



Chapter 21

Integrated E-Marketing – A Strategy-Driven Technical Analysis Framework

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ABSTRACT

E-marketing is considered to be one of the key applications in e-business but so far there has been no sure-fire formula for success. One of the problems is that although we can gather visitor information through behaviours online (e.g., cookies and Weblogs), often there is not an integrated approach to link up strategy formulation with empirical data. In this chapter, we propose a framework that addresses the issue of real-time objective-driven e-marketing. We present approaches that combine real-time data packet analysis integrated with data mining techniques to create a responsive e-marketing campaign. Finally, we discuss some of the potential problems facing e-marketers in the future.

INTRODUCTION

E-marketing in this chapter can be broadly defined as carrying out marketing activities using the Web and Internet-based technologies. Since the inception of e-commerce, e-marketing (together with e-advertising) has contributed to the majority of discussions, and was believed to hold huge potential for the new economy. After billions of dollars were spent to support and promote products online, the results were less than encouraging. Although methods and tricks such as using bright colours, posing questions, call to action, etc., (DoubleClick, 2001) had been devised to attract customers and induce decisions, the overall trend is that we were often guessing what customers were thinking and wanting.

Technologies are now available to customise e-advertising and e-marketing campaigns. For example, e-customers, Inc., offers a total solution called Enterprise Customer Response Systems that combines the online behaviours of customers, intentions of merchants, and decision rules as input to a data-warehousing application (see Figure 1). In addition, DoubleClick (www.doubleclick.net) offers products such as DART that help to manage online advertising campaigns.

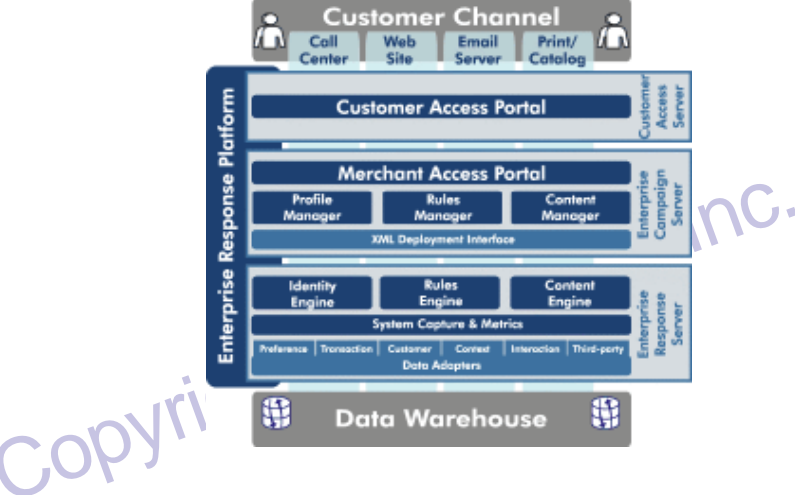
One of the difficulties of marketing online is to align marketing objectives with marketing technology and data mining techniques. This three-stage approach is critical to the success of online marketing because failure to set up key marketing objectives is often the reason for online marketing failure, such as overspending on marketing activities that contribute little to the overall result. Consequently, it is important to formulate clear and tangible marketing objectives before deploying e-marketing solutions and data mining techniques. At the same time, allow empirical data to generate meanings to verify marketing objectives performances. Figure 2 depicts a three-stage model of objective-driven e-marketing with feedback mechanisms.

Objective-driven e-marketing starts with identifying the objectives of the marketing campaign as the key to successful E-marketing, as well as with a goal (or a strategic goal) based on the organisation's mission. For example, a goal can be "to obtain at least 50% of the market among the online interactive game players." This is then factored into a number of objectives. An objective is a management directive of what is to be achieved in an e-marketing campaign. An example of such objective is to "use a cost-effective way to make an impression of Product X on teenagers who play online games over the Internet." In this context, the difference between a goal and an objective is that a goal addresses strategic issues while an objective tactical.

Often an e-marketing campaign includes multiple objectives and together constitutes the goal of the campaign. In order to achieve such a goal, it is necessary to deploy e-marketing technology and data mining techniques to provide feedback to measure the achievement of objectives. Not very often, an e-marketing technology is chosen based on close examination of e-marketing objectives. One just hopes that the objectives are somehow satisfied. However, it is increasingly important to have an e-marketing solution that helps to monitor if whether the original objectives are satisfied; if not, there should be sufficient feedback on what additional steps should be taken to ensure this is achieved.

In the following sections, we first provide a discussion on the various e-marketing solutions ranging from simple Weblog analysis to real-time packet analysis. We then discuss their strengths and weaknesses together with their suitability in the context of various e-marketing scenarios. Finally, we explain how these solutions can be interfaced with various data mining techniques to provide feedback. The feedback will be analysed to ensure designated marketing objectives are being achieved and if not, what should be done.

Figure 1. Enterprise customer response technology. Source: www.customers.com/tech/index.htm.



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