

Marketing Matters®

BUSINESS INFORMATION FOR MORE EFFECTIVE MARKETING AND PRINT COMMUNICATION |

SPRING/SUMMER 2006

PRINT Marketing IS STILL THE WAY TO GO!

Sure, the Internet, Web casts, videoconferencing and the corporate Intranet are touted as being the best for getting your marketing and advertising messages out to the masses. But are they really effective for your specific needs?

Even though we live in this age of advanced technology, not everyone has Internet access. Some companies only allow it for certain departments and employees who use it as a daily part of their job function. And with the rise in the rate of corporate Internet abuse,

many companies are implementing strict guidelines for Internet use. So in truth, your Internet message may not be reaching your intended audience.

This is why print marketing is still the way to go when it comes to promoting your company and its services to customers and potential customers. Many people may not have computer and Internet access, but everyone has a mailing address!

continued on page 5

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NEWS YOU CAN USE

DIRECT MARKETING

professionals can use a free online service that increases marketing campaign success by providing accurate direct mail and e-mail lists of buyers in specific industries. Developed by Marigold Technologies, www.marigoldtech.com, the new service allows visitors to reference Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes for precise business-to-business marketing mailing lists.

Source – March 7, 2006 - PR Newswire – MarketingPower.com News

2006 HOW DESIGN

Conference, June 12-15, 2006, Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas. Join *HOW Magazine* for the creativity, business and technology conference for graphic designers. For more information visit www.howconference.com.

Source – www.howconference.com

FEATURED BOOK

Branding for Nonprofits
by DK Holland

Targeted at nonprofits, this book delivers the message that a clear and consistent brand identity can aid an organization in growing brand awareness; the question is how to arrive at that clear identity. Holland offers practical process-oriented assistance, walking through the design brief, tailored to nonprofit concerns, exploring design options, launch and implementation. Visit www.brandchannel.com or www.amazon.com to purchase.

Source – www.brandchannel.com/books

Creative Capabilities

SATISFY CLIENT NEEDS

BY CAROL KULLINS

Academy Graphic Communication (AGC), *The Creative Advantage* is one of Northeast Ohio's premier communication companies. Over the past 40 years, AGC has evolved from a full-service printing facility to a full-service marketing communications firm. To learn more about how AGC is growing to better serve its customers, Candice Champion, Vice President of Creative Sales, provided an overview of AGC's capabilities and services.



How has AGC been able to keep pace with your clients' changing needs? I've noticed many businesses are beginning to decrease their print volume while increasing their Web presence.

We're continually evolving with our clients, constantly modifying and re-evaluating our services so we can supply our clients with everything they need to properly communicate their business goals, which ultimately helps their businesses grow.



Since we have aligned ourselves as a full-service communications provider, we frequently work with the client from the initial design of a project through the digital, print and distribution phases as well. During the initial design stage, we consider how the Web can complement their campaigns. Is uploading a PDF enough or should we include e-mail blasts also? The beginning stages of a project include in-depth discussions and research as to how AGC can best meet the client's objectives.

As for shorter print runs (i.e., decreased print volume) – we operate a high-end print facility – AGC's *Print Technology Solutions*. Shorter runs allow us to expand the design possibilities we can offer. Perhaps we'll utilize specialized stocks, die cutting, embossing, varnishing or foil stamping techniques to give their project a unique, one-of-a-kind look. Or maybe we'll elaborate on the physical size of the piece but utilize folding techniques so the final size is a standard size and the client won't incur any additional surcharges when the project goes to our mailing facility.

Is it wise to eliminate print materials and use Web sites only?

Today, we're seeing a lot of clients consider eliminating their printed newsletters in favor of e-mail newsletters or PDFs of the newsletter posted to their Web sites – and I have to say, they're struggling to maintain their audience. In combination with a printed piece I think the Web is great, in fact, it's proven that a multichannel strategy, utilizing the Web, e-mail and print is the most effective – but the Web alone? I think you're losing out on a certain percentage of your market.

“ IN TODAY'S BUSINESS CLIMATE, EVERYTHING IS ABOUT THE CUSTOMER... ”

In today's business climate, everything is about the customer: how can you best serve your customer in an efficient and effective manner? If you really want to serve all customers you have to consider those who don't want to – or are unwilling to – read your literature online. Complementing Web marketing with print marketing is the only way you're going to reach everyone. And we all know if you're not satisfying your customer's needs, they're going to find another business that will.

Why do you think a company's Web presence needs to be complemented by traditional print marketing?

The Web is truly a magnificent tool – its only drawback is that the customers have to visit your Web site! With traditional print marketing your client is greeted by your company every day when they get their mail. How do you get your clients to remember who you are and keep your business in their mind if all your marketing dollars are tied up in your Web site or your Web activity? With print advertising and communication materials there's something tangible, something your customers can hold on to, take with them, read at their leisure, circulate to others.



How can AGC help customers who feel they can't afford printed pieces anymore because of shrinking marketing dollars?

Well, there are several ways we can help. When budgets shrink, put on your creative caps or call us to figure out what you can do within your budget constraints. There is always a solution; you probably just haven't thought of it yet, but I guarantee AGC has been there and done that before!

To carry on with what I was saying with regard to company newsletters – if you've recently had to eliminate or decrease your printed marketing, consider selling advertising to offset the costs, update your mailing list, and work with an agency like AGC that offers you creative, print and mailing/distribution services under one roof – that will streamline your costs. We're more than willing to help a client budget their marketing dollars effectively. At AGC creative also means innovative new solutions.

Take me through the steps of a typical design project, how does it all begin?

It all begins with our clients – the driving force behind our business. The stages of the design process is custom-tailored to meet the needs and budget of our client. We usually start by scheduling a meeting with the client, either here at the AGC *Creative Advantage Design Studio* or at the client's facility, to discuss the project at hand. We review the objectives of the campaign, the budget, the client's needs, intention, desired outcome, target audience, etc.

A creative team is then established internally and we begin brainstorming, researching the market, reviewing the client's objectives, developing thumbnail sketches, formatting initial copy, establishing a color palette, gathering paper samples, etc. This information ultimately becomes the speculative designs we present to the client – usually 2-3 different solutions that acknowledge and defend the client's requirements. These speculative designs seek to answer who, what, why, when, and how creatively. During the presentation, we'll also present ideas on how the project at hand can relate to Web campaigns, e-mail blasts or additional collateral materials; we'll discuss the evolution of their brand, etc.

What's next?

Once a design is finalized, our Prepress Technicians take over. The AGC printing facility, *Print Technology Solutions*, is entirely digital and automated, offering digital RIPPING for final proofs, remote and soft proofing, computer-to-plate technology and computer-integrated press networks. Once the project enters this department it's only a few short days before the client will have a physical piece to page through.

Then what?

Finally, the project will move on to AGC's mailing facility, *Fulfillment Yields Interest*, for mailing, storage or distribution. This department can handle everything from database creation and/or management, to CASS certification and mailing preparation, to national or international packaging and distribution.



Wow, I guess AGC really is a full-service marketing communications firm!

We sure are! As I mentioned earlier, we've evolved with our client's needs – our goals are to help you communicate with your customers more easily and to help you grow your business! From advertising, direct marketing, marketing, new media, graphic design, brand management, printing, mailing and fulfillment – we're equipped to handle everything your project might need. And more importantly we're here to help you, to make your job easier. Our team is always available to answer any questions you might have and we pride ourselves on that. We stay in contact with our customers and listen to their needs.

Is there one question that comes up frequently?

Since everything we do is customized to the client's needs, the subject matter in question may be the same, but the question is always different. One thing I can mention is that we do work with our client's in-house design departments or third-party designers often. Designers can consider AGC a partner in the communication process. We're fully equipped with virtually every software program imaginable. Design files can be uploaded to AGC's FTP site; we'll review the files, send a proof for approval, print the project onsite and distribute the project according to the client's instructions.

What's on the horizon for AGC?

We welcome change at AGC, our services are always evolving, and we're always improving production efficiency and keeping up to speed with technological advancements. You'll likely see a few new offerings popping up over the next several months. We're also reworking our Web site right now. The new site will include a lot more information that will change daily. I'll keep you posted on its progress.

Any last thoughts?

I invite everyone who may be reading this thinking, "that sounds a lot like the services we use or need," or "we've worked with AGC in the past..." to call us. A lot has changed around here. All of our technological investments have resulted in tremendous cost-savings for our clients, our design teams are some of the most creative you'll find, and our services are continually evolving to meet your needs.

I think you'd be pleasantly surprised at the number of valuable services we can offer you and your business at a very affordable cost.

Give us a call and see for yourself! ■

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Carol Kullins is a freelance writer and copyeditor living and working in Cleveland.

For more information, please contact AGC at agc@agcinc.org or 216-661-2550.

FUN Folds

Not All Designs Have to be Folded Exactly in Half

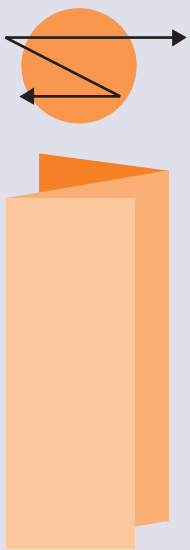


Fig. 1
Accordion Fold

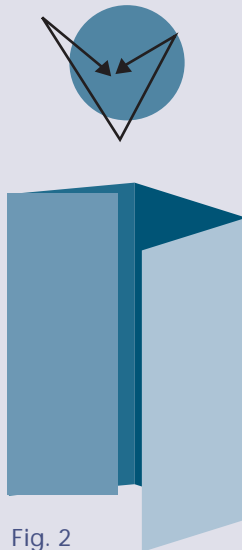


Fig. 2
Gatefold

While they are called finishing options, folds should be among the first things discussed when planning a print job.

There are a number of bindery options available and one can make your next project special. But be sure to take into consideration how the design will be used. Will it be stuffed in an envelope, available as a handout or used as a self-mailer?

When initially designing a piece, provide a comprehensive dummy or mockup of your project. This will help properly estimate and schedule the print job.

There is a wide array of folding configurations including:

- **Accordion fold** that looks like the bellows of an accordion (also called fanfold, concertina fold and over-and-back fold). Figure 1.
- **Gatefold** is one page with two parallel folds that come together in the center. Figure 2.
- **French fold** where a sheet is folded first vertically, then horizontally.
- **Letter fold** has two or more parallel folds in the same direction. The creases then wrap around an inner leaf. ■

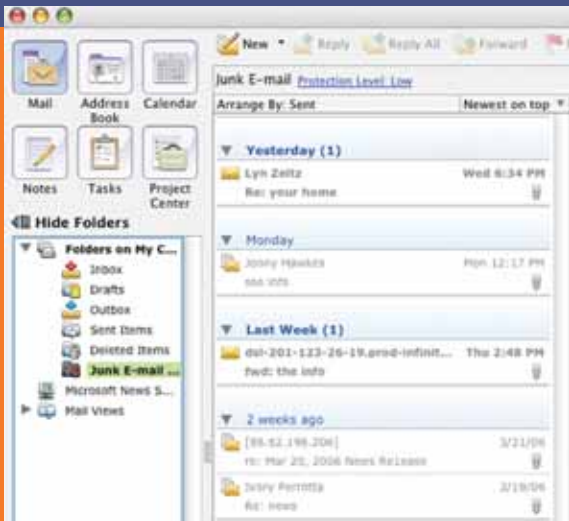
PRINT

Marketing

IS STILL THE WAY TO GO!

continued...

“Many people may not have computer and Internet access, but everyone has a mailing address!”



For example, a direct mailer is a sure way of getting your information out to your audience. A direct mail piece can be as simple as a card with your company's standard information such as product and service listings, address, phone and fax numbers, and Web site and e-mail addresses or it can be an elaborate, full-color, multifold piece. Whatever

type of direct mailer you choose, it's sure to be received – and seen by your customers.

Another asset of print marketing is that it allows you freedom of design. You can send out a bolder, bigger message based on your design element. Brilliant graphics, lively photos, dynamic graphs and charts, and bold illustrations add presence and depth to your pieces – so they're sure to stand out and grab attention. Print marketing allows you to take the “wow” factor to a higher level. Marketers are finding that visually appealing print pieces will generate much more attention and encourage readership.

Print marketing also allows for a wide variety of formats. In addition to the direct mailer, you can produce capabilities brochures, sales sheets, posters, flyers, press releases – the list goes on and on. And as an added bonus, you can print exciting novelty items such as notepads, calendars, sticky notes, etc.

Probably the most important aspect of print collateral is its shelf life. Unlike Internet marketing, print marketing doesn't have to be archived to make room for a new campaign. Your customers can take your newsletters, sales sheets or brochures with them to read at their leisure. This is especially great for people who take a bus, train or carpool to work. It's the perfect time for them to read all about your company and how you can better their world. Let's face it, people feel much more relaxed reading printed pieces than reading a computer screen. Wouldn't you rather read the Sunday paper relaxing on a sofa, instead of sitting in front of your computer?

Print marketing will never grow old or outdated. It will remain a sure-fire way to deliver your message right into the hands of the people who need it and who will respond to it. It's the “handy” way to promote your company and its products and services. ■



More Accurate & Efficient!

PDF-BASED WORKFLOW

To make transmission of your files designed in-house simpler, more accurate and more efficient, AGC has implemented an advanced PDF-based workflow allowing you to create and provide PDF files that instantly meet our computer-to-plate specifications. Contact your Account Executive for more information.

CREDIT CARD ACCEPTANCE

In order to better serve your needs, AGC now accepts most major credit cards. Credit cards can be used for everything – postage, image purchases, print projects, etc. For more information, contact your Account Executive.



EPRINT TIPS

ePrint Tips is our online monthly newsletter featuring articles about design, typography, color, paper, printing, etc. Log on to www.visitagc.com and click on eprint tips to read more.



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