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Strategic Assessment

## interlinkONE Utilized for Success in the New Marketing Economy

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### Abstract

As organizations face economic challenges, marketers are working as hard as ever to justify marketing spend. They need results. To get these results, they are moving to a more holistic approach to marketing—integrating multiple channels with consistent messaging and measurable metrics to track a campaign's success. Marketing service providers are finding success by adapting to this new economy and providing the services that marketers require. This whitepaper outlines how marketers' challenges can be met by MSPs and how interlinkONE's integrated marketing platform has played an integral role in helping service providers get in the game.

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## Introduction

With today's economic conditions, many organizations are facing challenges—especially when it comes to marketing. As organizations move to cut costs, marketers are working harder than ever to justify marketing spend. It is not enough for marketers to build brand awareness and increase response rates. The chief marketing officer (CMO) needs to generate qualified leads and then convert them into actual sales and revenue.

Historically, a marketing campaign used one or two forms of media. Today, marketers are trying to utilize every possible customer touchpoint, including mobile, e-mail, direct mail, social networking, and mass media messaging. A successful multi-channel campaign requires integration and synergistic use of media. To work properly, messages need to be targeted and relevant to the customer as well as consistent across all channels. The results also need to be measurable to provide a clear return on investment (ROI).

## MSPs and the New Marketing Economy

The integration of channels and the automation of campaign monitoring leads us to the new marketing economy, which involves utilizing multiple customer touchpoints and tracking each one closely to monitor a campaign's success in responses and conversions. Integrating emerging channels (including e-mail, Web sites, mobile technology, and social media) can enhance the reach to potential customers. Automating many tasks associated with launching and tracking multiple channels in an integrated campaign adds efficiency to the process and provides real-time results.

Developing and managing this holistic approach can be a very involved process for marketers, especially at a time when there may be little wiggle room in the budget to test new applications. Nevertheless, there are a number of print and marketing service providers that are adapting to the new marketing economy and can provide many valuable services. These include launching and tracking integrated multi-channel campaigns, which extend to key elements of supply chain management, including reducing printed inventory with print-on-demand capabilities, warehouse management, and fulfillment.

Print service providers/Marketing service providers (PSPs/MSPs) are attempting to participate in this more lucrative value chain by providing an array of services related to the marketing process, from campaign inception to program execution. The MSP understands that to participate in this new marketing economy, they must generate good data and relevant messaging. The MSP also knows that success is connected to the creation of one-to-one communications that are based on a deep understanding of the customer's needs. As a result, MSPs are implementing the infrastructure (i.e., technical, sales, and consultative skills) to develop solutions for efficient communications.

The MSP is focused on four dimensions of marketing relevancy in the solutions that they provide to clients:

1. **Relevancy in Content:** providing the right information in the right context
2. **Relevancy in Contact:** delivering this information to the right people
3. **Relevancy in Channel:** providing it to the right medium in the right format
4. **Relevancy in Time:** delivering this information when it is appropriate to meet the client's needs

Firms with decades of experience in prepress and offset printing are repositioning themselves as marketing services providers. These organizations are leveraging their talent and techniques to pioneer some of the world's latest marketing technologies. This emerging MSP portfolio includes:

1. **One-to-one ROI-driven multi-channel relationship marketing solutions** that are designed to provide individual communications with clients' best and most profitable customers, create unique and customized messages across multiple channels, manage campaigns, track expenses, as well as calculate ROI in real time.
2. **Data modeling and data mining** to determine the "sweet spot" based on specific criteria established by data experts. Profiling factors such as demographics, product affinity, lifestyle, and cluster analysis enable the MSP to model existing customer data against scrubbed national consumer files, extracting important and relevant demographics as well as lifestyle data. This means that clients can model the trends and traits of their best customers, and then use that "model" to find thousands more just like them.
3. **Web-based print solutions** for remote access to digital assets for distributed sales representatives as well as agents and franchises. These online storefronts are custom-designed for client organizations. They provide marketers, salespeople, and even customers with 24-hour access to digital assets. Users can customize the pieces and then download them immediately, or have prints delivered on demand.
4. **Digital asset management systems** are in place to house clients' assets (e.g., graphics, logos, templates) and allow secure access to approved users regardless of where they reside and what they want. This marketing management tool ensures the proper use of brand assets, consistency of communications, and immediate response to materials requests—24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
5. **Comprehensive marketing program measurement metrics and analytics** are being made available through marketing dashboards. With the dashboard, marketers can:
  - See who is responding within seconds of the visit
  - Use up-to-date collected results for ROI calculations
  - Create graphical representations of results that update automatically
  - Improve sales lead effectiveness via automatically delivered lead e-mail messages
  - Gain immediate access to raw data for other corporate systems or processes

6. **Mailing and fulfillment** includes more than just the operational aspects of mailing a piece. MSPs have become trusted advisors in the face of postal rate increases. They are working with clients to minimize the impact of postage increases while maintaining response rates. MSPs consult with clients to discuss options such as modified packaging, address quality, bar-coding, delivery point verification, volume discounts, and other money-saving ideas.
7. It goes without saying that the client expects **best-in-class prepress and print production** using offset or digital technologies. In today's market, these are "table stakes."

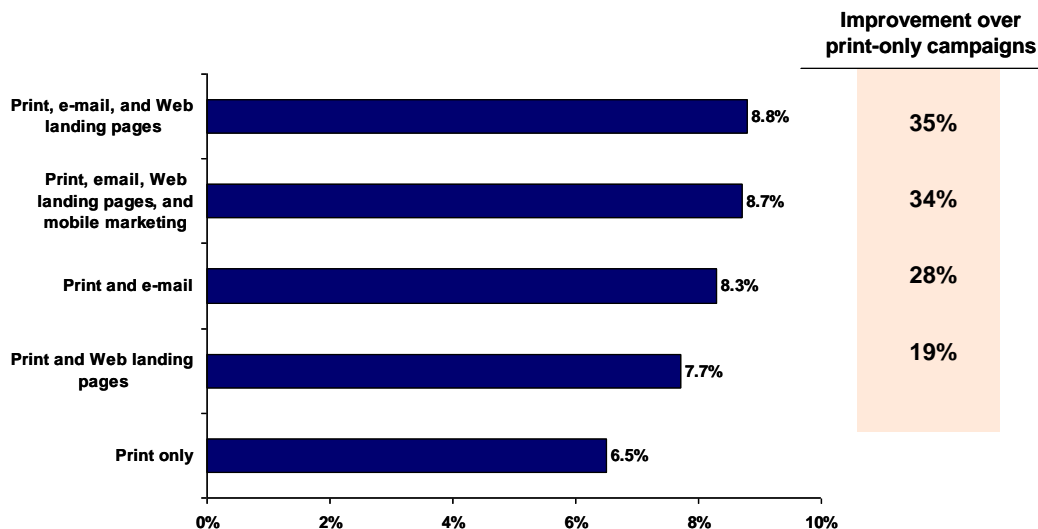
By expanding their scope and equipping themselves to provide integrated marketing services to clients, service providers can solidify and increase their presence with existing clients and bring in new clients to grow their businesses.

## Addressing the Needs of Marketers

To provide phenomenal results, service providers need to understand and address the needs that marketers have in the new marketing economy. In late 2008, InfoTrends conducted a study entitled *Multi-Channel Communications Measurement and Benchmarking* that discovered key data points about adopting an integrated multi-channel marketing approach. Marketers surveyed indicated that their top goal with multi-channel communications was to gain new customers, as well as increase response rates and improve customer retention. This finding reflects on the importance of gaining qualified leads through integrated marketing campaigns.

Additionally, marketers are utilizing an average of five channels in a multi-channel campaign and each channel added presents a boost in a campaign's response, as illustrated in the Figure below.

**Figure 1: More Channels Equals Better Response for Marketers**



N = Print to mobile marketing: 216, Print to landing pages: 216, Print and landing pages: 216, Print and e-mail: 214, Print only: 217

Source: *Multi-Channel Communications Measurement and Benchmarking*, InfoTrends, 2008

In the same survey, however, marketers indicated that their number one challenge is obtaining quality data. Good data is the key to gaining deeper insights on existing and potential customers, as well as being

essential for developing personalized components of a campaign. Organizations are relying more and more on customer relationship management (CRM) solutions to capture and refine customer data. In fact, 90% of marketers stated that integration with CRM systems is critical when launching a multi-channel communication campaign. A majority of marketers surveyed do not currently utilize a marketing dashboard to view campaign results, which could otherwise assist them in providing real-time information about a campaign's performance.

Other top marketing challenges include integrating all delivery channels for a campaign, as well as designing across multiple channels. Marketers are clamoring for these features, and service providers can play an important role in providing them. Two-thirds of print and marketing service providers surveyed for the *Multi-Channel Communications Measurement and Benchmarking* study indicated that their revenue has increased by offering multi-channel marketing services. Service providers also indicated that new revenue streams were the top benefit of offering these services, followed by expanding their customer base and improving customer retention. The opportunity is ripe for service providers to map out a smart business strategy, invest in solutions and resources, and start providing multi-channel offerings to clients.

## Success in the New Marketing Economy with interlinkONE

Technology is addressing many challenges that marketers face by empowering service providers, enterprise organizations, and agencies with the tools needed to become more efficient and effective. interlinkONE (based out of Wilmington, Massachusetts) provides an integrated platform for Enterprise Marketing Management (EMM), marketing automation, and multi-channel marketing communication. Components of the solution include:

- Multi-Channel Marketing
- Campaign Management
- Lead Routing & Scoring
- Response Management
- Targeted / One to One Marketing
- E-mail Marketing
- Micros-Sites, Personalized URLs, General URLs, QR Codes
- Dashboards for Measurement and Analytics
- Data Mining and Management
- Customer Relationship Management
- Channel Management
- Fulfillment Management
- Project Management
- Order Management
- Inventory Management
- Warehouse Management
- Print Management and Quoting
- Digital Asset Management
- e-Commerce
- Web-to-print Storefronts
- Social Media Marketing

Each component plays an important role in the marketing value chain, from planning and creation to delivery and tracking. In addition to these components, interlinkONE can integrate with existing business systems, including Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and external CRM solutions, like Salesforce.com. The interlinkONE platform is primarily offered as a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) model, but can also be purchased through software licensing.

With its integrated platform, interlinkONE addresses the challenges that are presented to marketers on a daily basis, from handling customer data in real time to providing integration and consistency among multiple channels. The company's solution is being utilized by hundreds of service providers, enterprises, and agencies that are working to deliver the best results to their clients.

The following sections include three examples of how interlinkONE's clients are utilizing its platform to help their customers play in the new marketing economy.

### ***BOPI***

Paul Macfarlane, Director of Sales and Marketing for the Bloomington, Illinois-based BOPI, has been working to help grow the company since he joined in 1995. He has helped spur growth by investing in cutting-edge technology and helping institute new business strategies. When the computer-to-plate revolution happened in the late 1990s, BOPI saw an opportunity for more precision and greater efficiency, and decided to implement the technology. In 2001, the company saw that variable data publishing (VDP) would provide a great opportunity and invested in a digital press specifically for producing VDP jobs. It was around this time that BOPI also invested in Web-to-print and Personalized URL solutions. The company felt, however, that these solutions were not integrated enough with CRM systems or with each other to develop the on-going multi-channel campaigns clients were asking for. In 2007, Macfarlane and his team searched for and found an integrated, flexible platform that met the company's needs: interlinkONE.

BOPI utilizes interlinkONE in a number of different ways. interlinkONE serves as a collateral ordering and management system for clients with a national presence that are spread out through remote sales teams, multiple branches, or a network of franchises. This approach enables consistency among marketing collateral no matter where the buyer is located. The company also utilizes the solution for launching integrated multi-channel campaigns that require integration with customer data and continuous tracking and improvement. The responses and leads generated by BOPI's campaigns have opened up clients to further harness the power of multiple channels beyond direct mail, including video and billboards. The company also gives access to interlinkONE's information dashboards to its campaign clients, usually at the CMO level. In addition to utilizing the solution for managing clients' projects, BOPI manages all of its internal projects through interlinkONE. According to Macfarlane, "You can't operate at the CMO level unless you've got an integrated solution. Standalone solutions can give you certain pieces you may need, but the only one that we saw that was truly integrated was interlinkONE."

### ***Fabiano Communications***

Phoenix, Arizona-based Fabiano Communications (FabCom) is the brainchild of industry pioneer Brian Fabiano and provides full-service strategic marketing, public relations, and advertising. FabCom is an agency that strives to deliver real measurable results for its clients through what Fabiano calls "cross-channel integration of marketing activities." By combining e-commerce, Web design, IT, content development, branding, and marketing strategy, the company provides a holistic approach that is not typically achieved without using multiple companies. This approach has proven successful for FabCom. It has added over fifteen employees in the past year (when many other organizations are cutting back). Its clients range widely in size and segment, requiring FabCom to deploy different marketing and advertising tactics depending on a client's needs. Additionally, the

agency makes every effort to develop campaigns with real-time, quantifiable metrics and results that provide the most value to its clients' marketing executives.

When looking for solutions to help enable his business to support integrated cross-media marketing campaigns, Fabiano and his team researched and benchmarked the leading solutions in the market for more than a year. In 2008, FabCom chose interlinkONE to handle the task. According to Fabiano, "Everyone gives you all the right answers when you're in the selection and sales mode. The difference with interlinkONE is that they get better after the sale." FabCom harnesses the power of interlinkONE for the tracking and automation of campaigns, including mobile marketing. While there is not one magic, universal solution that can meet its clients' needs, interlinkONE comes the closest for FabCom. "One of the major attributes the interlinkONE system has is horizontal and vertical integration across multiple channels. I believe the solution does the best overall job of any particular software suite that we utilize," says Fabiano.

### ***Goodway Group of Massachusetts***

Based in Burlington, Massachusetts (with sister locations near Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.), the Goodway Group has transformed over the past 15 years from a traditional offset printer into providing online collateral management, inventory management, and one-to-one multi-channel campaigns for clients. As an early adopter of black & white digital printing technology for producing variable content, the Goodway Group saw a natural progression to expand its services by adding digital color and leading variable data publishing technology. The company provides these services to organizations in the pharmaceutical, automotive, and software industries that want to reduce printed inventory and have more effective marketing programs. interlinkONE is an integral enabler for Goodway Group to provide these services.

By using interlinkONE's Web storefront and order management components, Goodway Group is able to handle a wide array of job types, from direct mail to complex kits that include promotional items and require multiple recipients. The company can also track inventory of all print and non-print items through the solution, as well as perform fulfillment functions necessary for complex orders. It has also been successful with providing multi-channel communication campaigns to clients by using personalized URLs, personalized e-mails, printed collateral, and up to nine different customer touchpoints through interlinkONE. Qualified leads can be placed into different priority buckets, and hot leads are forwarded directly to a client's salesperson for immediate follow-up. Noel Doherty, President and CEO of Goodway Group of Massachusetts, says that "Some campaigns have been so successful that the response has been too great for a client's sales force to handle." The company also uses interlinkONE internally to manage its inventory and projects. From Doherty's perspective, interlinkONE "just makes doing business simpler, and allows employees and customers from all over the country access information in real time."

## PSPs and MSPs Need to Get in the Game

The union of consumer demand for relevant information, technological innovations, and the needs of the CMO has a powerful impact on the market, contrary to what some may believe. Today's PSP/MSP faces the challenge of "getting in the game" and building a winning strategy. Firms like BOPI, FabCom, and the Goodway Group have made this transition as part of an overall strategic business plan. In doing so, they have:

- Analyzed customers and the business environment to identify the right target markets
- Researched the specific opportunities to better and more profitably meet customer needs in the identified segments
- Developed the product and service offerings that met customer needs
- Identified the right tools to effectively transform their business
- Redefined their market position and clearly articulated their unique value proposition

While traditional print will always be an important requirement for offset and short run on-demand printing will remain strong, PSPs need to be prepared to participate in the more lucrative marketing value chain by providing an array of services in the marketing process—from campaign inception to program execution to mailing and fulfillment.

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