November 20, 2018

Memo to: Editorial Solutions Performance Insider members   fm: Howard Rauch

Re: Results of 7th annual B2b e-news delivery study

This report includes selected results from my seventh annual 50-site study of B2B e-news performance. Having this information on hand should facilitate your future plan to use similar tabulations to compare your strengths and weaknesses compared with those of competitors. First let's consider Tables I and II, which provide an overview of survey methodology.

TABLE I: Top-ranking e-news package's delivery for ten articles posted on the day the site was reviewed

ARTICLE	IMP	ENT	QUO	LEAD	FI	ASL	WDS	LINKS	E QUOTES
A	High	Low	2	**-24**	10.8	18.7	431	1	2
B	High	Med	**0**	-3	7.2	14.1	727	2	0
C	Med	Low	2	-7	12.5	24.1	436	2	1
D	High	High	**0**	**-30**	11.2	24.2	**2925**	4	0
E	High	Low	**1**	-3	10.9	19.6	353	2	0
F	**Low**	Low	2	-13	10.3	17.3	623	2	0
G	High	Low	**0**	-8	8.6	14.8	313	2	0
H	High	Low	2	-4	**13.9**	24.9	349	1	0
I	High	**No**	1	-2	**13.3**	**25.1**	451	**0**	0
J	High	Low	2	-8	11.8	22.4	381	6	1

FIX-IT ALERT: 10 E-NEWS ITEMS = 12/80 = 15.0%

TABLE II: Lowest-ranking e-news package's delivery for ten articles posed on the day the site was reviewed

ARTICLE	IMP	ENT	QUO	LEAD	FI	ASL	WDS	LINKS	E QUOTES
A	High	**No**	**0**	-24	**14.4**	24.8	248	1	0
B	Med	**No**	2	-6	**17.1**	**29.0**	203	**0**	2
C	High	**No**	**0**	**-60**	10.8	19.0	228	1	0
D	**Low**	**No**	1	**-18**	11.1	20.5	123	**0**	1
E	High	Low	2	**-15**	**13.2**	23.6	331	1	1
F	Med	**No**	**0**	-3	**14.6**	**25.2**	378	1	0
G	**Low**	**No**	**0**	-8	**14.1**	21.2	**85**	**0**	0
H	**Low**	**No**	**0**	-8	**16.1**	17.7	**53**	1	0
I	High	**No**	**0**	-13	**14.8**	23.7	146	1	0
J	High	**No**	1	-13	**15.1**	17.5	241	**0**	**0**

FIX-IT ALERT: 10 E-NEWS ITEMS = 38/80 = 47.5%

The above tabulations reflect an eight-factor scoring system: IMP = impact; ENT = evidence of enterprise; QUO = number of direct quotes; LEAD = number of words used before key story point is reached; FI = Fog Index grade level; ASL = average sentence length in words; WDS = total article word count; LINKS = number of embedded links provided.

(CONTINUED)

PHASE VII E-NEWS DELIVERY STUDY – PAGE TWO

The ninth factor – E Quotes – is not scored. In another table, you'll find a separate calculation used to reflect editorial staff's success in gathering input from end-user sources.

Another chart component requiring explanation is Fix-It Alert. This device was introduced in my Phase II study. The reason: client claims that tabulated information shown in Tables I and II was difficult to absorb in terms of prioritizing where and when improvements were required.

With FIA, viewers immediately can spot categories where shortfalls exist. In execution, any factor that does not meet a predetermined standard is boldfaced. So in table II, you don't even have to count the number of boldfaced items. Simply looking at the crowding of boldface factors makes it clear that much-improved execution is required.

In practice, boldface is assigned on the following basis: IMP = ratings of Low or No; ENT = rating of No; QUO = rating of 0; LEAD = rating of -15 or higher; FI = rating of 13.0 or higher; ASL = rating of 25.0 words or higher; WDS = total article word count fewer than 100 words or higher than 750; LINKS = zero embedded links provided.

Table III: Performing/Scoring Data for Top 10 Finishers, Editorial Solutions Inc. Phase VII E-News Study

Factor	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Items showing enterprise	9	10	10	10	8	1	5	9	6	5
Fog Index 13.0 or higher	2	2	1	0	1	5	5	5	5	6
ASL 25.0 words or higher	0	1	1	4	0	4	3	3	4	6
Number of embedded links	22	6	14	0	31	43	36	7	76	17
Total end-users quoted	4	8	10	5	1	2	2	9	7	3
Fix-It Alert score (%)	12.8	18.8	8.8	18.8	16.3	9.9	31.2	22.5	26.3	20.0
Average article score	67.5	66.8	66.3	64.3	63.7	63.3	62.9	61.9	61.4	60.8

Table IV: Performing/Scoring Data for Bottom 10 Finishers, Editorial Solution Inc. Phase VII News Study

Factor	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Items showing enterprise	6	6	4	2	3	2	3	2	7	1
Fog Index 13.0 or higher	9	6	5	5	9	5	6	5	3	8
ASL 25.0 words or higher	9	5	3	4	2	4	5	5	4	2
Number of embedded links	24	2	10	11	0	10	8	3	1	30
Total end-users quoted	4	5	2	7	2	7	4	1	5	4
Fix-It Alert Score (%)	37.3	42.5	31.3	47.5	31.3.	33.8	41.3	33.8	23.8	47.5
Average article score	51.0	50.8	50.6	50.5	50.5	50.3	50.2	49.7	45.1	44.8

As you assess the above tabulations, please remember that every site was exposed to a ten-article review. Thus it becomes significant to note that among the bottom ten finishers, the best performing enterprise site managed a total of seven out of a possible ten articles.

PHASE VII E-NEWS DELIVERY STUDY – PAGE THREE

Table V: QUOTE USAGE TOTALS FOR 50 E-NEWS PACKAGES SHOWN BY SURVEY FINAL RANKINGS

Site ranking	All quotes	End-user quotes	Site ranking	All quotes	End-user quotes
(1)	12	4	(26)	7	2
(2)	21	8	(27)	6	0
(3)	15	10	(28)	5	0
(4)	10	5	(29)	15	5
(5)	14	1	(30)	8	2
(6)	7	2	(31)	13	2
(7)	15	2	(32)	8	1
(8)	10	9	(33)	5	1
(9)	9	7	(34)	16	5
(10)	12	3	(35)	14	12
(11)	14	3	(36)	14	11
(12)	14	8	(37)	14	3
(13)	12	3	(38)	10	4
(14)	11	11	(39)	9	6
(15)	12	6	(40)	16	0
(16)	9	3	(41)	16	10
(17)	15	1	(42)	14	4
(18)	5	5	(43)	10	5
(19)	17	5	(44)	5	2
(20)	11	4	(45)	16	7
(21)	11	3	(46)	2	2
(22)	7	7	(47)	16	7
(23)	2	0	(48)	8	4
(24)	6	0	(49)	6	1
(25)	4	2	(50)	6	4

The above data show how successfully each e-news package reviewed gathered end-user quotes. Which of the above most accurately matches your approach? The real question to be resolved is whether or not current practice needs reshuffling. Right now, there only are a handful of examples where the majority of quotes used were obtained from end-users. The best way to adjust the distribution is that when e-newsletters are posted, at least one article is a round-up based on input from at least six or more authoritative end-user sources.

Meanwhile, let's consider the above data mathematically. First, we know that each site involves a ten-article review. So for the sake of argument, let's agree that each article should include at least one direct quote from an end-user or other source. So in the "All quotes" column, every time the number falls below ten, that seemingly reasonable goal was not achieved. In other words, 45 sites – 90% – missed the mark.

Now let's turn to end-user quote achievement. Let's agree that every ten-article package reviewed should contain at least ten end-user quotes. This could be accomplished via including one end-user quote in every article. But a more likely possibility would be that two or three articles collectively would contain ten end-user quotes; the remaining

(CONTINUED)

PHASE VII E-NEWS DELIVERY STUDY – PAGE FOUR

seven or eight articles would include quotes from other sources. So the end-user target would be 10/10 = 1.0.

Concluding Table VI also uses the 1.0 target to reflect adequate embedded link usage. In this case, 33 of the 50 sites examined were in the ballpark.

TABLE VI: EMBEDDED LINKS USAGE TOTALS FOR 50 E-NEWS PACKAGES SHOWN BY SURVEY FINAL RANKINGS

Site ranking	# Of links	ELU score	Site ranking	#Of links	ELU score
(1)	22	2.2	(26)	19	1.9
(2)	6	0.6	(27)	12	1.2
(3)	14	1.4	(28)	17	1.7
(4)	0	0.0	(29)	5	1.5
(5)	31	3.1	(30)	28	2.8
(6)	43	4.3	(31)	8	0.8
(7)	36	3.6	(32)	6	0.6
(8)	7	0.7	(33)	4	0.4
(9)	76	7.6	(34)	3	0.3
(10)	17	1.7	(35)	0	0.0
(11)	19	1.9	(36)	2	0.2
(12)	8	0.8	(37)	19	1.9
(13)	3	0.3	(38)	10	1.0
(14)	11	1.1	(39)	9	0.9
(15)	6	0.6	(40)	18	1.8
(16)	13	1.3	(41)	1	1.0
(17)	24	2.4	(42)	24	2.4
(18)	22	2.2	(43)	2	2.2
(19)	17	2.2	(44)	10	1.0
(20)	20	2.0	(45)	11	1.1
(21)	28	2.8	(46)	0	0.0
(22)	10	1.0	(47)	10	1.0
(23)	20	2.0	(48)	8	0.8
(24)	6	0.6	(49)	3	0.3
(25)	5	5.5	(50)	30	3.0

Thus far, we've seen that lack of enterprise is an important hurdle to overcome. And we may need to rethink our e-news delivery policy in terms of beefing up end-user input. But we also have a few basic editing snafus that deserve immediate attention. The first is to observe brevity principles as outlined by Fog Index theory. Among other recommendations, suggests that article average sentence length should approach 20 words. Higher ASL's guarantee impaired readability.

(CONTINUED)

PHASE VII E-NEWS DELIVERY STUDY – PAGE FIVE

Another basic editing glitch, often referred to in my publishing industry blog posts, is "source first, news second" introductions. This often occurs because the intro is burdened by an opening sentence that provides a source's name, title and affiliation before arriving at a key story point. There are variations of this theme, but I think you get the idea.

If need for clarification occurs along the way, forward questions to editsol1@optimum.net. Or call me: (201) 569-7714.

Regards,

Howard Rauch, President
Editorial Solutions, Inc.

P.S. – An additional set of tables covering e-news performance by specific markets served – such as retail, medical, transportation – will be available next month.