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## Online Branding in Today's Economy

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In today's current economy, it's more important than ever to effectively build your company's brand online. In economic recessions, making sure your brand is top of mind is critical. Connecting to clients through the Internet, as opposed to more traditional marketing techniques, can be more effective because of the:

- variety of approaches available
- high level of interactivity
- lower cost per campaign
- immediacy of results
- ability to better track results

According to a recent report entitled “Online Branding—The Internet’s Impact on Branding” by the research firm Cyber Dialogue, more than a third of users (36%) undergo shifts in brand perceptions as a result of using the Internet. Assuring that your brand is correctly translated on the Internet increases your arsenal for targeting your market and improves the value of your brand—especially important in these tough times.

How does today's business climate affect your branding strategies?

Here are a few points to consider:

- Assure that your online brand is strong and clear. Your goals should be to get noticed and to increase your relevance. Focus on developing a usable and functional web presence and creating email communications that stand out in overcrowded "In" bins.
- Plan your online strategies for the next three months. In tough times, situations change quickly and budgets are tight. Make sure that your message is relevant and that you're getting the ROI anticipated.
- Provide an interactive experience for your clients to help build your relationship. In shaky times, your clients might need some hand holding, so stay in touch. Consider offering discounts or specials when possible.

- Review the imagery associated with your brand. Edit images that are inappropriate for today's climate. Be sensitive to your client's current state of mind and the current state of their business. Shy away from controversial imagery.
- Express how you are participating to help others. Are you offering discounted services/products to those affected directly by the incidents of 911? Have you created a fund to help or are you contributing to an established fund?

Remember that your brand is "alive." Stick to your core principles, but remain flexible in communicating your brand to your clients who may be experiencing difficult times.