



HYDER & ASSOCIATES MANAGEMENT REPORT

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Marketing to Your Community – HOW TO PROSPER in the Downturn By Maria McLeish

Whether the first item you open online each morning is the newspaper or your bank statement, chances are the news you're reading isn't good. All over the US and in other parts of the globe, people are letting their coffee or tea get cold while they ponder the causes and debate the cure for the worst downturn since the Great Depression. Businesses are shutting their doors, and jobs are being lost in record numbers.

And yet, as my grandmother used to say "In bad times, plan for good."

So pour yourself a fresh cup and clear your mind of the headlines. This article will share some positive suggestions for surviving and thriving in the downturn. How? By marketing to your community.

THE NEW MARKETING PARADIGM

"We have left the twentieth century, but you wouldn't know it by looking at much of the marketing still being done," say the authors of "Firms of Endearment—How World-Class Companies Profit from Passion and Purpose." While the main trait of 20th century marketing was hucksterism, the information revolution has since empowered customers to demand collaboration on meeting their needs. Unlike some Wall Street investment banks and notorious mortgage lenders, the firms of endearment profiled in this book by Raj Sisodia, Jag Sheth and David B. Wolfe (Wharton School Publishing) reject consumer exploitation, amply demonstrating that firms of endearment are firms that endure.

In the new marketing paradigm, customers want to feel connected, to be part of a community. According to research performed by The Nielsen Company, it's that emotional connection that fuels buying needs.

Marketing to your community doesn't mean passing out flyers at your next homeowners association meeting or putting your profile on Facebook, although those can be useful tools. Rather, it's a process of discovering, developing, and communicating what you and your business truly have to offer---and then

building and maintaining a bond of experience and relationships with a community of customers and cohorts who share your values and interests.

KEYS TO BUSINESS SUCCESS

In my work as a business coach and strategist I've identified five proactive principles for this new model of marketing: Tell your story; understand your customers; partner with talented people; create a place where magic happens; and celebrate your community.

1. **Tell your story.** Your story about your business is what differentiates you from the rest. It conveys your core beliefs and shares your passion and purpose. Although you may manufacture widgets, in fact what you really sell is passion, and purpose. How you present yourself (your story) is at the heart of your brand. The verbal messages and imagery that represent this heart form the information bedrock from which you reach out to your audience. Customer touch-points—such as a website, public relations, print ads and promotions, are tools for telling your story.
2. **Understand your customers.** Who are your customers? Perhaps you sell outdoor climbing equipment and your target customer is a self-reliant Gen XER who at 42 is nearing the

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COMPLIANCE CORNER

STIMULUS PACKAGE INCLUDES NEW HIPAA SECURITY RULES

The recently passed federal stimulus package includes changes to federal health information privacy and security provisions under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) that will affect physician practices. According to the Center for Health IT at the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), however, the extent of that impact remains to be seen.

The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act, which is intended to promote widespread adoption of health IT, was incorporated into the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. According to provisions in the legislation, physicians now will be required to track any disclosure of a patient's medical information. Previous regulations allowed physicians to disclose patient information for the purpose of treatment, payment, or health-care operations, but they were not required to track when that information was disclosed. However, the new legislation requires physicians who use an electronic health record or HER, to "have the ability to track every time (patient) information has been disclosed", said Robert Tennant, a senior policy advisor for the Medical Group Management Association.

The upside is the regulations will give consumers more control over their personal health information. David C. Kibbe, M.D., is senior adviser to the AAFP's Center for Health IT and chair of ASTM International's technical committee on healthcare informatics. He called the new security provisions "a missed blessing". He added "the regulations will also likely increase the uncertainty, complexity, cost, and risk for anyone or any organization who collects, stores, manages, or transmits personal health information." Tennant said he's focusing on how the provisions apply to family medicine practices and how they will affect physicians' ability to treat patients. Overall, he sees the provisions as adding a "new layer of confusion that can't do anything positive to patient care."

The biggest change affects physicians' business associates. They now will be required to fully comply with HIPAA privacy and security rules. That means clearinghouses, accountants, lawyers, and others who support physicians and have access to protected health information will have more culpability in terms of privacy violations.

SOURCE: ARMA International Policy Brief, April 2009

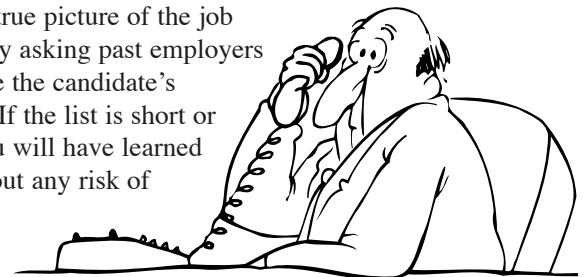
How You Can ADD VALUE TO YOUR JOB

Contribute to your organization's bottom line by asking yourself this question regularly: "If this were my money instead of the company's, would I spend it this way?" Apply it to everything from expense accounts to new office equipment.



HIRING: Asking for References

Because of the possibility of a defamation lawsuit, most employers are reluctant to provide negative information about a job applicant. How can you get a true picture of the job seeker? Try asking past employers to describe the candidate's strengths. If the list is short or vague, you will have learned a lot without any risk of litigation.



Hyder & Associates

BULLETIN BOARD

 Hyder & Associates celebrates its 25th year 

Hyder & Associates is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year providing records and information consulting services to the private and public sector.

Sharon Hyder, CMC, CRM, founder and owner of Hyder & Associates, wants to thank all employees, clients and colleagues who have contributed to its success!

HOW TO PROSPER IN THE DOWNTURN

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peak of his spending powers, or maybe you make organic beauty products for the New Customer Majority – women. Both of these cohorts value environmental sustainability, but how and where you communicate that value will depend on what motivates these very different customers. (Tip: according to comScore, an Internet traffic measurement company, women love to blog on women-only sites. Men don't.)

3. **Partner with talented people.** If you're a baby boomer who cut her teeth on networking mixers in the 80's or the child of a boomer – a savvy millennial who has grown up using electronic media as a social medium – you probably already understand the power of teamwork and collaboration. By reaching beyond your “posse” of peers, friends and colleagues to suppliers, employees, social networking discussions and blogs, you'll increase your exposure to new opportunities, and expand your community, too.
4. **Create a place where magic happens.** Great retailers know that customer loyalty is built from repeat, rewarding experiences, and that the number and frequency of store visits determines how much a customer will eventually buy. If your “place” is a website, you can convert visitors to customers with memorable and compelling content, as well as opportunities to interact. That's not accomplished by overloading your site with too much information or the latest flash features. Offline or online, magic happens through the quality of your relationships, the delivery of your services, and the authenticity of your communications.
5. **Celebrate your community.** Once you've mastered the first four principles of marketing to your community, you'll build and enhance on your foundation by celebrating what you share with your customers and cohorts. Today's customer isn't interested in your sales quotas; they want to know about your leadership in social responsibility. While some of them may be shareholders, they are first and foremost, stakeholders. Many companies, from Proctor and Gamble to Costco to Honda, have shown that a culture of sustainability is good for business, and that the celebration of human values is compatible with profit.

At most Starbucks, for example, there's a special display supporting local volunteer activities and inviting customers to join, as well as information about the company's program of environmental responsibility. If you're a small businessperson who can't afford to provide employees with paid time off for volunteering, you can still recognize their efforts — with a note of appreciation posted on the company website.

Your blog or newsletter can be an opportunity to celebrate your community in other ways, too. Trumpet your clients' accomplishments, and describe some of your recent projects as well as positive feedback from customers--- a fresh take on the “case study” approach. Consider hosting a discussion forum

about new industry practices or perhaps a “webinar.” Let your customers suggest new topics.

The key is to be adaptable and current, and nothing is as immediate as how Southwest Airlines celebrates its community through its culture of work and play, defusing the stress of air travel with a spirit of fun. When everyone on that crowded plane laughs together, the long delays and longer lines are momentarily forgotten.

It will take more than a joke to laugh off the dismal economy, however, especially if your business is losing market share or you've been unlucky enough to be laid off. In today's economic climate the competitive advantage will go to companies and individuals who market to their community through shared values and interests, winning legions of loyal customers---as well as of course, their wallets.

Maria McLeish is a coach and strategy consultant who helps businesses and individuals make the most of their capabilities. For more information about her services or about marketing to your community, contact her at clanmcleish@aol.com or 707-604-7290.

SHARON HYDER, CMC, CRM ANSWERS YOUR MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS



I'm often overwhelmed by the number of telephone calls I need to make every day. What is the best way to handle returning phone calls?

Time-management experts recommend setting aside an hour a day to make and return your phone calls. But which hour? The best times of the day are the first two hours of the morning and the last two hours of the afternoon. That's when most people are in the office and accessible by phone.

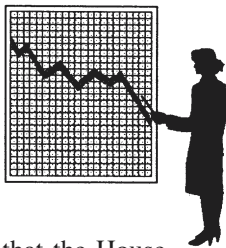
FAMOUS QUOTE

Take charge of your attitude. Don't let someone else choose it for you.

— Dale Carnegie

Trends...

INFORMATION CONTROL BILL PASSES HOUSE



Rep. Steve Driehaus (D-OH) announced that the House of Representatives has passed legislation he introduced to promote accountability and openness in government. The Reducing Information Control Designations Act (H.R. 1323) would establish regulations to make the government's process for classifying information more efficient and government information more easily available to the public.

"This is an important step in our work to make government more open, efficient, and accountable," said Driehaus. "Unclassified government information should be easy to access, but the current jumble of pseudo-classifications results in a roadblock for the public and poor information sharing among government agencies. My legislation would streamline the way we control information, helping to break down the bureaucracy between the people and their government."

Currently, government agencies control documents and information using a wide range of information control designations, known as pseudo-classifications, such as "for official use only" or "sensitive but unclassified". No overarching regulations govern how these pseudo-classifications should be used, and the Government Accountability Office has reported that pseudo-classifications make it more difficult for government agencies to share information with one another and for the public to access government information.

This Act would create a common language for the way government controls information. The legislation would require the archivist of the United States to put in place regulations pertaining to information control designations. The bill would charge federal agency heads with implementing these regulations and empower government inspectors to conduct audits to ensure regulations are being followed. Additionally, the legislation would create training programs for those with the authority to control information.



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MANAGEMENT REPORT

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