



# ISSUE

Insights on Important Marketing Communications Issues

## Branding Gains Ground with Executives

Reprinted from *B-to-B* magazine, October 29, 2001.

### New survey shows integration and research increasingly important

Though only 43% of executives consider brand building to be "vital" to their companies, according to a new survey compiled by Patrick Marketing Group, Calabasas, Calif., virtually none view branding merely as advertising anymore.

"This survey shows an increased awareness of the importance of brand identity" said Craig Shields, a partner at Patrick Marketing and the survey's author. And it indicates that integrated marketing techniques are gaining near total acceptance, he said. Just 3% of executives polled still equated branding with advertising.

The study also revealed business leaders are becoming more reliant on market research when developing branding campaigns. This indicates that quantitative research is gaining ground on creative planning, long the cornerstone of most branding efforts.

### The role of research

The survey found that research is playing an increasing role in developing branding campaigns, with 25% of executives saying a lack of research is the biggest mistake companies make when brand building.

Fifty-nine percent of executives said their companies occasionally conduct research when developing their brands, while 19% said they do a great deal of research. Only 12% said they don't believe in market research.

Companies that don't do extensive research when brand building risk misunderstanding their potential client base, said Dave Kleinberg, senior VP-marketing at Digital Impact Inc., an e-business and marketing platform developer and consultancy located in San Mateo, Calif. "Market research for branding is vital because a brand is largely a cognitive experience, with cognitive meaning both

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## Building the Brand

B-to-b executives are increasingly placing branding at the center of their marketing agenda, according to a new survey by Patrick Marketing Group. The survey found that a very low percentage of executives view branding merely as advertising, indicating that integrated marketing is gaining widespread acceptance. Here are some of the report's key findings:

- **70%** of executives polled said their companies have a consistent message in every marketing medium.
- **66%** said their companies' intranet is the most important internal branding medium.
- **55%** said their companies promote their products tastefully.
- **43%** said brand building was of vital importance to their companies.
- **25%** said that not doing sufficient research is the biggest mistake companies make when creating a branding campaign.
- **8%** said a lack of internal and external communications is the biggest mistake companies make when creating a branding campaign.
- **3%** view branding as merely advertising.



rational and emotional,” Kleinberg said. “Ignoring market research means ignoring what’s on people’s minds.”

The survey also discovered that b-to-b marketers are paying increasing attention to the nuances of branding, including product placement, which entails where a product is positioned in a catalog or on a store floor. Twenty-four percent of executives surveyed said their companies place products carefully.

Fifty-five percent of executives polled said they promote their products tastefully when creating branding campaigns. This finding indicates a growing level of conservatism

when creating branding campaigns, in light of recent events and the down economy, Patrick Marketing’s Shields said.

“Our sensibilities [have increased] toward things that you could’ve gotten away with a year ago, and you can’t now,” Shields said. “There’s a greater awareness of issues in terms of what should be taken seriously.”

More than 300 corporate executives were polled for the survey, including marketing VPs and brand managers at companies such as AT&T Corp., General Electric Co., and British Petroleum plc.

