



SITUATION

B&H Photo Video is one of the world's leading retailers of imaging products, serving professionals and consumers in the U.S. and internationally. With more than 200,000 items available in its inventory, online commerce has been a major sales channel for B&H for several years. A long time recipient of manufacturer-based online lead referrals, B&H desired a shift from manufacturer control to a more retailer-centric platform of online lead referrals.



“Approximately 20% of customers said that they came to manufacturer web sites specifically to buy items. An additional 25% said that they came to the web site specifically to research which other stores – both online and offline options – had the item of interest in stock.”

Must-Haves for Manufacturer Web Sites, a Joint Study with Channel Intelligence Highlights a Critical Stop on the Customer Purchase Path, Forrester Research Inc.



HISTORY

B&H, an early adopter of the original Channel Intelligence service for manufacturers called Product Links, knew the value of lead referrals from their vendors. Consumers on a manufacturer's site not only visit looking for product information, they are looking for ways to purchase. In the previous Product Links model, the manufacturer had full control over which retailer could participate in the program, the rules of engagement, order of retailers listed and more. In many cases, the retailer had little input on which products they were listed as a reseller for or the order in which they appeared on the where-to-buy page.



B&H has been serving imaging markets for more than 30 years with a goal to earn the trust of its customers by offering competitive pricing, combined with honest and helpful dealings with outstanding service before, during, and after the sale. B&H strives to maintain a knowledgeable and courteous customer service staff assisted by the best support systems.

“We are very pleased with the growth of this new channel and the quality of new leads being generated by Channel Intelligence.”

Tuvia Schachter
Strategic Partnership
Marketing
B&H Photo Video

SOLUTION

Channel Intelligence launched its Ad Network in the fall of 2007 to take its traditional Product Links service to the next level. In the new model, both manufacturers and retailers have control relative to participation and reseller placement. Channel Intelligence's long-standing relationships with manufacturers and their constant accrual of new players relieved the pressure from B&H. Excited by the new program, B&H could now take a more direct role in marketing to consumers on manufacturer sites about their product offerings. This also enables B&H to continue to foster a trustworthy relationship with its consumers.





*“Customers trust sites that are endorsed by the manufacturer.”
Tuvia Schachter, Strategic Partnership Marketing for B&H Photo Video*

B&H chose to participate in the CI Ad Network on a cost-per-click (CPC) basis and manages this program as they do their other comparison shopping programs. However, the Ad Network provides the company with a more cost-effective CPC program because of the highly qualified leads sent to their site from manufacturers.



KEY RESULTS

With B&H at the helm of their online programs, several increases were achieved when comparing the first half of 2007 and the first half of 2008. With the CI Ad Network, B&H enjoyed a thirty-five percent increase in the number of manufacturers sending lead referrals. Over the same time span, sales grew by over 50 percent.

*“We’re extremely excited by the success of this program,” says Schachter.
“CI is a great partner for B&H and we plan to leverage their services to continue to grow our web business for a long time to come.”*

Through the CI Ad Network enhanced reporting capabilities, B&H is able to determine which manufacturer referrals are performing well and which ones are not, enabling a better understanding about the success of their program. This insight allows B&H to make more informed business decisions in managing their return-on-ad-spend and their installation of new marketing programs.

NEXT STEPS

As this partnership continues into the future, CI will work with B&H Photo Video to enlist new manufacturers to join the Ad Network so they too can provide a more enhanced buying experience for consumers on their sites.

