

## Larry Varnes

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## Dealing with a society on the go

Today, marketers are faced with the stark reality that we live in a time-constrained society with constant bombardment of commercial message opportunities. The question is how to reach their target with their goods and services. Technology has in many ways made the communications decision making process more complicated. There are so many opportunities the decision making process becomes mind-boggling.

It was not too many years ago that commercial messages were relegated to one of three major television networks, a few syndicated radio broadcasts, a couple of national magazine titles or the local newspaper. If a marketer put their message in one of these media, the message was sure to be seen or heard. But when was the last time you sat down with your family for an evening of television?

Today, we are a society on the go. The way we receive information has changed forever. Information is instantly available through just a click of a mouse. Programming is streamed onto computers, cell phones and PDA's. There are literally hundreds of special interest television channels, radio now comes via satellite and has a whole new overlay of HD stations. New, highly targeted magazine titles pop up monthly. The Internet has transformed the way we seek information. How many times do we hear "just Google it?" Given this explosion of commercial messaging opportunities and societal changes, what does this mean for marketers trying to break through to get their message across?

Smart marketers stick to the basics that have inspired successful communications for time immemorial: be relevant, keep it simple and entertain. Smart marketers are mindful of the new environment in which the messages are exposed. Commercial messaging should be viewed as an invited guest into people's lives. It is far too easy for people to zip or zap a television commercial, change radio channels or ignore an ill designed web site. The successful marketer realizes that the consumer is in control. Marketing communications should be something consumers seek out because they view it as a valuable tool ... something they want to see or hear. Maybe that has always been the way. The reality is that only the environment has changed.