

## Is social media relevant for B2B marketing?

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## The Winning Ticket: The Trifecta Of Intention Marketing

by [Chris Copeland](#), 3 hours ago

As you read this, I will be standing somewhere on the grounds of my favorite sports destination, Churchill Downs. For me, the two minutes of thoroughbred racing on the first Saturday in May that is the Kentucky Derby is my favorite sports moment. The weekend encompasses three of my favorite things: sports with gambling attached, golf and plaid. It also gives me a great excuse to tie my hours of research into the writing of this column.

Last week I spoke at Search Insider Summit and it seemed like people couldn't help but fall all over the linkage between search and everything else. "Search is a verb" moderator Gord Hotchkiss cried out; search and social were cited multiple times, real-time search was hailed as game-changing, and Facebook had a speaking role. Even Aaron Goldman's annual trending topics Buzz-O-Meter was decidedly not search-centric.

Ultimately, I believe this will all be true; but I fear we've put cart before horse a bit and want to put into horse-wagering terms why the race is far from run in search, and how hitting a trifecta is a broader marketing decision. In horse racing a trifecta bet is selecting the horses that will finish first, second and third in that exact order. Trifectas pay well, but are not easy to pull off.

In the new-media world that has sprung from search, we suddenly have an active participant in the consumer, expressing intent through the platform and expecting appropriate responses from the advertiser. This is a key difference from the origins of traditional advertising, where the consumer was passive and, therefore, mattered much less on a one-off basis than today.

What I witnessed at SIS and see happening more and more is a focus on two pieces of the ticket. More and more I hear people advocating social and intention marketing because the consumer is engaged and expressing intent. Fully valid rationale -- except when it's tethered only to the location. Time and time again I hear people saying the reason to do social is because your consumers are there and talking about you. Since when did pressing advertisers to market out of fear lead to productive relations and results?

My problem is, we seem to be losing sight of the advertiser's value in the equation. The focus on the role of Google, Yahoo, Bing or Facebook should not be understated, but as the platform, it's a constant. Consumers are there, so the logic goes "we need to be there." But simply showing up is a bit like picking horses based on the color of the jockey's silks. It's an option -- but you won't win too often.

Instead, what we continue to push marketers to invest in is the relationship they aspire to create with consumers. Understanding the platform only matters if you can leverage it to your gain. And that gain comes from better site experiences, better brand assets and forming connections that establish your brand and work towards purchase and loyalty. If your owned media assets are not up to the challenge, then you might as well bet on the long shot. It will come in once in a while, but it's not a long-term strategy. For every Mine that Bird (last year's 54-1 Derby winner) there are dozens of horses that go off at worse odds and never come close. It seems advertisers are being rushed into being there, whether that's buying ads on Google or suddenly having to do Promoted Tweets without properly understanding what they bring to the table.

Brands need to recognize everything can be an asset. Yet the reality is, for something to be an asset it has to have value to both the brand and the consumers. And it also must fit into the platform. When you bet on your brand and create assets that align with consumers on their own course, you have a winning trifecta. Now for your Derby Trifecta "guess": Awesome Act - Ice Box -

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