

1. Executive Summary and Highlights

This **Online Lead Generation (B2C) Report**, produced by E-consultancy in association with Clash-Media, is based on the findings of a survey of more than 400 marketers carried out in January and February 2007.

Online lead generation is about using the web as a means of getting contact information for qualified prospects. This takes place before a conversion or sale of a product or service has occurred. The conversion, if it happens, may occur online or offline.

The key findings of the research were as follows:

- 82% of online marketers see online lead generation as **a growth area**.
- 64% of online marketers see it as **its own *distinct* area of online marketing**.
- Three-quarters of respondents (74%) working for multi-channel organisations said that their companies are **generating leads online with the intention of converting them offline** (either “occasionally” or as “an important part of their strategy”).
- Only 44% of marketers say that their organisations are **effectively exploiting online lead generation** as a way of growing their B2C business.
 - 47% of marketers say their business is NOT effectively exploiting online lead generation as a way of growing their B2C business.
- **Press** (i.e. newspapers and magazines) is the method of offline lead generation most commonly used to generate consumer leads (61% of respondents), followed by **direct mail / postal data** (51%).
- The online methods most likely to be used by company respondents to generate leads are **Natural Search** (78% of respondents), **Paid Search** (72%) and **Email Marketing – inhouse lists** (72%).
- The most effective methods of generating leads are all online. More than half of company respondents (52%) said that **Paid Search** was “very effective” while almost as many (48%) said that **Natural Search** was very effective.
 - **Email Marketing - in house lists, Affiliate Marketing, Shopping Comparison Sites, Viral Marketing and Acquiring Leads from Online Aggregators** are deemed to be very effective by 38%, 34%, 26%, 25%, and 25% of company respondents respectively.
- **Paid Search** gets the biggest share of online lead generation budget allocation (28%).

- 60% of company respondents say they are either “excellent” (11%), “good” (22%) or “quite good” (27%) at **measuring the effectiveness** of their online lead generation activity.
 - Despite this, there are many respondents who clearly feel there is room for improvement in this area, with 27% saying they are “average” and a further 8% saying they are “poor”.
- The **difficulties associated with measuring the effectiveness of online lead generation activity** generally fall into three categories:
 - Difficulty of tracking leads through to conversion in a multi-channel environment.
 - Lack of technology or poor technology for online tracking.
 - Lack of resources.
- **Only 16% of company respondents said that they buy lists of targeted prospects from online aggregators** compared to 77% of company respondents are **not** using online lead aggregators.
 - A fifth of respondents either “haven’t come across this” (12%) or “don’t understand how it works” (8%), suggesting that there is an opportunity for aggregators to educate prospective clients about this type of activity. A further 8% said they lacked the time to research this activity.