



# Increasing Online Sales Through Integrated Marketing

Improving all round e-commerce performance through better integration

## Table of Contents

Why Integrated Marketing & E-Commerce Matter.....	2
Work Out What it is You Actually Sell.....	2
Offline – Branding, Design and Direct Marketing .....	3
On & Offline – PR & Advertising.....	3
Online – Web Sites, Email Marketing, Search Marketing ...	4
Analysis & Improvement.....	4
How Do You Implement and Maintain the Process? .....	5
E-Commerce Sites For Surviving Uncertain Times .....	5



## Why Integrated Marketing & E-Commerce Matter

What does **marketing** mean to your web site?  
More importantly, what does marketing mean to you?

To many it is a strange animal made up of advertising, branding, direct mail, email marketing, and so on. It's always hungry and costs a lot of money to keep fed; it's also not very well disciplined and pulls in many different directions. When you look at it, it's often hard to see how it's generating sales for your web site...

As we find ourselves in a time of increased economic uncertainty, the vision of marketing pictured above, which may well have got your web site by in more bountiful times, will no longer cut the mustard.

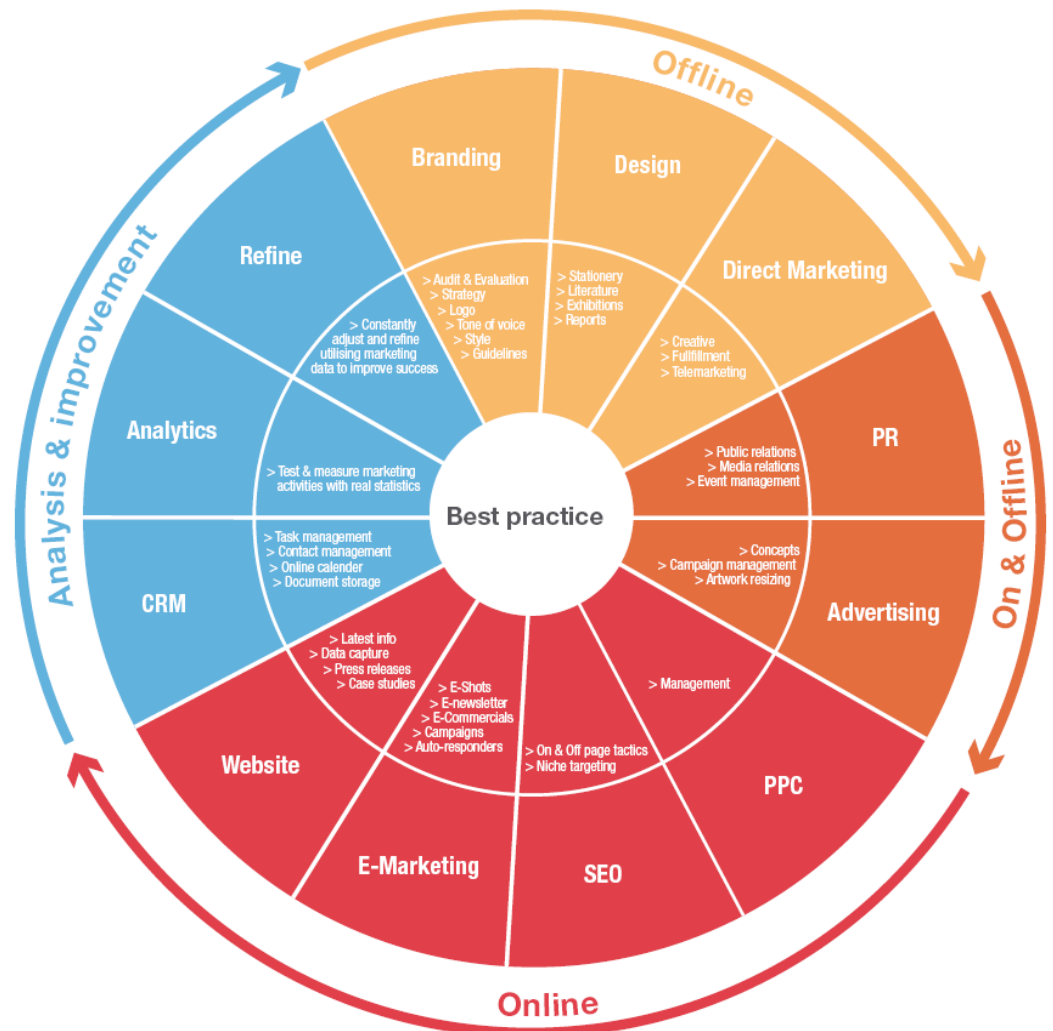
What is required now is a more integrated approach to online selling: one designed to support your e-commerce site by bringing the myriad of marketing channels available together with a co-ordinated voice, delivering the right message to the right customer at the right time; a cycle that continually improves itself through appropriate analytics and reviews. This includes looking at your e-commerce site itself.

We have built you a step by step guide on how to generate visitors across multiple channels, driving traffic to your web site and ensuring that traffic turns into sales when it arrives at your site.

## Work Out What it is You Actually Sell

Before you plan an integrated marketing strategy in support of your e-commerce site, it's imperative that you *really* understand what it is you're selling. It may sound odd that we're suggesting you don't know what you sell, but bear with us for a second and all will become clear.

Many businesses spend so much time talking about themselves that there is little time left to communicate what they actually do for their customers, or what problems they solve.



Well here's the trouble: your prospects couldn't care less about who you are! They want to know what you can do for them and what problems you solve. If you don't communicate this on your web



site and everywhere else online, they will just ignore you and move on.

Working out what you actually sell is possibly the most important thing you'll ever do in business. Ask yourselves what **problem you solve**, as this will help identify the main reasons why people buy from you. To illustrate this point, think about the simple examples below:

Product / Service	Actual Purchase
Ice cream for screaming child...	10 minutes peace and quiet for the parent
Electric guitar for teenager...	Dream of being a rock star
Distributor who provides timed deliveries...	10% reduction in warehousing costs for their customers
On-site company physiotherapy service...	Reduces absenteeism for their clients by 15%

You'll notice in the examples above that the value of the product or service increases dramatically when it moves from the left hand column to the right.

Once you work out what it is your customers are *really* buying – this will give you a clear guide to help make your e-commerce site and the messaging on all its related marketing channels more powerful.

### Offline – Branding, Design and Direct Marketing

Your e-commerce site will fall at the first hurdle if customers don't recognise and identify with the branding. Getting this element right starts out with a voyage of discovery:

- Who are our customers?
- What are we really selling?/ What problem are we solving?
- What is our point of differentiation?
- What are the best ways to reach our potential customers?

- What is the best way for us to explain how we can solve their problems?
- Who are our key competitors?

Once you know the answers to these questions, you will be able to work with your design agency and create branding and design that clearly communicates your aims for you over and over again.

Make sure this branding and design is used consistently over all marketing channels: if there is a disconnect, customers that arrive via a specific channel (direct mail, email etc) may lose confidence in your web site because of this inconsistency.

Don't forget that branding extends much further than use of colour schemes and images too; the content of your marketing and e-commerce site should reflect your company's individuality down to the very build.

### On & Offline – PR & Advertising

Traditionally, public / media relations and event management were offline channels, but with the advent of more online publications like social media, blogs, online forums and webinars, this is no longer the case.

Taking press releases for example, traditional media coverage is still key for heightening awareness of your brand; when combined with online press, it can get your message in front of a new audience and drive a significant amount of traffic to you.

Another benefit of online press release distribution is it can help elevate your site's position in search engine's natural rankings. This is because it creates more inbound links which search engines rate highly. This will also increase web site traffic, in addition to telephone and postal enquiries, and is just one example of how aligning your multiple on- and offline channels can bring hidden gain to your web site.



## Online – Web Sites, Email Marketing, Search Marketing

Take a look at your current e-commerce site and ask yourself:

- Is it clearly communicating the problem we solve for our customers?
- Are customers able to find what they need and purchase it online easily?
- Does it have strong calls to action?
- Are we capturing data for future online marketing campaigns?
- Is web site traffic being monitored using analytics programmes?
- Does it clearly represent our brand?
- Is it being regularly updated with new content: blogs, press releases and so on?

If you can answer ‘yes’ to all these questions - well done, you’re ahead of the curve! If on the other hand you’ve answered ‘no’ to any of them, you’re not maximising the potential benefit you could get from your web site. It’s important you work with your web company to put things right **before** you start increasing traffic to your web site, otherwise you risk wasting your money as visitors hit the ‘back button’ because they can’t find what they’re looking for or complete the transaction.

Once you have your web site in order, there are many ways you can drive targeted traffic to it. A few of these channels include:

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Massive Range of Office Furniture  
Showrooms Available Nationwide  
[www.Calibre-Furniture.co.uk](http://www.Calibre-Furniture.co.uk)

[Discount Office Furniture](#)  
Huge selection of furniture  
Free next day delivery orders >£30  
[www.eurooffice.co.uk/Furniture](http://www.eurooffice.co.uk/Furniture)

[UK Office Furniture Sale](#)  
Free UK Mainland Delivery  
Desks, Chairs and Filing Cabinets.  
[www.office-furniture4u.co.uk](http://www.office-furniture4u.co.uk)

- Pay per click (PPC) – paid for adverts that appear on the search engines when people type in a key phrase related to your business. You only pay when your advert is clicked.
- Search engine optimisation (SEO) – making sure your e-commerce site is listed higher in natural search engine results for your keywords. This is achieved by using on-page and off-page strategies.
- Email marketing – nurturing prospects into customers using a steady, consistent stream of email marketing messages with soft and hard offers to build up trust.

## Analysis & Improvement

This brings us to the last and arguably most critical stage in the cycle. Measuring your e-commerce site’s and marketing channels’ performances using analytics tools and customer relationship management (CRM) programs is what makes this strategy a cycle, spurring your online presence to be at the top of its game at all times. In the fast paced world of e-commerce, a site that doesn’t review and improve will quickly find itself left behind.

Once you have collected all the relevant data for measuring your performance, it’s time to review the most recent activities and measure each channel’s performance: sales figures, return on investments and other data that can be fed back into the process and used to set benchmarks against which later projects will be measured.

It’s also time to review any other monitoring systems you use: for example, programs like Google Analytics that provide valuable information on what is and isn’t working on your web site and other digital channels.



Finally, using data gained through the recording and analytics processes outlined above will allow you to remove as much inefficiency from the marketing process as possible. This may even

before it. For instance, do your web site and email marketing campaigns match the branding guidelines set out earlier on in the cycle? Has there been a positive response to the newsletters you've been sending (i.e. more visitors to your site) or does the content need reviewing? Rather than making decisions based on trial and error, you'll be using actual, empirical evidence with a better likelihood of getting results.



Maintaining the integrated marketing process is also easier than you might imagine: because the process hinges on the ethos of best practice, every element is designed to reach the highest possible quality standard. The analysis & improvement segment of the cycle ensures the processes are being tested for improvement continuously.

### E-Commerce Sites For Surviving Uncertain Times

An integrated marketing process is the next step required to grow your e-commerce site. For simplicity's sake, we have included just the main online advertising channels of today but the beauty of the model's cyclical structure is that it's possible to add new channels such as social media or mobile marketing without interrupting the channels already in place.

require you to revisit your branding and design...which conveniently brings us right back to the beginning of the cycle.

Since it also operates on a principle code of best practice and is geared towards continuous review, the process can 'take care of itself' to some extent. This means you'll have more breathing space and confidence with which to test unknown marketing channels with your e-commerce site before making them a fully-fledged part of the system.

### How Do You Implement and Maintain the Process?

Putting this program into action might sound time-consuming but in reality you're likely to have a lot of the basic building blocks needed to host it already in place. All that's required from you is to fill in the missing gaps. So if your e-commerce site already has data capture & email marketing programs up and running but no SEO or PPC tactics, concentrate on getting your search strategy up and running quickly.

By maintaining the basic principles of testing, measuring and improvement that are so intrinsic to this system, your e-commerce site should be in good shape to thrive in spite of the uncertain times ahead and outstrip your competition in the online arena.

Once the gaps are filled in, it's then simply a case of ensuring each part of the marketing process acts based on the decisions made in the segments



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- **Increase sales turnover** with user-friendly site design and checkout processes
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