

## A New Year and New Budgets Give Way to New Opportunities

By Allison Flett

After a major cost-cutting effort in 2009 followed by a cost-conservative approach in 2010, **marketing budgets are increasing**. This is particularly true of small to mid-size companies. Could this be the recovery we've all been waiting for?

As big believers in fact-based insight, Trinity sought out the findings of a recent survey conducted by MarketingProfs and Forrester Research to help answer this question. The survey participants included 416 executive-level B2B marketers. The findings do not indicate a worldwide recovery for all businesses, but they do show marketing budgets returning to normal levels. After all, one typically has to spend a bit of money to make money. So if you can accept that, you still need to understand where or how to spend that money to ensure the most ROI. We have some thoughts:

### 1. Mix It Up

Overall, companies used an average of 11 marketing channels to reach their audience in 2010. Channels included websites, emails, tradeshow, PR, direct mail, and a variety of online tactics. It is important to note that while print advertising was still a relevant channel, it faced a significant drop last year as companies shifted more budget dollars online. Also noteworthy, companies that are primarily B2B are more likely to invest in webinars/webcasts where B2C companies spend more on online display/banner/pop-up ads.

Our point of view for 2011 is to tightly define your target audiences. Begin to understand them and their media preferences so you can feel confident with your combination of marketing tactics.

### 2. Get Personal

Thought the days of tradeshow were behind us? This study shows that tradeshow, on average, receive the highest percentage of marketing budgets, regardless of company size. If your number one objective is lead generation than it's easy to see why. It is cited as the second most effective channel in generating leads, and leads that come from in-person dialogue typically convert to revenue at a much higher rate. Tradeshow also provide exhibitors with a nice opportunity to build databases, seek out new partnerships and take a peek at what the competition is doing.



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The third most effective channel among larger B2B organizations is executive breakfasts. Like tradeshows, seminars and events can be a big strain on human resources and time. But to ignore these channels would be ignoring the opportunities they can create.

### **3. Go Digital**

Almost every traditional tactic – TV, radio, print, outdoor and PR – suffered a significant decline in 2010. In fact, so much so that some marketers are abandoning their use all together. So how should companies create brand awareness? Webinars, company websites and search marketing (SEO and paid placement) rank highest here, further supporting the shift from traditional to online. Also, online is more targeted and more engaging. Your best-case scenario is likely a mix of both online and offline, but with an emphasis on online.

To summarize, Trinity saw good momentum with our B2B clients in the second half of 2010. In what is now January of 2011, we are invigorated by new marketing trends and what they mean not only for us, but also you, your business and the economic recovery. **Please let us know how you feel at [dlogan@trinitynet.com](mailto:dlogan@trinitynet.com) or at 617.292.7399.**