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## Multi-Channel Marketing: XMPie Users “Silence the Naysayers”!

[companion article](#) by Cary Sherburne

By Barb Pellow

March 27th, 2008 -- While there are some pessimists out there about the speed of adoption and effectiveness of multi-channel solutions, the XMPie Users' Group clearly silenced the naysayers in its “Best of the Best” competition. The XMPie Users' Group was held February 7-9 at Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas. Users were invited to submit campaigns for evaluation by Ann Trout, Leo Burnett, Paul McDonough of DMA, and Professor Matt Bernius of RIT. The evaluation criteria included:

- Degree of innovation demonstrated by the entry
- Use of multi-channel communications technology
  - Data integration
- Effective use of survey techniques for customer learning
- Business effectiveness and measurement of response metrics
  - Overall aesthetics for print and Web sites
- Degree of use of XMPie technology across all of the different phases of the campaign

### And the Winners Were...

Recognition for first, second, and third place went to Amsterdam-based Jubels Communications, Sacramento-based Admail West, and Akron-based Digital Color Imaging (DCI) respectively.

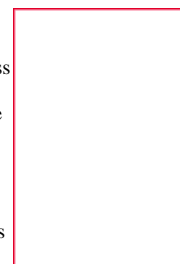
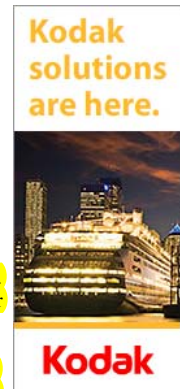
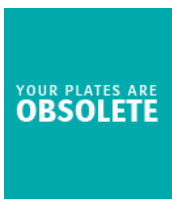
The Jubels campaign was designed to make its customers aware of the breadth of their marketing services. Jubels wanted to demonstrate to clients that with cross-media solutions and a database, it can deliver better results, more sales, and increased customer satisfaction. The company mailed a letter containing a real personalized picture of a restaurant with the client's name on the awning (printed as picture leveraging variable imaging software), an invoice from the non-existent Paris restaurant (iGEN3 print), and a picture frame to display the picture on a desk. In the personal note (with a handwritten look and a red wine stain), the customer is asked to visit a personal Web site. This Web site can be accessed after entering the invoice number from the mailed letter and contains several personalized restaurant photos with the prospect's name embedded as part of the photo. These images are downloadable as wallpaper. After the respondent has logged onto the personalized site, a personalized e-mail is sent to the customer to thank him/her for visiting the site.

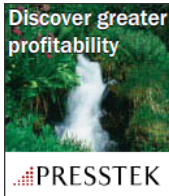
Jubels sent out 330 mailpieces. 20.2% of the recipients visited their personalized Web pages. The creative execution captured client and prospect attention and helped Jubels explain the capability of multi-channel communications.

Admail West is a data, fulfillment, and variable mail solutions provider. The company collaborated with Silicon Publishing, an XMPie and Adobe solutions partner, and Thomas Ferrous, a marketing and design company, on its submission. The objective was to provide a marketing campaign that would build awareness of the “XMPie Users' Group Best of the Best” competition. Admail West was asked to create different components to inform the members that the conference was taking place and to provide information on the competition.

The 3 companies created 4 different components for the XMPie Users' Group:

1. A mailpiece with variable text, which included a personalized Web site, was created to provide members with information on the conference and competition.





2. A personalized URL (pURL) for each member was built to encourage entry into the competition. (You may see this at [kathypescetti.xmpiebest.com](http://kathypescetti.xmpiebest.com)). The XMPie Users' Group requested that this pURL contain 2 responses and 2 links. The responses could be viewed on a real-time Web page.
3. A follow up e-mail was sent to every member, reminding them of the competition and giving them updated information.
4. A follow-up oversized personalized postcard was printed and mailed to each member, again to remind them of the competition and to provide them with updated information.



To create something exciting, the companies took multi-channel communications to another level. The campaign highlighted what can be done with pURLs today using the latest in Web technology, integrating video and audio with Web content in a single, personalized message. While it was not expected that a high percentage of attendees would enter the contest, the pURL served to show the new forms of communication possible with multi-channel software solutions and modern video technology.



Third place went to Digital Color Imaging. Norandex Building Materials Distribution has been a client of DCI since 1998. Norandex has nearly 200 dealer locations across the country. Individual dealers had a need to send out monthly mailers to clients and prospects that contained multiple ads as well as announcing discount specials, events, and featured products. Prior to DCI's integration of digital printing technologies, each mailer was handled individually. The dealers would fax in rough ideas of what they would like on their mailers, and these were frequently as primitive as the drawings on the back of a napkin. After the faxes would come in, the ads would be designed, placed into a mailer layout in prepress, printed on offset shells, and mailing lists would be forwarded to the mailing house. The mailing house would inkjet the recipient addresses and tab seal the shells.



This was a tedious and time-consuming process for Norandex's dealers as well as for sales, CSR, and pre-press resources at DCI. As technology advanced, DCI sought a streamlined, user-friendly workflow solution. After years of handling these common customized mailers in a manual fashion, it became necessary to find a more streamlined and user-friendly Internet-driven workflow. The company leveraged XMPie software to re-engineer the application. Today, it is a Web-to-print solution that provides the dealer with an easy-to-use interface.



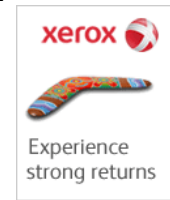
Through a series of templates, the Norandex dealers have maximum flexibility on number of ads, sizes of ads, and an array of mail alternatives including 11" x 17" and 14" x 8.5" mailers. The dealers can also order 5" x 4" and 5" x 8" postcards. There are 12 available asset libraries with 450 unique ads for dealers to select and populate the mailers. Through effective use of XMPie, DCI met its primary objective. The company effectively streamlined the customization, ordering, postal processing, and delivery of Norandex Mailers.



**But Wait... There Were More Winners!**



As I examined the range of applications submitted, it became clear to me that the market was the real winner. This creative group of users has taken the multi-channel tool set and breathed life and reality into real-world applications that provide market differentiation for their companies and their clients as well as a return on investment. There were numerous other examples of campaigns that delivered significant value.



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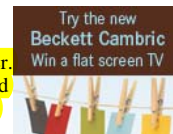
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Retailer Target Stores submitted its "Target Mail" solution. Target Mail is a customized direct mailpiece that is sent out to select Target guests 8-9 times per year. Each piece is customized to the guest, offering them 20 different coupon offers. These offers are based on each guest's shopping and purchasing behaviors. Target references an access database of over 1 million guests, with 20 targeted offers and integrate that data into one cliplless coupon barcode. 140-150 possible offers are cross-referenced from an access database to images.



Besides the variable text and graphics, Target has incorporated guest-specific mailing information, and a guest ID barcode added. This enables tracking for each piece individually through the printing, diecutting, and mailing process. Should a piece be damaged during one of these processes, the barcode is recovered, scanned, and the exact piece is reprinted. The content panels can also be changed variably to match the guest's demographics. Each Target Mail piece is sent to between 1 million and 2 million guests per mailing. Target is utilizing XMPie's uPlan, uCreate, and uProduce to merge the complex data, as well as variable graphics and text to develop a unique and relevant piece for each guest. The chain is receiving a 50% lift in average coupon redemption rate for customized offers in TM versus static offers in other similar direct mailpieces.



Baltimore-based "Echo Communicate" created an automated lead conversion program to fulfill online requests for an informational DVD for Sylvan Learning Centers. According to Robert Blakely, VP of Business Development at Echo Communicate, "In a 3-month pilot test with over 120 centers, the Platinum & Gold Conversion Program lifted the inquiry rate by 30% and the enrollment rate by 40% over the control group, with an ROI of \$3.50 for every \$1 invested in the program." This initial interest is captured by a phone call, or online request for more information. The program consists of 3 personalized mailers, 2 postcards, 24 custom e-mails, and a PURL. This program resulted in a substantial improvement in inquiries and enrollments out of incoming 800-Educate callers and Web site leads. Samples that were sent to Franchises elicited responses such as, "(this is) the best internal marketing we have ever done." The execution of the program is totally automated and requires no additional human involvement. Utilizing uProduce, uImage, uCreate, ICPs, Response URLs (RURLs), and API calls, the program generates printed fulfillment and electronic elements.



**Silencing the Naysayer**



As I listened to the XMPie Users talk about how they were delivering value to their companies or their clients, I could only reflect back to the naysayers in the market who predicted, "This technology will never take off. It is too complex. Marketers don't get it." Kirby Jones has a book out called "Silence the Naysayers." In it, he challenges the reader to dream and re-kindle the fire, but few people are willing to release their security blankets and launch out into uncharted waters. The XMPie Users' Group showed me that there are people who were willing to take on the challenge when no one else had the confidence. Yes, they silenced the naysayers!



Let Barb know what you think! She can be reached via email at [barb\\_pellow@infotrends.com](mailto:barb_pellow@infotrends.com).



#### Barbara A. Pellow

Barbara Pellow recently assumed responsibility for the development and delivery of two new services at InfoTrends specifically focused on the evolution of the Graphic Communications Market – The Business Development Service and Custom Communications Service. Pellow has served in a number of roles including the Chief Marketing Officer of Kodak's Graphic Communications Group. In the role of Chief Marketing Officer, Pellow was responsible for all marketing activities for the division, including marketing communications, public relations, marketing intelligence and advertising strategy. She was an active participant in developing business strategy and helping define the group's go-to-market organizational structure.

Prior to joining Kodak, Pellow was the Gannett chair in integrated publishing sciences in Rochester Institute of Technology's (RIT) School of Printing Management and Sciences (SPMS). She has also held senior marketing roles at IKON Office Solutions, InfoTrends, Xerox and IBM.

Pellow can be reached at [barb\\_pellow@infotrends.com](mailto:barb_pellow@infotrends.com).

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