Letter to the editors

Sir,

I would like to say that I am a little disappointed by your publication. While I appreciate it is called *Interactive Marketing*, I feel that it concentrates too much on one area of the marketing process, ie online.

I do use the Internet in my marketing programme: I find it an excellent source for overseas enquiries and to dispense product information and the like here in the UK. But it does not form the basis of my marketing plan and I don't anticipate that it will in the near to medium-term. I suspect that this is the case for the majority of marketing managers.

I would like to see a journal that more reflects the mix of marketing activity used by the majority of people benefiting from this journal. The effect of online business is important and is changing the way that companies work, but is nonetheless over-hyped. My view is the IDM has been dragged into this hype and is concentrating too much on what amounts to a minority section of a company's overall marketing expenditure. By far the greatest proportion of my marketing effort goes in direct mail and I suspect that I'm not alone among your members. The Internet is just one tool, and a not very effective one if used in isolation. Can your papers please reflect the fact that most marketers live and work in the real world and not a virtual one? Among UK customers, there is still great scepticism regarding the Internet and security, and although this may change, it hasn't yet, despite predictions.

Additionally, whether it is WAP or the Internet, it tends to be driven not by customer needs and wants, but by technical innovation trying to find a customer-centred application — a bit like the tail wagging the dog. It reminds me of a great pottery company that recently became insolvent — the reason? Because it was manufacturing-led rather than market-led. If marketing allows this hype to drive the way it presents its products, we will also end up out of touch with those we are trying to reach. I hope this doesn't sound too harsh, but I would like to see how I can use more conventional methods to improve response rates etc, and see model examples on such subjects other than flimsy notions on how a new untried technology might be able to help me if I was selling a mass-market product via e-commerce.

Kind regards,
V. Chapman, M IDM