

## The growth of 'one-stop-shop' list and data providers

Caroline Byrne, Winterberry Group  
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In a time of growing marketing complexity and weakening economic health, marketers increasingly rely on their list and data providers to play a strategic role in the adoption and development of integrated marketing programs. Although the trend towards personalized multichannel marketing is not new, organizations still struggle to break down their internal silos, impeding the adoption of these increasingly responsive campaigns.

In preparation for this future demand, list and data providers have been aggressively adding established distribution channels (e.g. InfoUSA's acquisition of Millard-Mokrynski) and data services (e.g. Epsilon's acquisition of Abacus Direct and Acxiom's recent Equitec and MKTG Services acquisitions). This consolidation will likely increase throughout 2008, giving rise to more sophisticated "one-stop-shop" list services providers that objectively serve marketers' complete media buying needs and provide complementary products and services that enhance multichannel marketing efforts.

Many progressive list and data providers have demonstrated a keen understanding of the industry's future, proactively expanding channel coverage and adding integrated analytics and reporting capabilities. These market leaders have an important role to play over the next two years, acting as a catalyst for organizational change through missionary selling efforts. The increased cost, complexity and competitiveness of customer acquisition, has propelled the role of the traditional list broker to that of a consultative marketing partner. Marketers are increasingly relying on these providers not only for their list expertise, but also for strategic and tactical planning services to effectively execute integrated marketing campaigns.

Marketers faced with increased accountability and the demand for demonstrable results continue to invest in targeted, below-the-line, response-driven tactics. Although second nature to some industry sectors — marketing through multiple channels, uncharted territory for others. As list and data providers' reporting and analytic tools continue to advance, marketer confidence and adoption of multichannel marketing programs will surge.

List and data providers are in a unique position to shape the evolution of the industry landscape, through the addition of data and services that enable integrated marketing programs.

*Caroline Byrne is a director at Winterberry Group. She can be reached at [caroline@winterberrygroup.com](mailto:caroline@winterberrygroup.com).*

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