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The features of interactive marketing communications

Building long-term relationships with customers is essential for any sustainable business. Failure to build relationships largely caused the failures of many dot-coms following huge expenditure on customer acquisition. But research summarized by Reicheld and Scheffer (2003) shows that acquiring online customers is so expensive (20-30 per cent higher than for traditional businesses) that start-up companies may remain unprofitable for at least two to three years. The research also shows that by retaining just 5 per cent more customers, online companies can boost their profits by 25 per cent to 95 per cent.

ChinaClick summaries that an effective web site should have three characteristics:

- Magnetic. Acquisition of visitors by promotion and by making it attractive
- Sticky. Retention – Keeping customers on the site once they arrive and encouraging them to engage in revenue-generating activities.
- Elastic. Extension – persuading customers to return, particularly for revenue-generating activities.

ChinaClick also summaries **eight key changes** in media characteristics between traditional media and new media. The eight key changes in communications characteristics as marketers move from exploiting traditional to new media are:

1. From push to pull
2. From monologue to dialogue
3. From one-to-many to one-to-many communications
4. From one-to-many to many-to-many communications
5. From 'lean-back' to 'lean-forward'.
6. The medium changes the nature of standard marketing communications tools such as advertising.
7. Increase in communications intermediaries
8. Integration remains important.