON-PROFIT SEGMENT**
- 3. MY LATEST ENDEAVORS**

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS CONSUMER FATIGUE, ONLY MARKETING FATIGUE.

Last month I mentioned that there are four important new trends that are impacting practically every industry. They are:

- Trend 1: The population is aging.**
- Trend 2: Today society is getting more culturally diverse.**
- Trend 3: Family structure is shifting.**
- Trend 4: New technology is changing the way we do things.**



More single children

I covered the first two trends in my newsletter last month. Here are the others.

Trend 3: Family structure is shifting.

Half a century ago a child was part of a family unit made up of parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and siblings. There was 'horizontal growth'.

Now as people live longer, move more often, divorce and remarry and have fewer children, the family has changed to 'vertical growth'.

Children may know their grandparents but fewer know their uncles, aunts, etc.

- Married couple households are decreasing in number;
- Single-parent households are increasing and many are mothers or older women.

What does this mean? It means that the family dynamics is shifting from the old days of “Leaver it to Beaver.’

These, children have more privileges, more buying power and are more assertive but don’t be fooled they are not going to be taken in by advertising hype.

What they will lack is the comfort; love and bonding that came with larger families when they grow up. Now, if you can market that, you’ve got it made in the coming years.

Trend 4: New technology is changing the way we do things.

Choice is growing in every area of people’s lives. This growth in choice is a result of market driven competition, but is also due to deregulation of many services:

- More TV channels are available;
- Landlines have been deregulated;
- Number of mobile phones has grown astronomically;
- Number of Internet provider has skyrocketed.
- Internet options have steadily climbed;
- The majority of people, of all ages, now own a mobile phone.

These developments are changing the way we do things, the way we work and the way we conduct our personal lives.

Today millions engage in social interaction via Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, etc. This has played a huge role in Trend 3, the shifting of family structure.

So pay special attention to it.

NOW, IT SEEMS THAT THERE IS EVEN CREATIVE FATIGUE IN THE NON-PROFIT SEGMENT



On August 28, I received an email from a friend, which said:

*Hi Billy,
...I thought you'd find this funny.*

Someone circulated this picture yesterday online and it's become a popular "buzz" thing for the day (I was looking at a tracking tool of what are the 10-20 things popular for yesterday).

His headline was, "So why the hell are you giving it to me?"

And then he included the picture alongside.

Pretty funny. A lesson for your DM class in how a headline might be counter-productive to what you are trying to communicate.

*Cheers,
Mike.*

The sad thing is that unfortunately UNICEF isn't the only one using this hackneyed old creative.

What's wrong with us? Are we lacking in new ideas?

This creative piece giving away money was first created by Reader's Digest way back in the '70s. It made sense coming from an organization that wasn't a charity.

MY LATEST ENDEAVORS

Last month I agreed to be a guest speaker for Canada Post's **Think Inside the Box. Direct Marketing Webinar Series 2009**



Having never spoken at a webinar before I thought it's time to give it a try.

To my surprise over 185 people registered.

The sponsor happily informed me: *"This is probably one of our biggest webinars so far."*

What did it feel like to me, a teacher used to viewing the



faces of the people I was talking to?

Well, it was a bit eerie but I was comforted when there was a huge barrage of excellent questions at the end. Obviously they were paying attention and I had made them think.

On another front, many non-profits have been daunted by recent economic upheavals and have gone into a kind of hibernation mode. However, every smart marketer will tell you that this just the time to act.

One brave charity, Special Olympics Ontario, decided to carry on as before and reaped handsome rewards. In a recent DM piece, it told the story of a Special Olympics Athlete whose team, the '**North York Grandravine Wolves**', was in jeopardy due to current cutbacks and was in danger of folding after six years.



The story of Jay Adams and his North York Grandravines Wolves team.

Well, 67% of faithful donors responded.

Finally, a publisher asked me to write a book on direct marketing for the non-profit community. I recently sent them my final draft and am told it will be out before the end of the year. And though I always say, "*I am not trying to sell you anything*", I will let you know when it's available and let you decide.

I hope you enjoyed the 'summer that never was' and managed to be outside for the few minutes of sunlight we did have. I just renewed my Canadian passport and will testify that our recent weather trumps the monsoons of my childhood any day!

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