

Lists 4 Europe

Lists 4 Europe, advertorial: February 2005 for Sally.

2005 saw the closure of several editions of leading global publications - editions with tailored content for each region. The reason given for closure is twofold, but the two points are in my opinion very much related. Firstly the internet presents an easier and more cost effective distribution channel in terms of content and secondly the advertising does not support the cost base. This has a knock-on effect to the list industry meaning that these once responsive lists, over time will decline in size making international list sourcing harder and harder.

Despite this I believe there are two opportunities that arise from this situation for the international list community. Firstly, those with clients looking for fresh prospect names have to re-visit the files that have been tested in past campaigns and not revisited. Within these files there could potentially be segments hitherto unexplored that might yield a profitable response.

There are a number of large international files with segments that can be exploited and this is good news for any international data owner or manager who can seize the opportunity and make intelligent recommendations for a retest, either directly to the client or to the client's broker.

As a company with both international compiled and response lists under management we are already seeing signs of marketers prepared to re-visit and re-test files that may not have reached ROI goals in the past but who have successfully re-tested with pleasing results, but this requires flexibility. Flexibility between list owner, broker and manager to ensure that the selection and the price can be mutually agreed to make the list perform and meet ROI expectations. Furthermore we are seeing that marketers conducting in country campaigns (rather than cross border campaigns) that segments of multinational lists can be made to work again provided there is flexibility, this is of course made easier with local representation and a broker or manager who understands both local and international markets so that pricing can be agreed that suits all parties.

The second opportunity for those list firms ever keen to expand their reach I believe there lies an opportunity to work outside of the list and data area. I'm not limiting this to inserts and email lists but working with the client in other ways to help them meet their new customer acquisition targets. This could be acquisition via the internet or working with the client who is increasingly looking to lower their customer acquisition costs by utilising either some of their product or working on a revenue share basis. This is something several

list firms have grasped the nettle of but in my opinion not enough have and as such are missing out on a way to develop our business from being list focussed to dealing with other response channels.

2006 will yield challenges for our customers, which will in turn present opportunities for the list industry. Only companies with a flexible approach and the right resources will be able to help their customers with their marketing challenges.

Richard Gibson is Commercial Director of RSA Direct, the UK partner in the Lists4Europe network richard.gibson@rsadirect.com