

New Chair ... continued from cover
direct response advertising agency.

A frequent speaker and writer on direct marketing, Rappaport is the author of the DMA's List Leaders' Basic Training Program, a one-day workshop for people new to the data marketing business. He is a past chairman of both List Day and Direct Marketing Days New York. He serves on the DMA Environmental Task Force and was a contributor to the DMA's "Environmental Resource for Direct Marketing."

DMA07 *Show Daily* touched base with the newly elected chairman in the early hours of his 12-month term to solicit his views on the state of direct marketing, as well as garner a little advice for becoming a world-class direct marketer.

Q: What are your goals as the DMA Board of Directors' new chairman?

A: DMA's membership is large and incredibly diverse—after all, direct marketing techniques are today employed by virtually every type of business and organization. This diver-

sity is, in my opinion, our greatest asset, but it also poses a major challenge.

My primary goal is to do what I can to make sure that DMA is fulfilling the distinct needs of every industry segment it serves, while still carrying on the big work that only a large, international organization can perform.

I believe we can accomplish that goal by improving the make-up of the various DMA councils, fostering stronger, more open and more productive two-way communications with them. Also, we can accomplish this by forging healthy, cooperative alliances with any number of segment-specific trade groups with whom we share common ground and objectives, and can find a common voice.

Q: What are the most important issues facing the direct marketing community, and how can marketers address them?

A: Do-not-mail (DNM) is probably the most critical issue we face today. As you know, the DNM movement is gaining traction at an unsettling

pace. A year ago, there were DNM bills proposed in just four states. This year, that number jumped to 15 states.

And the various factions that seek to regulate the use of direct mail marketing—environmentalists, privacy advocates, data-security fear-mongers—are finding strength by banding together, and we are in their cross-hairs. And it's a shame because they are, in my opinion, misinformed for the most part, and their energy is fueled more by confusion than anything else.

When asked, many Americans understandably say they would choose not to receive unsolicited direct mail. That's because when they think of unsolicited direct mail, they think of the stuff they don't like. The irrelevant, the insulting or the just plain misdirected mail, they receive and ditch. They don't equate the catalogs they buy from, the newsletters from the nonprofit organizations that they support and other offers relevant to their lifestyle as unsolicited direct mail.

Of course, privacy and data security
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Beyond Integration

John Adams portends a new world order for marketers

John Adams, The Martin Agency's chief executive officer, sees a whole new world order ahead for the marketing arena, one that moves beyond integration into unification. Adams expounded on this theme in his keynote address yesterday afternoon at DMA07.

"Story-tellers," began Adams, "fasten your seatbelts and hold onto your hats!" The first sweeping wave of change, he explained, is in the tools we use to tell stories. And today's marketplace is experiencing a "creative destruction—the beginning of the end of integrated marketing."

Once upon a time, marketing was about one product, one promise; one brand, one story. And any departure from that discipline would cause a brand to become diffuse. "But today," said Adams, "that may not be the case any more." In fact, the entire nature of story-telling is changing.

Today, boundaries are being destroyed, not just in marketing, but in other aspects

of our culture as well, as evidenced in mashups, which occur when different forms of an experience are pushed together. Marketing mashups, explained Adams, include the blending of marketing with sports and entertainment, as well as the merging of Internet and TV.

Clues are coming not from the market, but from entertainment, Adams said, pointing to the evolution of TV storylines from one-track plots, such as '70s sitcom "Starsky & Hutch," to multilayered narratives, such as those in "The Sopranos" and "Lost."

In creating a campaign that would fully express the benefits offered by Geico, Adams highlighted the company from four distinct angles. This effort included the familiar Geico Gecko and the disgruntled Cavemen. "Based on the campaign's breathtaking success," he said, "you have to believe that most people aren't confused by this."

Today we demand behavior change soon—preferably now—in a very natural and frequently digital process. "It's all direct response now," Adams said. Further, data analytics have evolved to a new level of precision, allowing the right person to speak to the right person at the right time to create behavior change.

According to Adams, there has never been a more golden time for direct marketers. "Integration is no longer a game. The boundaries between our disciplines are crumbling away. It's not about integration—it's about unification."

It's not every day that marketers get treated to the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, but Adams wasn't afraid to take the poet's help in summing up his message: "This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it."

—Susan Taplinger



John Adams

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are equally critical issues facing direct marketers. Marketing data is direct marketing's lifeblood. And once again, the problem, in my opinion, is misperception and confusion. Consumers have been led to believe that their identity and personal information are in dire jeopardy. And that direct marketers, who capture and utilize data about their purchases, are to blame.

It's just not true. In fact, there are issues surrounding the security of personal information. And the direct marketing community must be absolutely rigorous in respecting and protecting the rights of consumers. But the idea that the free-flow of marketing information is to blame just doesn't hold up to scrutiny.

Q: *What are some of the top opportunities direct marketers should prepare to leverage in the coming years?*

A: I think customized multichannel marketing—and by that I mean the ability for a marketer to communicate with customers and prospects about the things they specifically care

about, in the “language” that they understand, through the media they are most responsive to—is a huge opportunity. More than anything else, it is what allows a marketer to burst through the clutter and noise, and establish meaningful, productive, high-value customer relationships.

Another big opportunity I see is in the area of partnership marketing. Here, you have all these great world-class brands that have done exemplary jobs of creating high-value relationships with their customers. But for a variety of reasons—increased competition, price sensitivity and any number of economic factors—the numbers just don't add up any more. Then, you have all these new players who have developed intriguing new products and services, but are struggling with the high cost of new customer acquisition. Bringing them together, and allowing the organization with a strong brand to promote the other organization's new products to its customers on some form of revenue-sharing basis might make a lot of sense to both.

Q: *As a seasoned direct marketer, what advice do you have for those seeking success in this business?*

A: During his presidential run in 1968, Bobby Kennedy said: “Some people see things as they are, and ask, ‘Why?’ I see things as they might be, and ask ‘Why not?’” I was still in high school when I first heard that, but I took it to heart and have pretty much lived my life by it.

My advice to anyone who wants to be successful—in this business or in any other—is this: Don't be afraid to challenge the status quo. That is as valid now as ever.

You'll encounter no shortage of people in your career who will tell you all the reasons why you should do this or that. Why you must play by the rules, accept the prevailing wisdom. But it's the ones who are continually seeking a new way, who recognize that the times are always changing, who come up with fresh ideas and ask, “Why the hell not?”—they are the ones who produce the real breakthroughs.

—Hallie Mummert

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return on the marketing investment.

The program utilizes the data from Experian's business and consumer databases, identifying small and micro-business professionals who own multiple unrelated businesses in different locations or conduct multiple businesses out of a single location. “When a marketer looks at a small business, they may not know that the same individual owns three or four other small businesses,” says Rick Erwin, senior vice president and general manager of marketing information services for Experian. “Having the complete picture about a potential customer can help a marketer target their communications to better serve the customer.”

Visit Experian at Booth #411

Message Systems Teams Up with Return Path

Columbia, Md.-based e-mail software solutions provider Message Systems recently announced that it has partnered with Return Path to provide users of its

Message Systems Delivery Manager with expanded opportunities to increase e-mail deliverability through advanced reputation management best practices and technology. Message Systems is now offering the Return Path Sender Score platform as an add-on option to its Message Systems Message Transfer Agent (MTA).

According to the company, more than 20 percent of e-mail gets blocked or filtered because it looks like spam to e-mail receivers. This filtering hinders overall response rates and subsequent revenue opportunities. Knowing what reputation standards ISPs are using to evaluate incoming mail messages—from content and complaint rates to e-mail volume and corporate unsubscribe functionality—can help corporate marketers solve problems in their e-mail program that may hinder delivery and response rates.

“We built our business on the premise that deliverability is the overriding factor in the success of any e-mail marketing campaign,” says Barry Abel, Message Systems' vice president of field operations.

“For legitimate senders, achieving deliverability in an environment that's fraught with spam, viruses and phishing attacks is decidedly more complex than ever before and requires, among other things, a good corporate reputation—that's where Return Path can help.”

The Return Path Sender Score platform provides the tools corporate marketers need to test their e-mail messages prior to sending to better ensure the campaign will make it to the intended recipients' inboxes. The platform consists of four reputation management deliverability programs.

The platform also is natively integrated into the Message Systems Delivery Manager, to work in unison. Data generated by the platform is merged with Delivery Manager data and displayed on the Delivery Manager Web Console for a comprehensive, in-depth view of each campaign's delivery problems or successes.

Visit Message Systems at Booth #2147