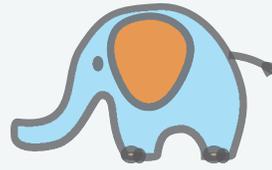
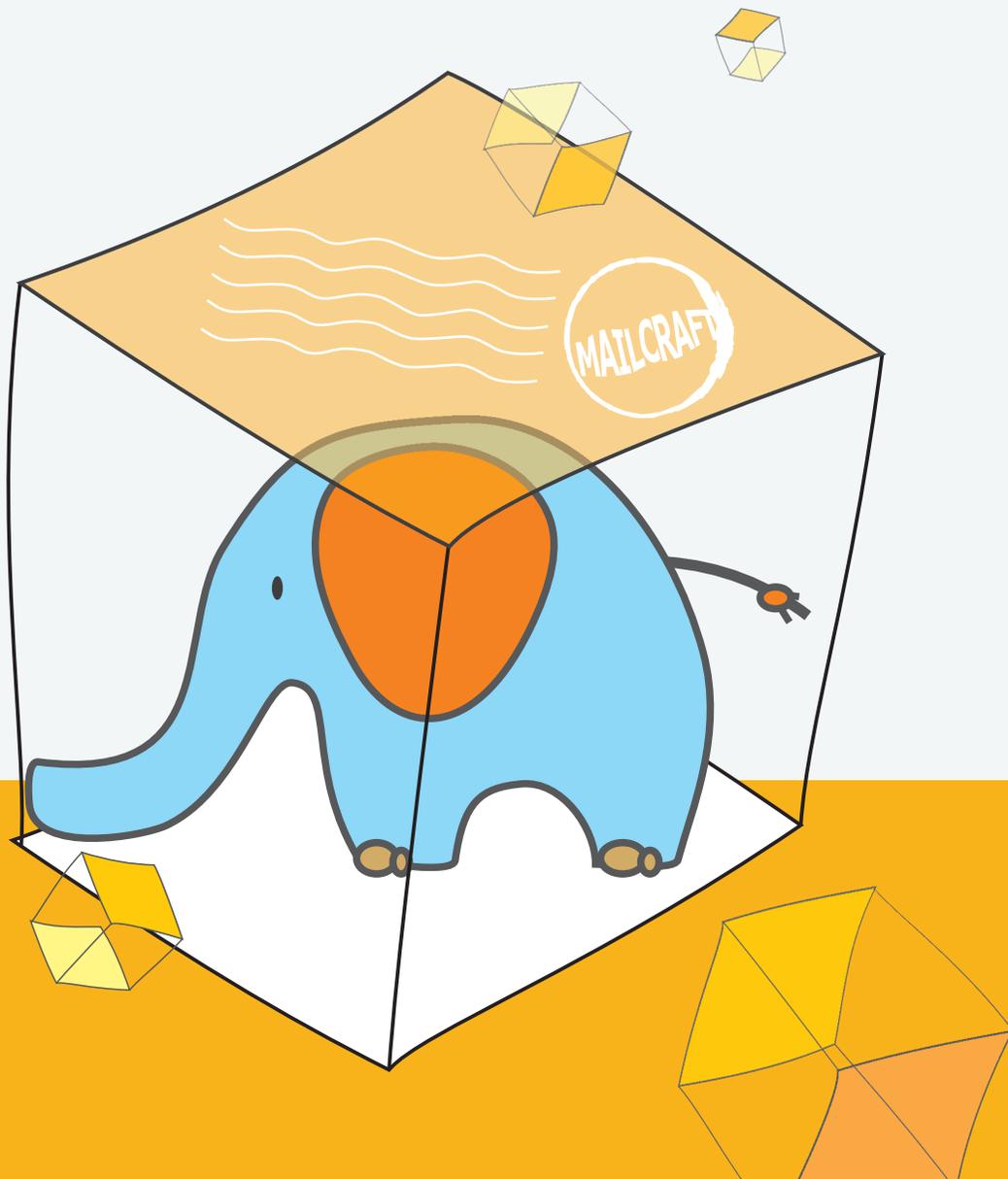


MailCraft



The Elephant In The Room

<http://www.marketingship.com>



The Elephant in the Room

I hate white papers. This may seem contradictory as the author of one but I want it known where I stand. White papers are generally terribly written, contradictory, filled with jargon, confusing and generally leave me muddle-headed. Having read literally thousands of them in course of my duties as a professional nerdist my promise to you, the reader, is this:

I will not waste your time if your goal is how to efficiently:

- 1. Generate interest or publicity for an event you're hosting*
- 2. Increase visibility for products you make or sell, either locally or via mail-order*
- 3. Keep people in touch with what's happening at your business establishment or*
- 4. Capture attention for philanthropic activities*

If you want to candidly connect with a responsive audience and increase the return on the time, money and effort you put in to your communications strategy the next few pages should be real handy.

Getting People's Attention is Hard

Actually, it's getting positive attention that's hard but the alternatives aren't attractive. Do you want Jerry Springer attention? Running in your underpants across a baseball field with a website address painted on your stomach will get you that. Historically, however, the long run shows us that being genuine with people you meet and good at what you creates deeper connections than a "That Guy" tactic. Sadly, being friendly and competent is less telegenic. It rarely translates to Jerry Springer or YouTube. Neither does friendly and competent get you airtime on talk radio. On any media with a volume knob do you know who does really well? Used car salesmen. You want to be That Guy?

Message and Distribution Channels have changed and will continue to

There is evidence of human tool making in North America dating back 12,000 years. There is, however, no evidence of email. Messages traveled on foot and were communicated from one sender to as many people as could hear his voice. Now there is a wider range of message options.

Equally much as I would love to write a few pages on the history of how human communications became telecommunications, so would such activity deviate from my promise. Digital Media is our method of communication and now comes to us at an incredible rate through pods and pads and phones, in the coffee shop and at the airport. Does all this message convergence / channel divergence get us closer to our goals?

MailCraft: Email refined

Hooray! Yes it does! Email has fallen literally into the palm of our hand. Here is a nearly ubiquitous resource which democratizes communication by creating channels connecting us directly with our audience. By “Opting In” to your mailing list, the fine citizens who sign up have indicated they may even listen to you. This is where being viewed as friendly and competent pays off.

The landscape of Digital Media often seems broad, confusing, awesome, overlapping, filled with gaps, filled with videos of sleepy kittens, redundant, fun, useless, useful and what does that 2pointZero on the end mean? How is it possible to get so many contradictory answers to simple questions like “What tools do I need to accomplish my task?”

Let me de-clutter that landscape in 5 bullet points or less:

- Digital Media, New Media and Social Media (the Web 2.0 thing): All of the jargon boils down to people trying to communicate with other people.
- Be genuine; speak honestly and exhibit passion for a topic and people will respond. The communication skills we value in live interactions are the same we value in digital form.
- Technology is a multiplier of what you already know, not a replacement: The technology behind an Email Newsletter or Email Flyer is actually less mysterious than how a photocopier works. You use it every day and you’ll find MailCraft’s tools look and feel like other things you’ve used.
- Plan simple, execute well and succeed: Your communications strategy should hinge on things you already know how to do, not learning how to “Tweet” or get 5000 “Likes” on Facebook. You’ve written Email, people are used to getting Email, don’t re-invent the wheel

Exciting people via your content is what matters. You can forget about the Apps and WAP and WEP and Tweets and Pokes everyone jabbars about for the time being and get down to some basics of Email success.

Changing Times, Changing Minds

Email is everywhere. That’s reason Number One to look at it when you are choosing a communications tool.

Over 20% of cellphones carried in the US are used to send and receive email. Email has now been effectively free for 15 years and is available with access to the majority of public libraries. Most of the people you know have it and use it daily. Ubiquity is beyond price when you are trying to get a message to a lot of people. Know what has a price? Bulk mail flyers.

Or, as they’re known in my house, coasters.

Start Simple for Success

Plan simple, execute well.

Email can be an effective method to deliver your message and generate a positive response. If you commit to the following steps and focus on consistency and execution, the payback will likely surprise you.

1. Take Email seriously – use it as the base of your message strategy.
2. Take the Time to Define – prepping your contacts and mailing lists into orderly segments helps you organize follow up responses according to which group the respondent was in.
3. If your contact list is a little dusty, begin your current program with a Re-Opt email which lets folks remember who you are and why they gave you their email address.
4. Take advantage of what a service like MailCraft can offer – for instance, we analyze outbound messages to judge whether they'll appear "spammy" to Gmail and Yahoo. We'll also tell you which words or phrases to fix before you send a message, not after it all comes bouncing back.
5. Measure what Matters – MailCraft metrics and reporting tools allow you to weed out non-responders and focus follow-up mail on people with an active interest in your activities.

Staying Simple and Succeeding

Stay Simple, Keep Executing. Refine you Email Kung-Fu as follows:

1. Simple Messages, Topics that Matter to you, repeat occasionally.
2. Does the Title line convey the message's purpose?
3. Does the email give the reader a single action they can pursue? Write a check or a letter or boycott something or buy something else for a good reason?
4. So you included the action. Does the email let the reader know how to accomplish the task?
5. Does the email explain the benefits of taking the suggested action?
6. Spell Check. Really. You'd be surprised.

Finally, keep at it and be consistent. Find your voice and establish a rhythm to your correspondence which keeps you fresh in people's minds. I can't tell you how often I've come across a blog focused on a topic interesting to me only to notice the last post was in 2009. That information source ceases to be credible and I'll never pay attention again even if it keeps showing up in my Google results. Using Email as a tool to attract interest and engagement works in a similar fashion. If you send off content 3 months in a row and then go dark for 6 months, if you come back you'll have to make friends with people all over again.

What does it take to make this commitment?

Can you post 5 things you find interesting to Facebook every month?

If you can commit just that small amount of time your Email Campaign will be sustainable, vital and return more than you put into it.



An Email Life Cycle: Practical Approaches

So, you've given it some thought and the Back to Basics approach Email offers has an appeal. What next?

How about free stuff? Go to <http://www.marketingship.com> and check out our Free Market accounts. We'll let you send all the mail you want to 2000 friends for as long as that fits your needs. So go to the website, look for the big **FREE** button and get started with our easy to use contact management and attractive Email template designs.

Change is Possible, Measurable and Manageable

What do I hope readers of this White Paper take away?

- Change is possible and you don't have to wait for Webb 3.0 or learn a new skill set to start achieving it.
- People make change with tools which work today and can grow with tomorrow.
- Friendly and Competent are your allies whenever you're talking about subjects that matter to you.
- Friendly and Competent is very likely what created the message you wish to share. Your content will reflect that and readers will respond to that.
- Simple steps repeated with excellence will achieve your goal.

Visit us and take a look at the Free Market Account (<http://www.marketingship.com>).

Go through the exercise of creating something simple and executing it well. See what comes back to you.

Effective. Familiar. Free.

MailCraft by MarketingShip

© Copyright 2011 Marketingship, Inc. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or for any purpose without the acknowledgement of Marketingship, Inc.

The information contained herein may be changed without prior notice.

