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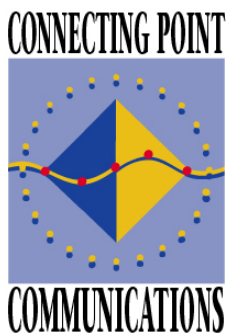
ProfitMeister

M A X I M I Z I N G Y O U R M A R K E T I N G M O N E Y

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“You have the ability to focus, to work with our marketing plans and augment them with other strong ideas.”

D.J. Heckes
Owner, EXHIB-IT!
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Tiny Print, Big Picture Impact

Crystallize your strategies with a simple, succinct one page marketing plan for your business

Daniel grew his business to five locations and then turned it over to a manager for a couple of years; without a plan, a once successful enterprise derailed. Now he had to get it on track and fast. Holly, on the other hand, had pages of marketing proposals, but no practical overview. One year into her manufacturing concern she had to get the word out about a product launch - like yesterday. Both Daniel and Holly were missing a cheat sheet that would help them run marketing quickly and easily.

Write a marketing plan

When you take the time to formulate a one page marketing plan, your marketing strategies, now set out on paper and easily accessible, work smarter and harder for you. Instead of “winging it”, or marketing on the fly, you develop focus and in the process, both your time and money become more effective.

Your marketing plan is similar to an umbrella. It provides a cover for everything underneath. Without this cover, unrelated tactics could sneak in and add up to a hodge-podge of efforts that likely convey a variety of messages.

You can develop an effective plan in a matter of two hours. This newsletter shows you how.

First, rate last year

Quickly list your marketing events from the previous year. As you examine each

listing, think about rating it on performance effectiveness. Quickly assign a number on a one to ten scale with one being the weakest, an event or campaign which offered no noticeable results, and 10 being strong, with significant increased traffic and sales. Once you complete your system, drop any event rated lower than a six.

Daniel, for example, realized that he had a number of non-events: best price sale, biggest saving event. The lukewarm sales matched the lackluster language and the non-events were dropped from the calendar. He kept a July Firecracker Sale that included a coupon that produced a strong response.

Calendar new events

Log the events from last year onto a calendar and add the biggest or most important events for the coming year, including anniversary celebrations, festivals, large trade shows and so on. Next, focus on potential recurring items such as customer appreciation days, holiday sales or company related events.

Add in any current expenditure, from the church bulletin to a baseball team sponsorship, listing it in the month it occurs. Allow your calendar to also include noteworthy renewals that affect your advertising, such as domain registration for your website, directory deadlines for the phone book listing, conference displays, special “theme” issues in which you participate and so on. Think through exposure opportunities that may position your firm more effectively.

“The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well the product or service fits him and sells itself.

Peter F. Drucker

List costs for items

As you build your calendar, log the dollars allocated for specific tactics or events. Your expenditures, placed in the month incurred, begin to form a more complete picture for your marketing plan.

You’ll notice, for example, that your calendar begins to dictate the rhythm of expenditures; realistically, some months are much heavier than others. For practical purposes, assume that your budget is at least 10 percent of your projected gross revenue.

Review months, quarters

As I put a one-page marketing plan together with Daniel, I found it helpful to list an emphasis for each month. During month one, for example, he needed an outreach emphasis to let customers know that the business was under new management. This dictated advertising expenditures in targeted local publications, a direct mail campaign to previous customers and flyers in partner organizations. In addition, his personal outreach efforts included attendance at one business networking event each week during the initial month.

When you look at your year by quarters, it is easy to see holes as well as areas of increased concentration. Begin to take charge of your tactics; add activities to those months that need support and estimate the expenditure required to fulfill the task. Remember the umbrella analogy? Think of this process as the spokes of the umbrella, rounding out your cover and giving support to your business.

Craft messages

Now that the base calendar for the year has begun to reveal itself, take a moment to review outcomes that you hope to generate as you contemplate questions like “What does my marketing ask people to do? What

result do I want to generate?” (I want to see x number of customers at x amount average sale per day, or add x clients, sell x books, produce x web hits, etc.)

Concentrating on one message offers an advantage: the opportunity to use a tried and true tool of marketing, frequency. A message needs repetition to make an impression. The same message, presented from different sources at different times will more likely be heard, understood, and most importantly, acted upon.

In Holly’s case, she elected to send potential customers to her website. As a new business, she did not have sufficient distribution points for a statewide market offering. Instead, she chose to advertise the website and then use adwords to generate increased traffic.

Where can I market?

Once you identify your primary message, think carefully about your target. If you have a list of customers, consider surveying them to determine what magazines or newspapers they read, the television shows they watch, the blogs they frequent and the type of advertising to which they may be receptive. There are endless possibilities. Your goal is to choose the ones most effective for the result you have in mind.

Conclusion

A one page marketing plan puts you in charge. It unifies your marketing strategies and offers at-a-glance overviews of advertising tactics. Once you’ve completed the OPMP, when you hear about a “good deal” from a media salesperson you can honestly say, “Let me check my marketing plan and see if that makes sense for my business.”

To learn more

For a copy of the one page Excel marketing plan, email: MaryEllen@ProfitMeister.com.



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