

Rich Media House: developing brands online for London's business

By Dr Riaz Agha, Chief Executive Officer,
Rich Media House Ltd



The incredible growth of the internet provides businesses with both great opportunities and new challenges. The ability to access a new and broader customer base through a low cost and efficient channel is well recognised.

Yet building a brand online is difficult and often requires the business to reshape and condense their message for the virtual touch point. Customers are increasingly net-savvy and are informed about the ease with which a competitor can be courted and services or quotes compared.

Companies should aim for an integrated service where design,

they do on the high street and have little time for poor websites.

Layout, page width, colour scheme, navigation, brand focus, functionality, loading time and content should be meticulously thought through. Most new media agencies would work with their clients to build client persona matrices or a profile of likely users of the site (age, sex, location, occupation, interests, etc) and thus create the design, site logic and deployment of evolving web technologies (such as AJAX and Flash) with this insight in mind.

Businesses nowadays also need to consider site security, data protection and whether their site complies with the *Disability Discrimination Act* and the *Companies Act*. Multiple rounds of user testing during the design cycle are needed to fine tune usability, user experience and brand image. Finally, the personas would need to be validated through post-launch analytics and feedback.

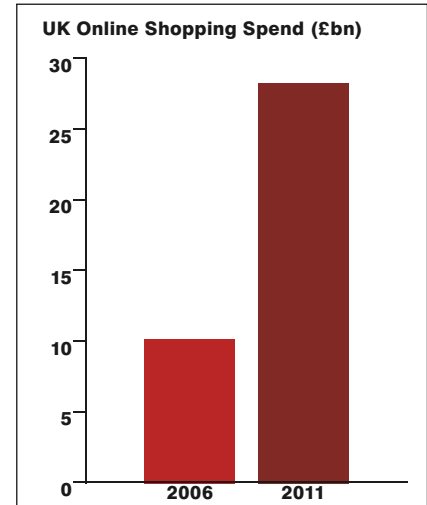
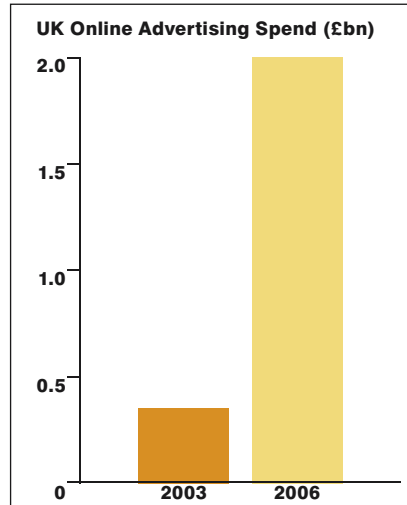
Content Management

According to a report by Accenture, the explosion of unstructured data is one of the biggest challenges facing business today. The quantities of web content, emails, documents, images, audio and video held by companies is soaring and unstructured data within corporations is doubling every two years.

Content heavy and dynamic websites require content management systems (CMS) to streamline their data and business processes.

London's businesses should invest in a CMS solution as part of their digital strategy and enjoy time and cost savings in document creation, document import/export, finding content and synchronising data across departments and work groups.

There is no one size fits all solution and CMS need to be scalable. Furthermore, content management needs to be considered within the usage paradigm of the organisation. How do people use data day-to-



day, how should it be structured, backed-up, stored, indexed, searched, optimised and made secure.

Organisations that have implemented a CMS report positive impacts on their corporate ROI. According to a 2005 AIM industry watch survey, 70 per cent of surveyed business leaders believe their enterprise CMS implementations met or exceeded expectations. Results were positive and consistent across organisations of all sizes.

Digital Marketing

With over 60 per cent of UK households having internet access, there are a huge number of eyeballs to play for, but customers are not pervasive and simply having a website is not a guarantee of success. Websites need to be seen, especially in the search engines (60 per cent don't go past the first page) and once found, need to present a clear and concise message, good navigation and quality content which encourages the right person to become a customer.

Verdict Research, the consultancy, recently published a report where online spending in the UK was predicted to reach £28.1 billion by 2011 (9 per cent of retail spending). In recognition of this trend, over the past

12 months a number of leading brands, including Arcadia, Dunelm, Ikea, Oasis, Superdrug, Waterstone's and Wickes, have launched e-commerce sites.

Where shoppers go, advertisers follow (and in some cases lead) and British advertisers are now spending more than £2 billion a year online in a wide variety of ways including; pay-per-click, search engine optimization, digital banners, viral video campaigns, email marketing, web banners, online promotions, interactive rich media, microsites, product-specific social networks, interactive games and

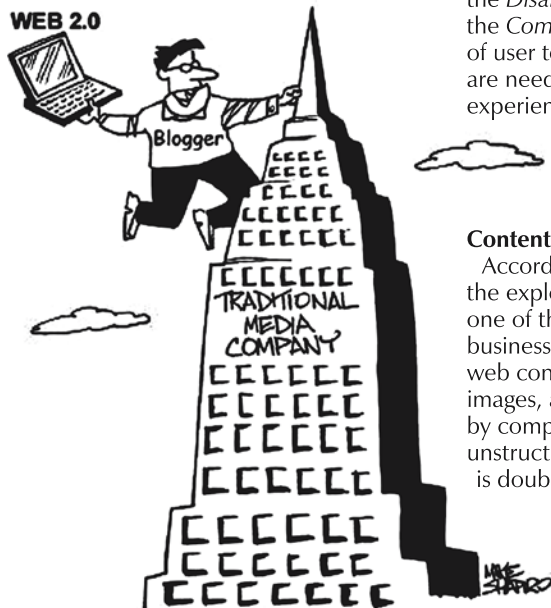
mobile messaging. The key is to link these with offline campaigns and have an integrated approach through keyword research and ownership.

Businesses need to develop an integrated digital strategy and make use of soaring connection

speeds and enabling web technologies to maximise their site's potential. Investment in developing and marketing your company website should be considered an investment in perhaps your most important non-tangible asset, your brand.

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Rich Media House Ltd is an award winning New Media Agency and licensed Google Advertising Professional based in Central London
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content and marketing strategies can be brought together early on and thus ROI maximised. These days companies need clients to understand the latest web technology developments (such as "web 2.0" – another "great equaliser" like the internet itself) and utilise these if appropriate to develop their brand.

Website Design

Companies need to think very carefully about their website design, customers show far less brand loyalty online than



Case studies

City Car Club (www.citycarclub.co.uk)

Rich Media House was commissioned to build a new website for City Car Club, the UK's first and largest national car club operator with over 2500 members. The new website was a complete re-design with a new logo, flash animation and clearer navigation.

The site includes our Bluefalcon content management system that allows staff at City Car Club to manage site content, newsletters, press releases, polls, as well as over 200 cars in 10 cities across the UK.

The site has been search engine optimised and is ranked number one by Google for "car club" and appears on the first page for many industry keywords. We are



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now focussed on developing an ongoing pay-per-click campaign for the company that maximises ROI and continues to build the City Car Club brand online.

City Car Club commented: "We rent cars by the hour in major cities around the UK. Cars are booked over the internet and accessed using a smart card. The whole system is 'hands free' – members apply over the internet, book over the internet, pay over the internet or by direct debit. The result is that the website plays a key role of the company, setting high demands on its versatility.

"Having recently upgraded the City Car Club brand we went in search of a developer to build the site. After a careful selection we selected Rich Media House as we felt they offered the latest standards in web development, coupled with all important content management and would be able to assist us as we progressed down the road of electronic marketing.

"The content management was key – our company is expanding fast and needs to constantly change the locations of the cars. As the product is new, we also need to update the web contents easily and quickly. Rich Media House provided these facilities.

"Last but not least came electronic marketing. About 20 per cent of our new members come through electronic marketing, so this is an important area for us. Again Rich Media House has helped us to upgrade our profile and the impact of our message."

Aquamist (www.aquamistwater.com)

Aquamist is the fastest growing producer of pure natural mineral water in East and Central Africa and are official sponsors of the Kenyan youth football team, the Kenyan national cricket team and Olympic Silver medalist Catherine Ndereba.

The company approached Rich Media House to develop a website to reflect and develop the brand they had built up. Following regular



Dirk Van Dijk,
Chief Executive Officer,
City Car Club

consultation and an iterative design process a final design was approved.

Furthermore, Rich Media House developed the promotional Aquamist mascot for the IAAF Mombasa cross country championship 2007.

Aquamist commented: "We first came across Rich Media House when searching for a website developer through Google. With their nearly instant, professional and economical quote we knew they were the people for the job.



"This exceptional service continued throughout the project leading to a final website that exceeded our demands and has generated excellent feedback from the Kenyan public."

Karim Premji,
Managing Director, Aquamist