

imc²**1) Can you give the readers some background on imc²?**

imc², an independent brand engagement agency founded in 1995, helps clients build meaningful and profitable relationships with people. From strategy development to global social media platforms, we blend our proven digital approach with emerging and more traditional media to deliver the ideas and tools that brands need to thrive. With offices in Dallas, New York City and Philadelphia, imc² works with some great companies and brands, including The Coca-Cola Company, Pizza Hut, Pfizer, Samsung USA, Unisys, and GlaxoSmithKline.

2) What does imc² specialize in, and what sets you apart in the marketplace?

imc² specializes in helping brands build sustainable relationships with people – relationships that focus on both short-term and long-term results. While helping clients increase transactions (short-term), we're equally concerned with helping them develop trust with their consumers (long-term focus). We evaluate the entire marketing landscape when creating strategies for our clients. These strategic solutions may be technology-enabled, but more often involve an integrated approach that efficiently and intelligently supports dialog and engagement across media, platforms, channels and touchpoints such as web, social, CRM, mobile, search, digital media, gaming, out of home, and mass.

3) How does imc² utilize market research, and what value does it provide?

Market research builds solid strategy by acting as the voice of the consumer. This creates a better and more sustainable ROI for imc²'s clients. imc² uses market research for a variety of reasons, such as gaining consumer insights by building target audience personas; understanding emotional engagement; testing concepts; understanding company image, awareness, and loyalty; and getting to the heart of questions our clients want and need to answer.

4) How has iModerate helped you and your clients?

iModerate offers important opportunities to help imc² learn about consumers and their preferences. The partnership is a helpful tool in imc²'s arsenal. In addition, iModerate works well with tight timelines and cutting-edge approaches to help imc² create valuable insights for its clients.

5) What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing digital and direct marketing in 2009 and beyond?

Helping marketers navigate the shift from an independent campaign-driven approach to an “always on” marketing ecosystem. In the past, marketers created campaigns, stopped and measured, optimized, and launched another campaign – all in relative isolation. Marketers must now build multiple integrated strategies for brands and consumers that interact with each other. Digital was the catalyst for this change – then the widespread adoption of social media; where consumers are demanding a new level of accessibility and transparency for brands to be successful.

6) What do you see as the next “big thing” in your industry?

Three-screen convergence – where consumers can access the same content through their mobile phone, TV, and computer – is on the horizon. While not readily available yet, this idea is coming closer to reality with consumers' increasing adoption of fully functional

mobile browsers. These mobile browsers give consumers a level of control and access previously unimagined – consumers now expect brands to engage them well beyond advertising messages focused on persuasion. Consumers are experiencing micro control over the things that really matter. Significant numbers of consumers are using applications that provide a rich value in terms of content and accessibility to the brand. This is all providing brands with a new way to advance relationships with consumers, resulting in more transactions and a higher degree of trust with those consumers.

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