

# Hospitality

I learned about touch-points from a client in the hospitality industry. He wanted complete feedback from a marketing person (me) on every facet of communicating with him and his company; from my impression of the “touch-point” that was his message on the after-hours answering machine to my initial impression when driving up to his property. Touchpoints are every time, place and medium in which your prospect or customer has contact, directly or indirectly, with your business.

Given: The best way to communicate with people is, however, they want to. Cross-pollinate touch-points. That is, do all you can to ensure that you offer prospects and clients the best way (their best way) to communicate with you and that they experience each as a complimentary, positive touch-point. Work email, the web, telemarketing, fax, personal visits, and US mail into your prospecting and customer service touch-points. For example, our company uses a geographically-based integrated marketing program that:

- Starts with a phone call to simply confirm the marketing decision-maker and whether the company has a web presence
- Continues with a personal visit to leave information for the decision-maker
- Continues with seven postcards via direct mail, sent one every three weeks
- Continues with a phone call, then a letter
- Then continues with a repeat of numbers 3 and 4, twice more each, alternating number 3 between print postcards and e-cards

All of these touch-points after the personal visit include an invitation to action. Relatively recently we substituted a basic (text only) email for half the postcards we were sending (mailing to half and emailing to half of our list for each card). The emails out-pulled the mailings two-to-one. Remember, we weren't spamming. These prospects we emailed were all familiar with us from a number of earlier touch-points, including a telephone contact and an in-person visit as well as inclusion on our (print/post) mailing list.