

# two-fisted attack

## Internet and direct mail team up for great results

Back in the Dark Ages of the online world — a decade ago, give or take — online companies had a hunch they were onto something big. Internet marketers foresaw a time when the old bastions of marketing would fall: A new world required new rules.

"Initially, the Internet advertising people didn't learn a thing from direct mail marketers. They thought direct mail was a horrible disease spread by people in bad clothes," says Peter Blau, co-founder of Customer Growth, Blau Moritz Klang Inc., based in Westport, Conn. "The problem was that Internet people didn't think they had anything to do with direct marketing; they wanted to avoid it like the plague."

On the flip side, says Blau, direct marketers, being steeped in the past, often ignored or discounted the impact of the Internet.

Several years and untold dot.com carnage later, both sides have come to realize that each has some valuable lessons to impart to the other. "The Internet has not changed the fundamental rules of direct marketing," says Blau. "You're still talking about human psychology and how to motivate a customer to buy. The methods may change, but the principles remain the same."

Those principles, according to Blau, fall into three categories: grabbing customers' attention, offering them a unique selling proposition, and keeping them involved. "Learn what key benefit will motivate your customer to buy and dramatize it in your creative," says Blau. "That's important online as well as offline."

One valuable lesson that direct marketers have taught Internet marketers is the strength of segmentation. "The initial idea of the Internet was that they'd reach you with the right message at the right time, which is a nice thought, but the way that really happens is segmentation,"

says Blau. "Direct mail marketers knew about segmentation 50 years ago. Internet marketers are learning it as we speak."

And at the same time, direct marketers learned they had to tie in with the Internet to protect and grow the businesses. "If you had previously existed solely on direct mail, you now had to allow and encourage customers to respond via the Internet," says Blau.

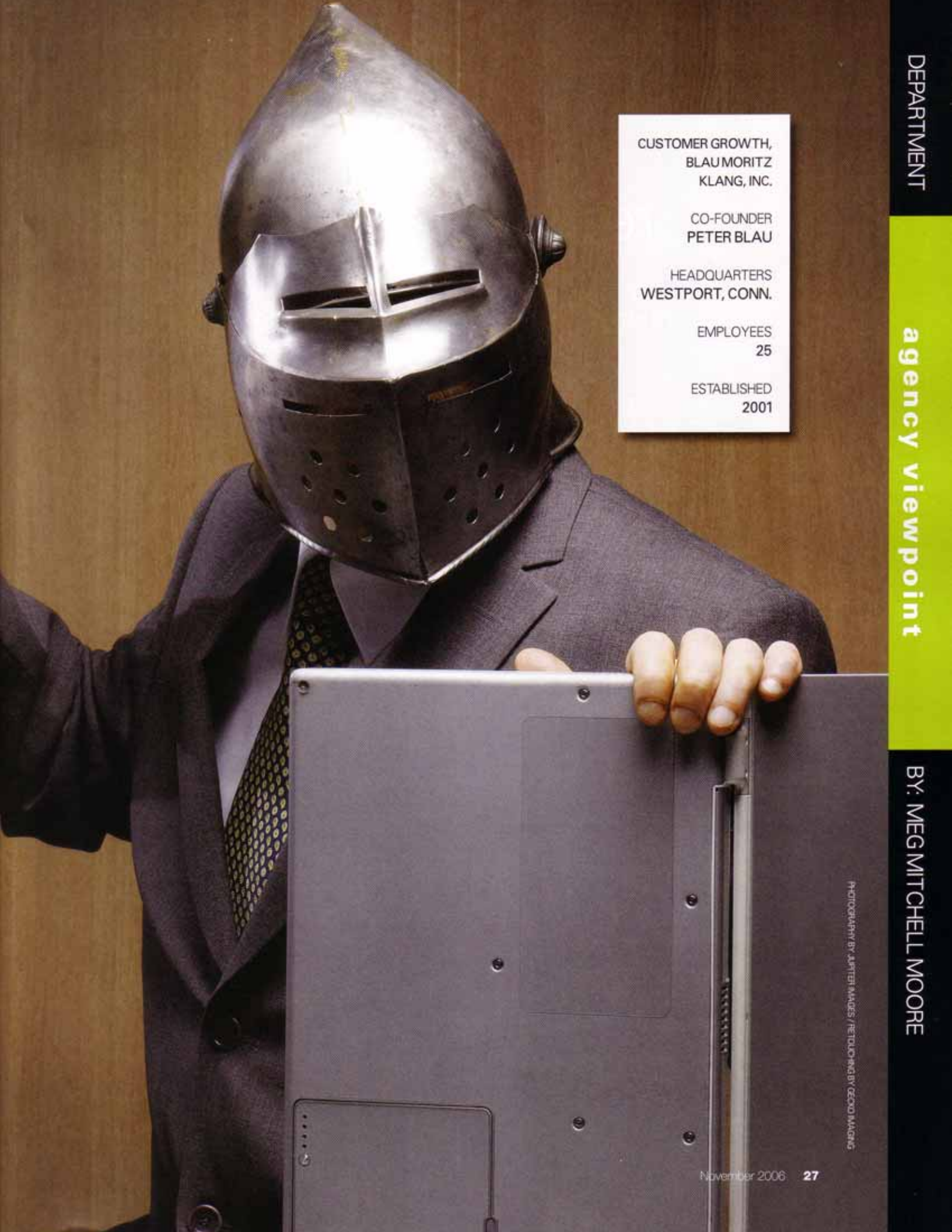
Blau points to Dell as one classic example of successfully blending old and new marketing: their direct mail catalogs drive customers to the Web site to purchase the company's products. Airlines have also learned to combine traditional direct mail offers with personalized e-mail updates, incorporating the Internet into the overall marketing plan without eschewing direct mail.

Customer Growth puts those principles to work on its own clients by encouraging them to create a "landing page" — an electronic business reply card of sorts — to field Web responses to a direct mail piece. That practice started years ago and continues today as Web responses make up an ever-larger percentage of overall direct mail responses.

"Direct mail is still a fantastic, targetable medium that grabs your attention," says Blau. "Every business that serves a mass market audience in America is a multi-channel business, and paper is one of those channels."

Which just goes to show you that as much as things have changed since the advent of the Internet, they've pretty much stayed the same too. ☒





CUSTOMER GROWTH,  
BLAU MORITZ  
KLANG, INC.

CO-FOUNDER  
PETER BLAU

HEADQUARTERS  
WESTPORT, CONN.

EMPLOYEES  
25

ESTABLISHED  
2001

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PETER BLAU  
Co-founder  
**Customer Growth Blau Moritz Klang, Inc.**

Peter Blau started Customer Growth in London in January 2001. Previously, at Blau Marketing/Brann, he was the agency's chief creative officer, as well as the founder/ chief executive of the company's European network, Blau Tequila. He drove the agency's success with clients including British Telecom, Citicorp, The Hartford, IBM, Charles Schwab, Dreyfus, MCI, Pacific Bell and Visa. His awards include a NY ADDY Best in Show, John Caples First Place Award, DMA Gold Echo and selection as 1997 Chairman of Direct Marketing Days/NY.

SHAWN DENNIS  
Vice President, Global Branding  
**Dell**

Shawn Dennis serves as vice president, global branding at Dell and is responsible for programs that build Dell brand preference across all customer and business segments. Prior to joining Dell in January 2005, Dennis served as vice president and group head of marketing for the NFL. Ms. Dennis spent several years with MasterCard International in a variety of roles, most recently as vice president, global co-branding. Prior to that, Dennis spent over seven years in various marketing positions with Universal Studios, with an emphasis on corporate-alliance building and partner promotions. Ms. Dennis received a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of California at Los Angeles.



AKSHAY RAO  
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Akshay Rao's research focuses primarily on pricing and branding issues, with a particular concentration on consumer decision making. He's the author of numerous articles and academic papers on the subject of consumer research, and he serves on the editorial board of the Journal of Consumer Psychology. He holds a BA in economics from Madras University, an MBA from Xavier Institute and a Ph.D. in marketing from Virginia Tech.

J. WALKER SMITH  
President  
**Yankelovich MONITOR**

J. Walker Smith is president of the MONITOR division of Yankelovich. His latest book is "Coming to Concurrency: Addressable Attitudes and the New Model for Marketing Productivity." Prior to his time at Yankelovich, Walker was director of research for DowBrands, Inc. He is a past vice president of the marketing research division of the American Marketing Association, a member of the board of advisors for the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a director of the American Marketing Association Foundation.

