

New tendency in viral marketing

Viral marketing is first and foremost associated with small film clips, jokes and publicity films that are forwarded to and from inboxes worldwide. Often humour or sex carries out the message. But according to Keith Mullan, MD of PSA Solutions, a lot of companies choose the wrong wrapping.

Mullan advocates a more strategic and thoroughly targeted kind of viral marketing, such as the Maconomy marketing campaign to launch on 1 May 2006: "Today, viral campaigns are not only supposed to entertain their audience. If a company wants to promote a new product, the message has to relate to a situation the target group can identify with.

"A good viral marketing campaign combines form and content and addresses the relevant target group in a way that demands their interest. Next, the viral element must invite the target group into a universe, which they recognise and find so entertaining/relevant that they forward it to their colleagues. That way the message is spread through the optimal communication channels," says Mullan.

He points out that a serious businessman is not likely to forward pornographic clips or amateur daredevil footage to his network.

"Most viral campaigns aim for a large target group and reach an even larger one. But that kind of viral marketing has not been our purpose. I would rather get in touch with 60 000 potential customers than a million people for whom the content of our viral online game might well be entertaining but not at all commercially relevant," Mullan continues.

On 1 May 2006, Maconomy's marketing division will launch a go-to-market strategy mixing a 'traditional' positioning strategy with a viral online game. Through the last 16 years, Maconomy has provided business- and industry-related job management and accounting solutions to three core segments: IT/consulting, engineering and marketing communications. At the heart of the viral online game "Catch time - on time" is the software company's product experience and knowledge of different businesses - that a healthy bottom line requires employee time registration.

"The combination of traditional and new communications disciplines is in my opinion perfect when the goal is to generate awareness and at the same time increase the chances for a positive recognition of the product," says Mullan.