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Achieving powerful online success through integrated marketing solutions

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No one hopes for economic hardship. But, smart marketers in any industry can learn to make the most of a bad situation when the economy takes a turn for the worse. Economic downturns, despite popular opinion, present great opportunity for savvy marketers to kick-off new products, gain market share, and solidify brand identity.

Unfortunately, these opportunities are not always at the forefront of the minds of companies being faced with shrinking budgets and lost revenue. As a result, marketing is often first on the chopping block during budget cuts. According to a recent Epsilon survey of CMOs, 79% strongly or somewhat agreed that during an economic downturn, marketing budgets are the first to be scrutinized and eliminated.

Knowledgeable marketers, however, are singing a very different tune. Ask any qualified marketing expert and they will tell you that you have to increase spending on marketing—especially in a tough economy. Time and time again, companies have marketed their way through tough times to an end of increased market share and stronger brand recognition than their competition. As stated by Sir Martin Sorrell, chief executive of WPP Group, "When times are tough, it is time to invest, not cut. This comes from years of research dating back to Ogilvy's Alex Biel and Millward Brown interaction surveys. All show that if we cut marketing during such times, the impact is damaging and it can take you longer to get back to where you were."

Choosing the right online strategy is essential to marketing success and revenue growth in today's tough economy. In addition, marketers are faced with breaking down the silos between online and offline media campaigns. Finding a balance and integrating the right online efforts with offline strategies is a new challenge for marketers that will not be short-lived. The only certainty in the future of integrated online and offline marketing is that it will continue to grow, change, and evolve, and marketers are advised to get onboard.

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