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Marketing Your Shows the 4 C's Way

By Susan Freidmann

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Traditional marketing is changing: Customers are more sophisticated and price sensitive. They expect products and services to be delivered faster and more conveniently. And they have no qualms about switching to competitors.

At the same time, traditional marketing tools are less effective than in the past. Products are not much different from each other, pricing is quickly matched by competitors, advertising is expensive and less effective, and sales force costs are rising.

Consumers are constantly being interrupted by thousands of marketing messages, making it easy for one message to get lost in the overwhelming clutter of communications. Plus, consumers no longer have a well-defined set of products and vendors that they will consistently seek out to fulfill a need.

So how do you create, win, and dominate markets today? According to marketing guru Dr. Philip Kotler, "marketing must help the company deliver more value to the customer."

What does this mean in trade show terms? It means that you need to focus on the services both exhibitors and attendees perceive as valuable ... and deliver them with perpetually fresh appeal.

Customer Value

Customers are getting more and more value conscious. You can fulfill their expectations by constantly "thinking exhibitor" and "thinking attendee." You need to live and breathe for your customers — they make your job possible.

Encourage your team to do whatever it takes to get projects accomplished and wow your customers. Follow examples set by Disney, Ritz-Carlton, and Southwest Airlines. If they can do it, why can't you?

Brainstorm ways in which you can continually differentiate yourselves from competing shows. Don't be shy about inviting your exhibitor advisory members to be part of your team. Insist that they evaluate

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your employees on the job.

Training also needs to be a major consideration. If your employees need more skills, offer to pay for specific training courses in your area or push them to pursue continuing education opportunities online.

Change

Is your show successful the way it is? Do you think you have the perfect formula that works? If you say yes, you might be heading for decline. Your team needs to fall in love with change. If you don't grow and change, you'll become stale, your competition will outdo you, and then your show will be history. Change, however, has to be in line with the essence of your show — it needs to be relevant. Just as

your attendees expect to see and experience something new and exciting from visiting your exhibitors' booths, that expectation should also define your overall show. The challenge is that results need to be visible to the bottom line.

Experimentation is the name of the game. Each year you need to introduce new ideas and concepts into your show organization and production. Change doesn't have to be drastic; small subtitles can make the difference, especially when you implement ideas supplied courtesy of your exhibitors and attendees. Make sure that you communicate these changes and let your customers know that you're listening to their suggestions.

Convenience

How easy is it to do business with you? Are your systems user-friendly? Consider every piece from the exhibitor manuals to the registration desks at the show. What can be done to make participating in your shows a hassle-free experience? Consult your vendors, staff, exhibitor advisory committee, outside consultants, and even children for ideas and suggestions. Then try them out yourself. Again, model concepts that work. Ask yourself how favorite companies might solve your particular challenge.

Use the Internet to simplify form completion and registration procedures. Offer discounts for using the technology. Challenge yourself to constantly make the process more convenient.

Communication

Bernd Schmitt, author of *Experiential Marketing*, once noted, "Today's customers take functional features and benefits, product quality, and a positive brand image as a given. They want products, communications, and marketing campaigns that dazzle their senses, touch their hearts, and stimulate their minds. The degree to which a company is able to deliver a desirable customer experience — and to use information technology, brands, and integrated communications and entertainment to do so — will largely determine its success in the global marketplace of the new millennium."

You want to stimulate such excitement among your exhibitors and attendees that your show is an experience not to be missed. Experiential marketing is the latest trend in marketing that focuses on the

experiences of customers.

In addition to dazzling your exhibitors and attendees with your show promotion, realize too that they hunger for two-way communication. They want to know that you care, that you are interested in them and their goals. Either way, the key is two-way communication, them hearing you and you listening to them.

Customer value, change, convenience, and communication all make up the essence of a powerful 4 Cs marketing approach that will help take your show and organization to another level.

17 Extraordinary Human Capacities

By Steve Brunkhorst

People have a tremendous capacity for outstanding achievement. There are also many extraordinary capacities that allow them to become high achievers.

Here are seventeen extraordinary capacities that make human beings remarkable. When we recognize and use these capacities, the quality of our lives can become more joyful than ever before.

1. Helping someone in their time of tragedy or need shows the capacity for human goodness.
2. Listening closely to another's words and experience shows the capacity for soulful communication.
3. Understanding the pain, sorrow, or loss of another person shows the capacity for empathy.
4. Believing the best about others, and offering time, support, and friendship shows the capacity for trust.
5. Apologizing for a past mistake shows the capacity for strong character and trustworthiness.
6. Forgiving the errors of a fellow human being shows the capacity to receive forgiveness.
7. Supporting the truth, even when it is unpopular, shows the capacity for honesty and integrity.
8. Compromising when it is best for the welfare of others shows the capacity for teamwork.
9. Giving time and effort to assist others to be successful shows the capacity for sincerity.
10. Being curious about life, its people and its mysteries, shows the capacity for learning.
11. Praying for the welfare of family, friends, and all of humanity shows the capacity for love.
12. Waiting for God's answer to a prayer shows the capacity for faith and patience.

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13. Accepting the answer to a prayer, whatever it might be, discovering its blessings, and then moving on shows the capacity for gratitude.

14. Believing in a God-given purpose throughout long and difficult seasons of scarcity shows the capacity for determination and hope.

15. Taking risks, making mistakes, and learning from all experiences show the capacity for being human.

16. Getting up after having fallen down or suffered failure shows the capacity for resolve.

17. Persisting resolutely to navigate life's rapids, scale its mountains, move beyond its perceived limitations, and arrive at its finish line with faith and dignity shows the capacity for achievement.

When we use our mental and spiritual capacities, our lives will be filled with more love, contentment, and achievement than we can imagine. When we cultivate a deep faith in a Power greater than ourselves, we never have to travel life's journey alone. There will be powerful sources of wisdom and guidance walking with us every step of the way.

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17 Extraordinary Human Capacities

How to Sell More Stuff to More People, More Often.

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Marketing 2005

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Profitable Crafts Vol 4

The Ultimate Ad Tracking Tool

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