



## Make e-Mail Marketing & Blog Software Work for You, Not Against You

By [Amy Zucker](#), president of [Synergy Marketing Group, Inc.](#)

There are a lot of great interactive marketing tools available today — like blog and e-mail marketing software — that can help you quickly build market awareness, establish wide-spread credibility in your industry and solidify long-term customer loyalty. But it's important to remember they are just tools. While these are fantastic products, make sure you have the strategic plan AND the means to utilize them properly before you buy a subscription or license. Otherwise, they actually could do you more harm than good.

When used in the workplace, e-mail and blogs should be considered BUSINESS communications vehicles, not personal soap boxes. So the messaging, timing and tone should all be developed strategically to align with your company philosophies and reflect your corporate culture – not your individual mood or rant-of-the-day. These communications also should be used to stay in touch and share relevant and timely information with your target audience groups. If your marketing efforts to use these tools are not planned, managed and executed well, they could result in long-term damage to your company's reputation and market share.

Here are some tips to make the most of your blog and e-mail marketing communications:

1. **Know your target audience.** Whether you are using these online tools to reach employees, clients, peers, prospects, investors or vendors, make sure your tone, topics and messages resonate with your specific target audience groups. For instance, if you are a software company maintaining communications with current customers, e-mailing and blogging about user tips and technology shortcuts makes sense. Conversely, if you are reaching out to prospects, you'd want to develop an entirely different type of message. If you have the resources, your best strategy is to develop a blog and/or e-mail marketing campaign for each separate target audience segment. In fact, according to Jupiter Research, targeted e-mail campaigns produce nine times the revenue and 18 times the profit of a mass e-mail campaign.
2. **Carefully select authorized spokespeople for your company.** Typically, the most senior, credible and knowledgeable people in your organization are the best choices as authors of your company's blog or e-newsletter. These electronic vehicles are ideal platforms for helping your executives broaden and strengthen their reputations in the marketplace. Assign your authors based on their level of expertise in specific functional areas that they would be writing about.
3. **Decide if you need a ghost-writer.** Not everyone is comfortable writing their own blog entries or e-newsletter articles – and, a lot of executives just don't have the time. This doesn't mean you should leave your most impressive executives off the author list. You may need to hire or assign a scribe to help these executives effectively express themselves. An experienced ghost-writer should be able to understand quickly and easily your spokespeople's ideas and fluently communicate them.
4. **Keep your communications professional and strategic.** Even though only a handful of people may be assigned as the official spokespeople of your organization's blog or e-newsletter, make sure their comments and opinions reflect those shared by the company. Remember, these are BUSINESS communications vehicles, not personal platforms. While it is completely appropriate to reflect individual personality, passion and vision, just make sure these marketing tools are being used to further the business, rather than personal agendas. If your goal is to up-sell or cross sell services, keep these objectives in mind when you are developing messaging, and give your readers a way to engage in your sales process (e.g., schedule a meeting, buy now, download a white paper, etc.).

5. **Develop an appropriate tone that accurately reflects your corporate culture.** Whether your company is laid back or formal, make sure your blog and e-mail messages mirror your company's persona. While these types of online communications vehicles are meant to be conversational and approachable, keep them congruent with your business' environment and personality.
6. **Form an editorial board.** In addition to assigning company spokespeople, create an editorial board to help them develop a list of relevant industry topics and a timeline for broadcasting messages. Additionally, task this internal group of peers with reviewing all communications before they are sent to your target audiences. This system of checks and balance will ensure the consistency and appropriateness of your online messaging, tone and timing.
7. **Solicit, track and incorporate feedback.** Blogs and e-Mail marketing offer an unmatched way to facilitate instant communication with your customers and prospects. Use these tools to deliver customer satisfaction surveys, seek feedback on your services and products, and encourage dialogue about new industry trends. If you truly are a customer-centric organization, make sure your Web site also includes an interactive form for feedback and questions. Most importantly, use your readers' feedback to continually revise your editorial calendar, modify your messaging and ultimately provide constituents with the type of information they find most valuable.

e-Mail marketing and blog software are powerful online tools, but you have to use them wisely. If not carefully managed, these assets can quickly become liabilities because of their ability to reach instantly a large base of readers. Once you post or send your messages, you can't recall them. Remember, the Internet has a far reach and long memory.

However, if used properly, these online tools can help your company exponentially expand awareness, create demand, position your executives as industry experts and increase sales. Treat your e-mail marketing and blog initiatives with the same level of seriousness as you would a national advertising campaign. Despite the fact that these electronic marketing vehicles are a fraction of the cost of print ads, don't underestimate their potential. Because e-mails and blogs can produce higher returns if executed well or result in more damaging (and longer lasting) backlash than print ads if implemented poorly, they warrant a heavy investment of your executive team's time, consideration and strategy.

**About the Author:**

[Amy Zucker](#) is president and founder of Synergy Marketing Group. A marketing, branding and public relations veteran with 15 years of industry expertise, she started the company in 2002 to exclusively serve the business-to-business community. Today Synergy is one of the top 20 [Indianapolis marketing agencies](#) with an impressive roster of both B2B and B2C clients. The firm offers its clients expertise in building memorable brands, generating awareness in the global marketplace, establishing credibility, creating demand and quantifying marketing investments. In 2007 Synergy became a certified Woman-owned Business Enterprise (WBE) to bring added value to clients and vendor partners who want to meet corporate supplier diversity program goals and qualify for new business opportunities in government and regulated industries. Amy can be reached at 317.205.9690 ext. 223 or at [amy@synergy-mg.com](mailto:amy@synergy-mg.com). To learn more about Synergy Marketing Group, please visit [www.synergy-mg.com](http://www.synergy-mg.com).