

2012

Idaho Marketing Tactic Survey

January, 2012

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Which marketing tactics are working for Idaho companies? Which aren't?

Those two simple questions led us to create the Idaho Marketing Tactic Survey. The survey provides a rare insider's look at the marketing efforts of Idaho companies – both what's working and what's not.

What the survey is: a self-reported assessment of the marketing tactics employed by Idaho companies in diverse industries, ranging from health care to professional services.

What the survey isn't: though the sample size is significant for a localized, business-focused survey, it has not been statistically verified.

More about this survey.

Who took this survey: executives from 64 Idaho-based companies, 52 of which have 2+ employees. 61% (39) employ 11 or more people. Their industries are varied:

- Professional services
- Technology
- Wholesale distribution
- Manufacturing
- Medical
- Travel & tourism
- Retail
- Agriculture
- Real Estate

Highlights ►

- Most companies are beginning the new year in an aggressive marketing frame of mind: 74% plan to increase their overall marketing efforts and 55% plan to increase their overall marketing spending.
- This spending increasingly is going into digital marketing. The majority (75%) say digital marketing (websites, social media, blogs, etc.) tactics will be “most important” to their marketing efforts in 2012.
- The vast majority—a full 83% of our respondents—plan to increase corporate social media usage in 2012.
- Those who are not participating in social media say that it is due to the lack of people (35%) or lack of time (26%).
- Facebook continues its climb as a legitimate marketing tactic.

Findings ▶

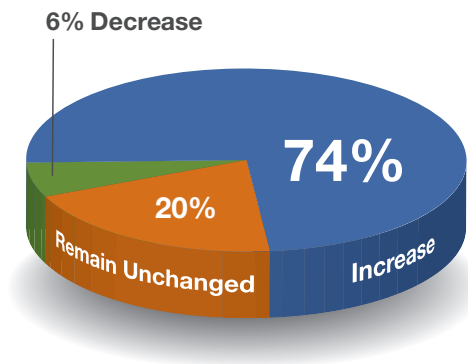
The next 12 months.

The great shift from traditional marketing (print advertising, billboards, TV, etc.) to digital marketing (websites, social media, blogs, etc.) continues. Again this year the vast majority of Idaho companies surveyed report they plan to do more and spend more, but not necessarily in traditional tactics. Enthusiasm for traditional marketing continues to wane—20% of companies plan to decrease their spending in this category, twice the number who said they planned to decrease their spending in the category last year.

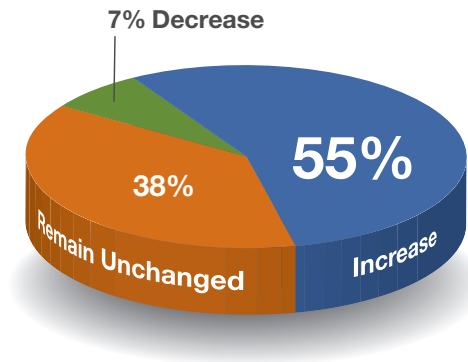
Also similar to last year, respondents plan to do more without hiring more people. Only 12.5% say they will increase their marketing department hiring.

- ▶ Do you expect the following to increase, decrease or remain unchanged in the next 12 months?

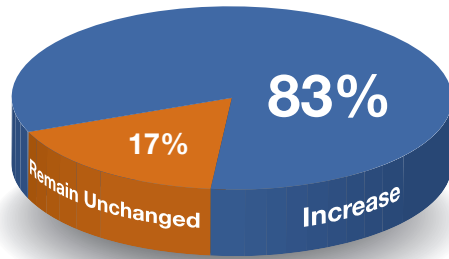
Overall Marketing Efforts



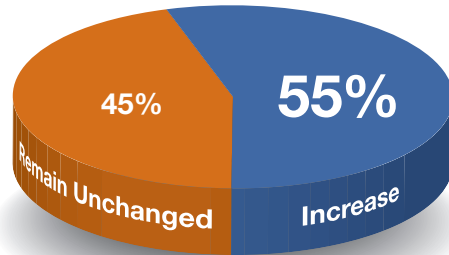
Overall Marketing Spending



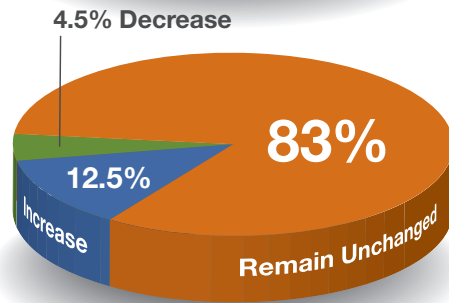
Corporate Social Media Usage



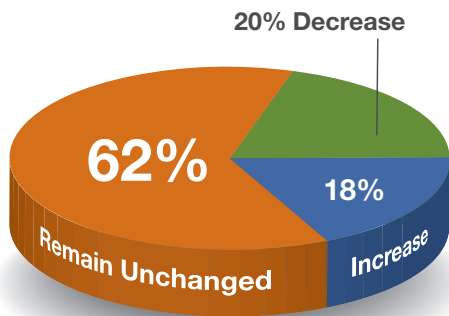
Internet-Based Marketing
(banner ads, website, etc.)



Marketing Department Hiring



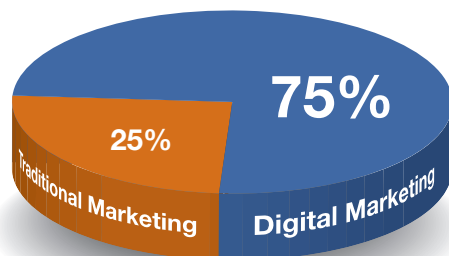
Traditional Marketing
(print, billboards, TV, radio, etc.)



► In the next 12 months, which types of tactics will be most important to your marketing efforts?

Digital Marketing
(websites, social media, blogs, etc.)

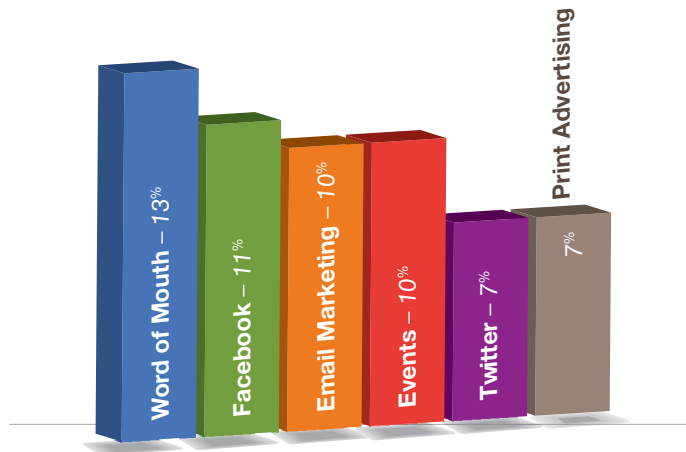
Traditional Marketing
(print, direct mail, billboards, TV, radio, etc.)



Regarding all bar graphs:

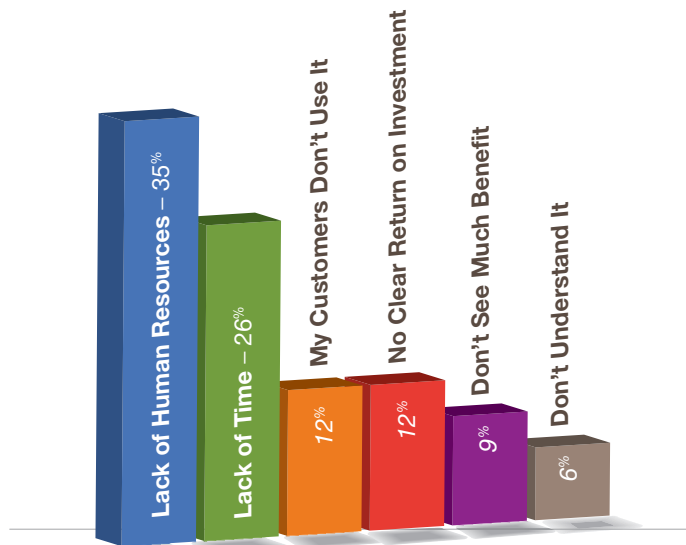
Figures represent the percentage of those that answered the given tactic. Respondents had 16 defined tactics to choose from as well as the option to list “other” tactics.

► **What marketing tactics are you currently utilizing?**



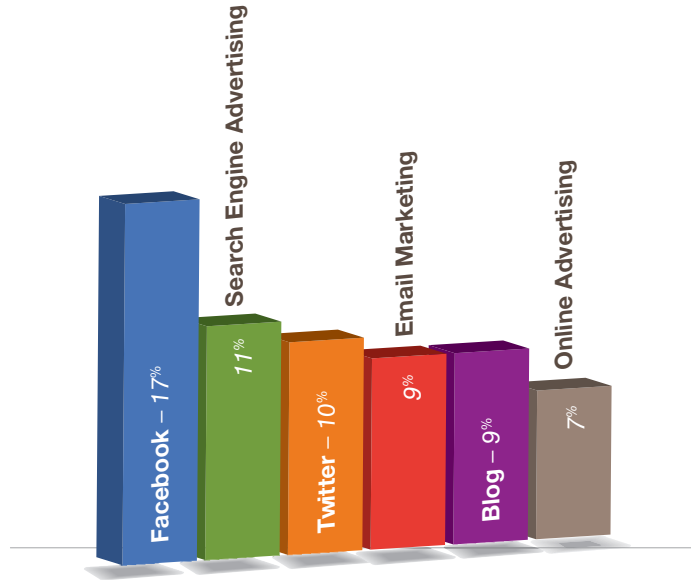
Word of mouth (unsurprisingly) continues to be the undisputed leader in the tactics used. The other top six tactics remained the same as last year, with Facebook edging out email marketing for the second place spot. Respondents chose from an exhaustive list of tactics from telemarketing to billboards to radio advertising. Each tactic had several companies who reported using it.

► **If you are not currently using social media for marketing, what are the primary reasons you are not?**



Our only new question this year. Interestingly, respondents reported exactly what our consulting practice has shown us: many companies don't have the time or resources to do SM right. In other words, while SM doesn't take a lot of cash, it takes a lot of time. And we all know time equals money.

- ▶ What tactics are you NOT using now that you are planning to begin using in the next 12 months?



Social media climbed up the list this year. Facebook leapfrogged the others to take the lead, while Twitter, which didn't crack the top six last year, debuted at #3. Last year print advertising hung in for the #6 spot, but this year joined other traditional media in not making the top six responses.

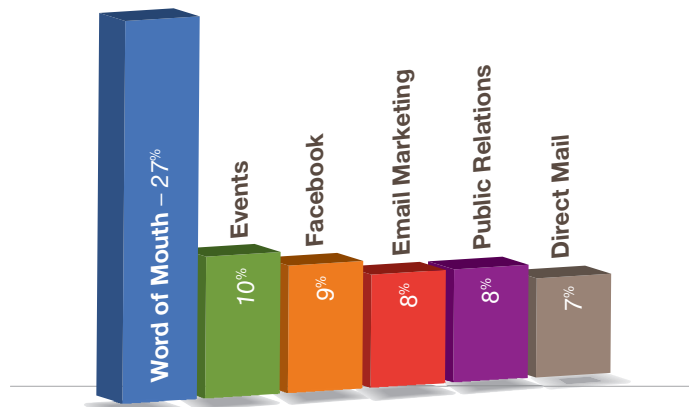
What's happening now?

Almost across the board, Idaho companies are looking to get closer to their customers through more personal, less intrusive tactics. This means more investment in content-rich mediums like Facebook, events, and email marketing. We believe this a good sign—signal that companies are looking to offer their customers value in every interaction, including their marketing efforts. These approaches do, however, pose a challenge for acquiring new customers. For that, Idaho companies rely on (ever-popular) word of mouth, events, public relations and online advertising.

On the other side, the “old standbys,” particularly Yellow Pages, are not viewed too favorably. Put simply, most survey respondents don't think they deliver a good return on investment. In fact, for the second year in a row, Yellow Pages is named the tactic found to deliver “the least bang for your buck” and to be “least effective.” How long can this medium survive?

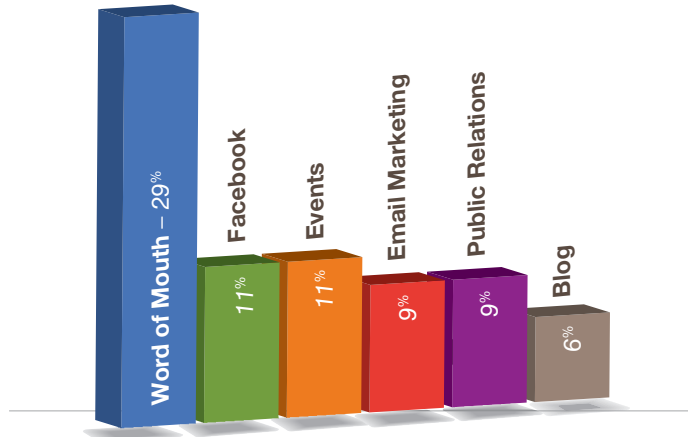
In the interest of space, only the top six responses out of 16 total options are listed graphically. Additional details can be found below each graphic.

► **Of these tactics, which three would you consider MOST IMPORTANT to your business?**



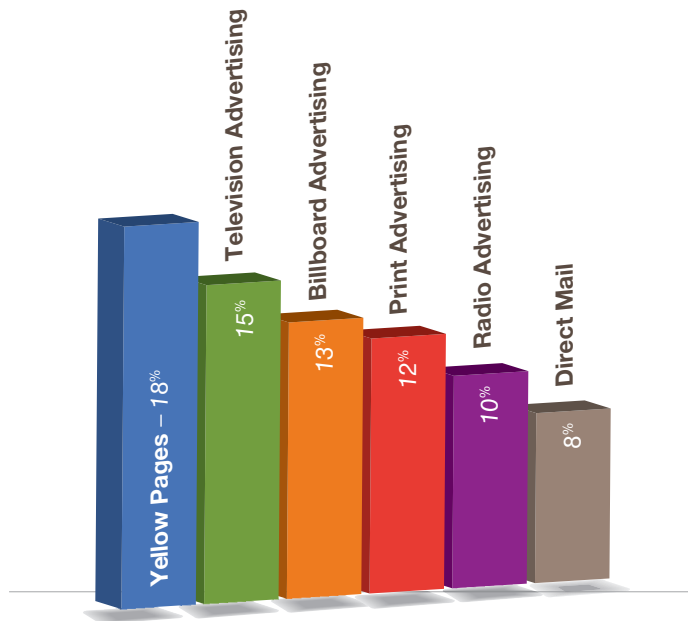
Broadcast mediums like radio and TV were rated very low in responses to this question. This is likely because so few of respondents use them regularly. What did rank high were tactics that allow companies to control their message, but share it in a more intimate and in-depth way.

- ▶ Of these tactics, which three do you believe give you the MOST “bang for your buck?”



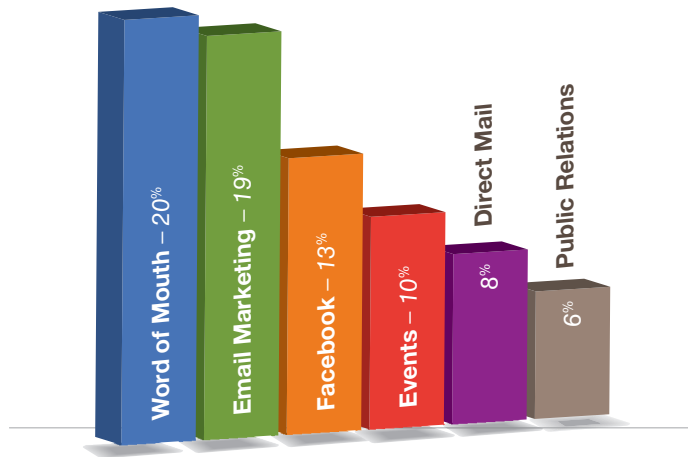
Again, Facebook moves up the list, from the #6 response last year to #2 this year. Obviously, Facebook usage by business has hit the mainstream, a fact buoyed by our own first-hand experience in our consulting practice.

- ▶ Of these tactics, which three do you believe give you the LEAST “bang for your buck?”



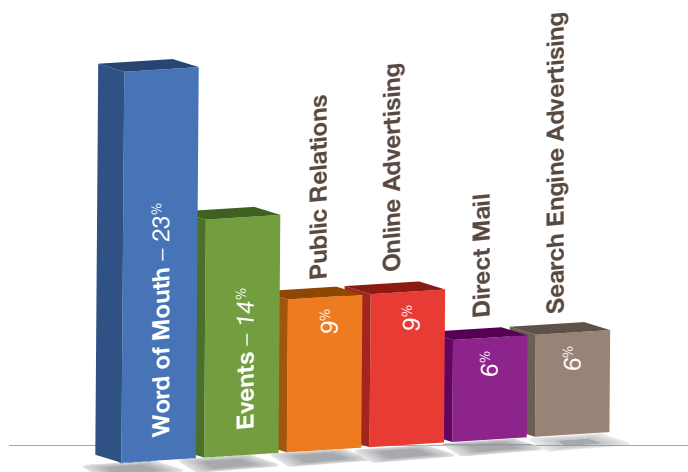
Here, traditional media rules. Obviously, for the small businesses that dominate Idaho’s marketing landscape, the overall costs, while cost-effective for reaching the masses, are difficult to justify. Interestingly, telemarketing/cold-calling finished solidly in the middle of the pack.

- ▶ Of these tactics, which three have you found to be MOST EFFECTIVE in marketing to **EXISTING CUSTOMERS**?



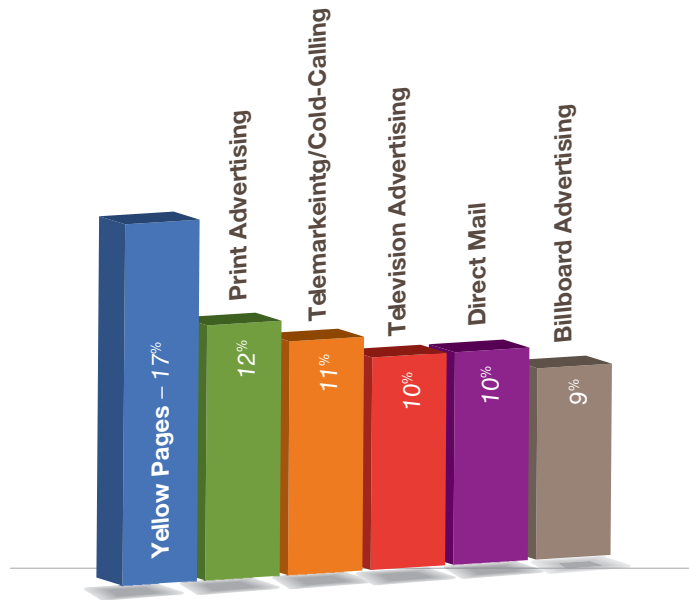
Word of mouth and email marketing continue to dominate, while Facebook moves from the bottom of the pack to the top three. Billboard advertising was the only tactic to get zero votes.

- ▶ Of these tactics, which three have you found to be MOST EFFECTIVE in attracting **NEW CUSTOMERS**?



Search engine marketing and direct mail debuted on this list in positions #5 and #6. Again, billboard advertising was the only tactic to get zero votes.

- Of these tactics, which three have you found to be LEAST EFFECTIVE in attracting new customers?



Not a single digital or “new” media makes the list as among the “least effective” in attracting new customers. For the second year in a row, Yellow Pages tops this less-than-flattering chart.

About Rizen Creative ►

Rizen Creative helps underdogs win. “Underdog” is not a euphemism for “small” or “unsophisticated.” Our work spans multinational corporations, mid-sized consumer and business-to-business companies, and government agencies. Their common thread? A desire to use the power of a well executed idea to compete with better-funded or more entrenched competitors. We use digital, traditional or unconventional marketing tactics to grab attention, communicate clearly and spur action. Simple, really.

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