

## Summertime: Your Secret Marketing Weapon

Last time we checked, not too many profitable businesses take the summer off — but their potential suppliers often do when it comes to marketing.

If you sell B2B and scale down your marketing when the heat hits, you may be missing out on significant sales opportunities. Think about it: who'll be top of mind when a customer is ready to buy — the vendor who kept in touch via a creative mix of channels, or the ones who fell completely off the radar until Labor Day?

To maintain positive momentum during the summer season, consider these warm-weather marketing strategies:

**Add some topical PR to the mix.** Can you tie in your product or service to an annual seasonal event or offbeat holiday? The lazy days of summer are ideal for less serious creative approaches. For example, who knew that June boasts National Rocky Road Ice Cream Day (June 2), World Juggling Day (June 18), UFO Day (June 24) and anniversaries honoring the invention of the shopping cart (June 4), sandpaper (June 14), and the toothbrush (June 26)?

Turn your tie-in into a tongue-in-cheek media release. For example, a healthy-foods company could write an op-ed piece to suggest changing "Rocky Road Day" to "Hit the Road Day" in an effort to fight childhood obesity. Or a mental health

practice could tie into World Juggling Day with a tip sheet on stress-free juggling of work and kids when school is out. Try resources such as Chase's Calendar of Events (mhprofessional.com) for holidays you never knew existed.



**Lock in fall business.** Offer customers a discount on future projects or purchases if they book or buy now. Position your offer as a "budget extender" that lets buyers get the

resources they need at terrific savings.

Or, consider mailing an elegant "save the date" card or exclusive invitation promoting a special offer that starts September 1st.

**Ramp up your newsletter.** The most difficult aspect of publishing a newsletter is creating useful content. Use your slow season to map out an editorial calendar for the next 12 months. Be sure to include new product launches, scheduled seminars or

(cont'd on page 4)

### Five Ways to Play Nicer with Your Sales Team

*Better lead generation's a snap*

The relationship between sales and marketing is like oil and water — never the

two shall fully mix. Often, the problem stems from the perception that we're not giving our sales counterparts the right tools to close the deal.

Here are five steps to remedy the situation the next time you're developing a piece of sales collateral:

**1. Share responsibility for defining the target.** What makes a qualified lead? Together, sales and marketing should clearly identify the who, what and when: demographics, psychographics, industry and company size if you're selling B2B, budget, and even the length of the sales cycle.

Getting the buy-in of your sales team at this stage of the game is critical. If your piece hits the defined target, sales can't blame

(cont'd on page 3)

### in this issue...

#### Page 2

*Bests and Worsts*

*Are You Among the Digitally Dissed?*

#### Page 3

*Leveraging Your Speaker Evaluations*

## Bests and Worsts of the Month

### Best spam "From" of the month:

Numbskull D. Misinterprets

### Best vendor response of the month:

AccuData, for quickly fixing a download glitch so we could access the white paper mentioned in a newsletter, as well as their timely, low-key follow-up on the sales side.

### Worst vendor response of the month:

InfoUSA, for not guaranteeing mailing lists run from their website. If they run them for you, you're good. If you take advantage of their highly touted do-it-yourself option...you're out of luck if there's a problem. For the exact same list. And while we're on the subject of InfoUSA, they're in the Hall of Shame for a second reason: wasting money on a cheesy, ego-driven SuperBowl ad when they've been buying up smaller companies and laying off their employees left and right.

### Pithy marketing phrase of the month:

Continuous partial attention, as in "Consumers everywhere are in a state of continuous partial attention."



## Trendwatch

## Ad Specialties

The Advertising Specialty Institute's annual sales analysis shows that spending on advertising specialties reached a record \$18.6 billion in 2006 — up 4.5 percent from 2005. According to ASI, spending was almost twice that of Internet display advertising (\$9.7 billion), nearly five times greater than outdoor (\$3.8 billion) and more than cable TV advertising (\$16.7 billion), according to figures supplied by TNS Media Intelligence.

## Testing, 1..2..3

### Smart tactics for tweaking your message before an expensive rollout

Targeting a brand-new market or launching a new product in unfamiliar territory? Before you spend significant sums on print advertising, make sure you're using the right messaging and strongest possible offer by using less costly promotional methods to test first, says Eric Gagnon in a recent *Tuesday Marketing Notes* from the Business Marketing Institute.

Rather than start with the most expensive vehicle first, hone your message by testing various copy approaches via less pricey Google AdWords or a simple direct mail piece.

According to Gagnon, there's no reason why smartly crafted Adwords text or a winning DM headline can't be recycled to make them just as effective in a print ad. You can also use these vehicles to test other variables like pricing before rolling out a new program.

Says Gagnon, pre-testing your marketing program without print advertising may mean making a smaller splash initially. The upside is that subsequent ads have a higher likelihood of generating strong response, because you're much closer to knowing what will resonate in your new market.

**Source:** Eric Gagnon is president of GAA ([www.realmarkets.net](http://www.realmarkets.net)), a sales and business development consulting firm, and is the author of *The Marketing Manager's Handbook*.



## Are you among the digitally dissed?

If a tree falls in the forest and it's not indexed on Google, does it make a noise? The next time you plug your company name (or your own name, for that matter) into a search engine and come up blank, you may want to re-think that sigh of relief.

Sure, you can be delighted that there's no damaging misinformation floating around cyberspace for you to refute. But consider this: it's just as bad (maybe even worse) to be completely absent from the online forum other than your own website.

Right or wrong, many prospects and potential business partners gauge your "worthiness" based on how many independent references they find online. Think of it as the grown-up version of your MySpace friends total. So, how do you go about developing a compelling online presence? Try these three easy ways to get started:

**Author, author! Post an article you've written.** Many websites aggregate content that ezine publishers can use for free as long as they keep your byline intact. Others feature niche-specific articles that allow you to showcase your expertise in a broad array of categories. Try sites like [authorconnection.com](http://authorconnection.com), [sideroad.com](http://sideroad.com), or [ideamarketers.com](http://ideamarketers.com) to get started.

**Read it and reap.** Why write a book when you can review someone else's? Write a thoughtful review of a new book in your area of expertise, then post it on bookseller sites like [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and [bn.com](http://bn.com). You can also send the review to your local trade magazine or association newsletter. Hint: it helps to actually read the book in question.

**Post comments online.** Think the role of commentator's only for ex-jocks? Think again. Use a blog search tool like [technorati.com](http://technorati.com) to uncover blogs that are relevant to your industry or area of expertise, then post insightful comments to the entries on a regular basis.

## Five Ways Marketers Can Play Nicer with Sales...*(from page 1)*

marketing for missing the mark. A shared sense of responsibility is a powerful thing.

**2. What happens next?** Think beyond the lead. Support your sales team with repeated reasons to connect with customers, especially for products or services with lengthy sales cycles. This is where white papers, case studies and trade articles can be invaluable.

Invest in ancillary pieces that support the sales process, and make the most of your investment by repurposing this "education" information in as many ways as possible: dangling a white paper as a bait piece in a direct mail offer, posting chunks on a blog, quoting in a podcast, and/or offering it as a free online download.

**3. Organize stuff the way people sell.** Quite often, a company's lead generation activities are focused on conquering new markets. So, it really doesn't help to have sales collateral organized by industry. Instead, focus on issues rather than verticals to get maximum traction from case studies or white papers.

For example, lack of effective CRM is by no means unique to the manufacturing sector.

The problem — and the solution — remain virtually the same regardless of industry. Organizing collateral by problem rather than industry makes it easy for your sales team to demonstrate your company's expertise, even when they're in unfamiliar territory.

**4. Make it interactive.** Engage prospects and make your website stickier by turning static information from brochures or sell sheets into online checklists or quizzes: "Is your company EEOC-compliant? Take this one-minute quiz to find out!"

Keep in mind that interactive doesn't necessarily have to mean online. Matawan, NJ-based Aroman Promotional Products ([aromanpromos.com](http://aromanpromos.com)) developed an offline contest for a software company that wanted to hammer home the differences between its products and the competition's.

According to Aroman President Rosie Mankes, prospects were sent a keepsake stand that held six photos, and instructed to call into a game center each week for questions and clues during the six-week contest. Answers to the questions could only be found within the company's promotional literature, requiring players to scrutinize sales materials if they wanted to win.

Says Mankes, "The program really opened up the lines of communication in a unique way. Our client's sales staff found it much easier to connect with their targets and book face-to-face appointments."

**5. Make collateral easy to access.** Sell sheets sitting in a box in your conference room are not selling anything. Give your sales team the flexibility to grab what they need from anywhere via your company intranet. Post high-resolution pdfs that can be reproduced at a local quick printer and still look highly professional. Ditto for presentation masters that salespeople can download to their laptops and personalize as needed.

Bonus benefit: you retain control of the look and feel of all collateral, minimizing the need for sales to go "off the reservation" and create something that may not be consistent with your company's branding guidelines.

“It is our choices that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.”

J.K. Rowling



Where Great Marketing Ideas Grow  
is published quarterly by:

**FAHOURY INK**

201 Gregory Avenue  
West Orange, NJ 07052-4529  
Phone: (973) 324-2100  
Email: [compost@fahouryink.com](mailto:compost@fahouryink.com)

Subscriptions are free to qualified business professionals. Please send subscription requests or inquiries regarding editorial contributions to the email above. Kindly include your telephone number or email address for verification. All submissions become the property of *Creative Compost*. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity. Download free back issues at [fahouryink.com/newsletter](http://fahouryink.com/newsletter).

©2007 Fahoury Ink. All rights reserved.

## Speak Up! Leveraging Your Workshop Evaluation Forms

So you've finally hit the road and seen the value of public speaking as a brand builder. Now, take it one step further by using your speaker's evaluation forms to collect valuable intel and cement the relationship with your host and audience members:

- Include a fill-in-the-blank that asks, "I would have liked to learn more about...?" Of course, use these to guide future seminar offerings, but you can also follow up with respondents by sending them a tip sheet or article in the area they specified.
- Recap responses for the meeting coordinator to assist them in planning future events. Offer to book a return engagement to present the subjects that fall within your area of expertise.
- Include check boxes on every form to subscribe to your newsletter, or if the participant is interested in having you speak to their company or association.

Source: [SpeakerNetNews.com](http://SpeakerNetNews.com)



**Creativity on Call™**

201 Gregory Avenue  
West Orange, NJ 07052-4529

**Are you among the digitally  
dissed? See page 2!**

## Summertime Marketing... *(from page 1)*

presentations, industry trade shows (promote your attendance in advance or plan to write a post-show recap), and seasonal trends that are of interest to your audience.

Do some preliminary research on potential feature article topics and slot them into your calendar. Use the most promising info to pen several "evergreen" articles that will remain timely for at least six months. These will serve as the basis for your next few issues and put you ahead of the game come deadline time.

Having a tough time finding content? Try digging through recent customer service correspondence, suggests copywriter Nick Osborne in his Excess Voice newsletter ([excessvoice.com](http://excessvoice.com)). If someone asks a great question, or certain issues crop up time and again, turn them into a regular newsletter Q&A feature.

**Get the competitive juices flowing.** Hold an internal contest to follow up on stagnant proposals and lapsed leads. Encourage your staff to meet with as many prospects as they can — perhaps over a leisurely summertime lunch — to network, gather information and try to re-ignite the relationship.

Coach your team to gently probe for details on why the project or proposal might have derailed. Maybe it was as simple as a personality issue with someone who no longer represents you. Even if no deals are closed as a result of these casual lunches, you'll gain some useful feedback on your sales process and customer relationships.

**Try some training.** Maybe you've hesitated to add PR to your mix because your CEO goes goofy without warning on camera. Or you haven't upgraded everyday software in fear of a too-large learning curve. There's no time like the present to schedule that media training or InDesign workshop.

Everyone in an organization needs a regular dose of professional development. The right

training not only brings necessary skills up to speed; it also can spark new ideas, invigorate jaded old-timers, and send a clear message to your staff that management values their input and thinks they're worth investing in.

**Finally, test drive a new piece of the puzzle.** Been itching to integrate newer technology like RSS, or maybe add some online surveys to your marketing arsenal? Use the summer to read up on the latest resources, then map out a plan for selective testing with your audience. If it's well received, you'll feel comfortable rolling out the latest and greatest in the fall.

Summer not exactly your slow season? Don't use that as an excuse to stagnate. Every industry has its down time — pick yours and use it to ramp up and reinvigorate your marketing efforts. Then, you can take that much-needed vacation with a clear conscience — and come back refreshed and ready for more.