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The Top 10 Wild and Wacky Ways to Market Yourself for Big Visibility

By Bea Fields

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In today's competitive world of business, it takes moxie and pizzazz to sell a great product, idea, or service. This list will provide you with ten unusual and creative marketing strategies which will help you to stand apart from the competition and to increase your visibility.

1. Celebrate the Wacky World Holidays with your Clients and/or Customers.

Did you know that August 17 is Number 2 pencil day? Send your clients Number 2 pencils with your name and logo embossed on the pencils. What about Homemade Pudding Day on September 19? Send your clients and customers your favorite pudding recipe, and invite them to your business to sample a "taste." If you are the owner of a toy store or a children's clothing company, you may want to set aside November 18 to celebrate Micky Mouse's Birthday. Creative marketing is the future of big business, and celebrating offbeat holidays will allow your customers and clients to experience something unusual and will set you apart from your competition. For a list of non-traditional holidays, visit www.earthcalendar.net.

2. Add a Company Mascot to your Business.

With the help of a few very clever cows, Chick-fil-A's unaided brand awareness has grown 81 percent, and its sales have increased nearly 120 percent since the mascot was added to the team in 1995. This attention-grabbing ploy, encouraging folks to "Eat Mor Chikin" has helped make this Atlanta-based company the third largest quick-service chicken restaurant company in the United States.

3. Throw a Gala for Hair Stylists in your Community.

What do hair stylists do while they are working their magic? They TALK! By throwing a memorable event for the hair stylists in your community, you can reach thousands of potential clients through fantastic word of mouth. Host a breakfast, lunch, or dinner and roll out the red carpet for this crowd,

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and watch new customers and clients flock to your place of business.

4. Host a Game Night.

Are you an investment advisor? Host a game night using the game "Cash Flow." Are you a Life Coach? Throw a party and play the game LIFE. Are you a cat groomer? How about a Cat-Opoly Night? For travel agents, try the game Route 66, taking your guests on a road trip across the country. Playing board games can create a rich and wonderful opportunity for interaction with potential customers, which can allow them to get to know you in a fun and non-threatening way and can create an opportunity for building rock solid strategic alliances.

5. Host a "Big Brain" Week-End.

Want to learn from the experts? Borrow experts one time per year to develop a cutting-edge marketing plan for your company by hosting a "Big Brain" Week-End. If you cannot afford a full marketing staff, you can borrow key experts for a quarterly brainstorming session which can enhance product and service ideas for your company quickly. You can pay a small per diem and travel expenses and pick the brains of 6-8 people who really know their stuff.

6. Sponsor a Night Light Golf Tournament (a golf tournament held in the evening after the sun sets.)

This grassroots approach can land you accounts, customers, and an amazing amount of visibility. Short on funds? Invite ten strategic alliance partners to help cover the costs. This collaborative effort will triple your visibility.

7. Put Yourself in the Dunking Booth!

Carnivals and festivals are great fun for the entire family, and one of the hottest attractions at these events is The Dunking Booth. By volunteering to be the person "dunked," you will have all eyes on you, and folks will be talking about you for weeks, creating "buzz" around your name, your products, and your services.

8. Fly a Kite!

Your company name, logo, and contact information on a wild and brightly colored kite can send your business to new "heights." Spend a windy day at the beach or in the park, and give away free kites to visitors. This approach can be valuable and can quickly expand your visibility.

9. Send Unusual Gifts and Freebies.

Giving unusual gifts and freebies is another way to set yourself apart from the crowd. Are you in the middle of an ice storm? Send leis to your customers to brighten up their day. Do you have a customer who is recuperating from a broken leg? Send a movie on video, a box of popcorn, and a pack of M & M's. Do you have a customer with a new baby? Send a basket with bubble bath, herbal tea, a cooling

eye mask, and a set of ear plugs (humor works!)

10. Design Two or Three Marketing Goals with No Purpose in Mind Other than to Amuse Yourself and Your Friends.

Two of the biggest goals of marketing are to appear larger or more well known than you are at this moment and to have great fun! Gather your friends, and throw a Hula Hoop party, dress up for Halloween, or stand on the corner of town and interview folks with a question such as "If Barbie is so popular, why do you have to buy her friends?" Sound strange? You bet it does! Strange and mischievous approaches to marketing work, and people will stand up and take notice of what you have to offer. Cheers!

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Bea Fields is an Executive Coach and a Certified Guerrilla Marketing Coach. She is also a Consultant, Trainer, Public Speaker and author of the Five Star Leader e-course. Her area of expertise is that of Leadership Development and Marketing for Executives, Managers, Small Business Owners, and Political Leaders.

How To Create A News Angle How To Create A News Angle

By Michael Levine

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Facts tell, stories sell. People can see themselves in stories.

How do you tell a story that ensure's your message get's heard?

Keep current events in mind.

Think of a triangle. On the left, imagine the story you want to tell. On the right, you have zeitgeist , or curent events. The object of the game is to create a unified, triangulated center...literally an "angle" for your story.

For example, if you have improved your business practices, you might utilize the popularity of television transformations, and promote your story as an "extreme makeover" for busy professionals.

By tying your story to something topical, you vastly improve its chances of being heard.

A good story with a mediocre salesperson is better than a bad story told by the most articulate salesperson. Lack of slickness is actually an asset.

If you had the greatest press kit in the world—but a lackluster story—I couldn't get you on the Today

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Show . But if you were pregnant with Osama Bin Laden's baby, I could get you on with a smudged fax.

In America Today, for better or worse, the way we become credible is by being visible. These are wacky times. Where there's no visibility, there is no credibility. That's just the way it works.

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