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**SAM 'n ELLA'S HOMESTYLE RESTAURANT – better known as: EFFECTIVE USE OF HUMOR
IN YOUR MARKETING MATERIALS**

By Rick Beneteau

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Call me crazy but if I were to open a trendy restaurant I think that I would use this article's top title as my moniker. It would certainly create some chatter about the newest spot in town. The SAM 'n ELLA'S sign would be hung months in advance of its doors being opened just to start the buzz. I might complete the theme and really "go for it" with an emergency room décor with wait staff in nurses uniforms serving up soup-in-a-bedpan.

Beware, any would-be restaurant franchisers out there, this article is published and I had the idea first!:-)

And so it should be with your marketing materials. Laughter and smiling, like music, are among the few universal languages where we all share the same dialect. Humor equals warmth and friendliness. Which equates to the kind of person your prospects will want to do business with.

I'm not suggesting that every piece of promo should produce gut-wrenching hysterical laughter but subtle injections of personable humor can score big points with would-be customers. Let me cite a few examples.

Jim Wilson of VirtualPromote effectively injects his personality into the lead page of his website (<http://www.virtualpromote.com/promotea.html>). This is a long tutorial that eloquently expounds the 'there-are-no-experts' tactics of website promotion. Could get boring pretty quickly, but not with Jim. There is a short prologue, then an introduction and just where a reader's attention may begin to wonder, Jim puts forth these two paragraphs:

"The final reality to materialize was: I was hooked. This Internet publishing stuff is addicting. Something new to learn every hour. Sleep became a thing of the past. My phone is always tied up and my family

gave up on my attending things like movies and meals.

If all this sounds familiar: you are an addict. Especially if you are reading this at 2:00 A.M. But there is hope. You can get the traffic. You can debug the cgi and HTML. Java can be learned. Forms really do work, eventually. You can add more phone lines. Sorry, can't help with the family problems. Let me know if you figure that one out."

And Jim proceeds to make you feel right at home with him throughout his impressive website with flashes of his friendly and witty personality. This was my introduction to Jim and I liked him before I even began communicating with him. Important stuff in the oft cold binary world of the Web!

Another example of effective use of humor (of the non-belly laugh nature) I especially like appears in the LinkOMatic website: <http://www.linkomatic.com> . One line – their slogan, "Quite simply, the laziest way to promote your website". Catchy, friendly and right up front. A bonus for them, their support

people are indeed very friendly to deal with.

Here's my favorite. Robert Woodhead, of SelfPromotion.com cracked me up with his informative but hilarious website at: <http://selfpromotion.com> . My kind of people. Beauty is, this guy's got a great web-based search engine submission program that he lets you use and you only pay him what you feel it's worth if you're satisfied. Who says there's no integrity on the Net? Visit Robert's website and see if you're not smiling by the time you're through the first page.

Humor can be especially effective in salesletters. The purpose of a salesletter is of course to produce sales, not chuckles, but a warm smile can go a long way towards opening a door and closing a sale.

Press releases are almost always staid and my first line of offense is to, wherever possible, warm it up with at least a semi-quaver of a polite smile. Kinda like electroshock when someone is in his-or-her-reading-boring-press-releases trance. A fluorescent orange tie on gray suit day.

Try it. You'll like it. Humor!!..... not the tie! And so will your prospects and customers. Projecting your "warm side" is not a weakness, as some experts might have you believe. It is strength in its purest form that we as human beings naturally gravitate to.

The Internet is rather faceless so it is the perfect place to put your best face on. I'd much rather 'feel' personality in a website than see flashy java-laden fireworks. But more important, I'd be much more inclined to do business with a real person, a warm human being that I'm 'introduced to' right up-front, than a non-descript entity in some technomarovellous website.

If humor is one of your best character features, use it in your marketing materials!

They say it's a small world and the Internet is making it even smaller. But you know what? ... I'd still hate to hafta paint it!

What Dr. Seuss Teaches Us About Marketing

By Kristie Tamsevicius

I am Sam! Sam I Am!

That Sam–I–am! That Sam–I–am! I do not like that Sam–I–am!

I was sitting down with my son last night to read Green Eggs and Ham. You know, of Dr. Seuss fame...

I'm sure you read it when you were a kid. Anyway, I couldn't help but smile as I gleaned words of marketing wisdom that I found hidden in between the lines. Isn't it funny where ideas strike you sometimes?

So here are some of the lessons that Dr. Seuss has to offer about marketing your business.

Lesson 1) Sam Was Selling Green Eggs and Ham

Do you like green eggs and ham?

I do not like them, Sam–I–am. I do not like green eggs and ham.

Do you sell something unique or different that your customers aren't familiar with? In the story, the big fellow is running away from Sam who is pushing green eggs and ham. He flat out says he has never tried it.

I don't blame him. Take one look at the plate of green eggs and ham and it doesn't look very appealing.

Customers are often afraid to try something new. Sometimes they don't understand your product. Other times they have preconceived notions about it. Perhaps if Sam had taken time to share more product information with the fellow, then he would be more apt to try those green eggs and ham.

For instance Sam could interest his customer more if he:

– shared the customer focused benefits of green eggs and ham – shown testimonials from customers who sing the praises of it – offered a free report so he could learn more about it – offered a free teleclass with recipes for using green eggs and ham

Lesson 2) Sam Wasn't Focused on the Customer's Needs

I am Sam, – Sam I Am. That Sam–I–am! That Sam–I–am! I do not like that Sam–I–am!

It seems that Sam has created a bad impression with his customer.

The only thing on Sam's mind is selling his product. Had Sam been more focused on caring about his customer, discovering their needs, and creating a relationship, he might have had better results.

Remember, to get inside the customer's head by asking "What's in it for Me?"

Lesson 3) Multiple Marketing Exposures Pay Off.

Sam is an aggressive little salesman isn't he? In fact, he is SO aggressive that he tries to reach his customer in a boat, with a goat, in the rain, in the dark, on a train, in a car, in a tree, in a box, with a fox, in a house and with a mouse. And in the end, those friendly marketing exposures worked. The customer "got" the message and finally tried green eggs and ham!

Quite often we send one announcement about a product in an email or newsletter and are dumbfounded at why we didn't get a better response rate. The truth is, that it takes repeated, consistent marketing communications to achieve maximum sales effectiveness.

A marketing message must reach a prospect 9 times. However, because of SPAM and the sheer flooding of marketing messages, people only HEAR your message 1 out of every 3 times they are exposed to it. That's why Guerrilla marketer, Jay Conrad Levinson says that these days it takes a full 27 exposures to ensure the full capacity of your sales campaign.

Lesson 4) Sam's Customer Now LOVES Green Eggs and Ham!

Say! I like green eggs and ham! I do! I like them, Sam–I–am!

I do so like green eggs and ham! Thank you! Thank you! Sam–I–am!

In the end, all that work of romancing Sam's customer worked. After taking one bite, the customer is singing the praises of green eggs and ham. So how can we use testimonials in your business?

– Ask your customers for feedback on how satisfied they were after purchase – Provide a feedback form on your web site – Create a customer forum where people can share their experiences with your product – Add testimonials from satisfied customers to your web site and sales letters

Kristie Tamsevicius – turns entrepreneurs into the lavishly paid in–demand experts in their field. Learn how branding helps you to attract customers, build income, & gain visibility while successfully promoting your business online with our FREE report "Web Branding Secrets" by visiting



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