

Meet the 1to1 Editors



Topic:

**Guest Blogger Jeff Hilimire: Move Marketing Forward by Agreeing to Adapt**

**by Guest Blogger**

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### **Guest Blogger Jeff Hilimire: Move Marketing Forward by Agreeing to Adapt**

Marketing has seen tremendous change over the past five to 10 years. Take a closer look at direct and digital marketing specifically and you'll see a clear shift. Marketers are beginning to combine the opportunities made possible by the principles and disciplines of direct marketing with the accountability and engagement that are possible with digital marketing. We call this shift iDirect - where the blurring of the lines between these disciplines is being used to garner greater customer engagement that leads to measurable and dramatic gains in ROI.

Marketers in both camps see the potential of tapping into the other side. As a result, agencies are beginning to see these initiatives bubble up from their clients. In fact, I'd go so far as to say that iDirect to date has been driven by brands, rather than agencies. Now, that's not saying that agencies aren't responding, or in some cases even leading the charge. What I am suggesting is that the industry isn't collectively responding. And until that happens, we won't see the true potential of an iDirect discipline.

For the industry, iDirect represents progress. But it does require change; and for marketers and agencies alike, this isn't always easy. Agencies will need to break down barriers between their digital and direct practices to deliver more unified solutions. For those who already collaborate and share, this will happen more quickly. For others, where silos isolate disciplines, it will take a determined effort to create a unified channel that supports a marriage of best practices, tools, and strategic thinking for the benefit of client initiatives.

Brand marketers, particularly in large organizations where marketing practices are fed into separate departments, will need to consider restructuring. Teams need to share information and critical thinking to develop a full view of both the customer and the marketing programs that are speaking to them. It means sharing of systems, transfer of information, and a willingness from team members to collaborate for a common goal.

It will also take recognition by the industry - and the organizations that serve them. For example, the Direct Marketing Association has formed a committee, aptly named the [iDirect Leadership Committee](#), which is represented by both brands and agencies. And Engauge chairman Stan Rapp, cochair of the DMA's iDirect Leadership Committee, is releasing [Reinventing Interactive and Direct Marketing](#), an anthology highlighting the practice and the future of iDirect. The purpose of the committee and book is to bring the channel to reality, and to put best practices in place to move the initiative forward. It is the broader thinking and guidance that is needed to shake things up and stir change.

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**About the author:** Jeff Hilimire is Chief Digital Officer for [Engauge](#)