

Growing in Tough Times: Marketing Communication Ideas that Work!

Over the past thirty years in business as a high quality printing company we have collected many successful printing and communication ideas. Especially now, in these lean economic times, we feel these are more than just ideas - they are in fact elements of success in marketing communications and we want to share them with you.

First a definition and then a plan called "1-2-3 Successful Ideas" in marketing communications. "Marketing is a business term referring to the promotion of products, especially advertising and branding. The term developed from the original meaning which referred literally to going to market, as in shopping, or going to a market to sell ones products." (Wikipedia)

Successful Idea #1 Refresh Your Message

Your promotional message must state what your business or organization does and why it matters to your customers, why they can count on you in tough times and how you can help them. Further, everyone in your organization should understand and be able to articulate the marketing message from memory. Look at your current marketing message and if needed, adjust it to address your customers concerns - the "why it matters to your customer" part of the message. In difficult times, customers seek products and services that provide an obvious benefit or value. Be sure your message clearly articulates what you can do for them and how you can take their "pain" away. Here is our Message: "Golden Belt Printing, Inc. enables small businesses and not-for-



profit organizations to get their message to their targeted audience with creative, high quality printed materials and direct mail, verified by many successful, satisfied clients." Does it give you comfort or encouragement to know we want to help you be successful? Your customers need to hear something like this from you.

Successful Idea #2 Be Consistent

Make these three items part of your business or organization's marketing communications material.

ONE, you will need business stationery consisting of well-designed and printed business cards, letterheads, envelopes, calendars, note pads, thank you cards and mailing labels. These items speak professionalism and credibility to your customers. We have helped many companies with products such as these. Our files are full of printed samples and we have some great designs ready to go.

All these items need to be visually consistent and recognizable as belonging to your business or organization. Besides your logo, which we can help design if you want, you must use the same typeface and color palette and have your materials professionally printed. Color is our specialty and nobody does it better! Our new High Definition digital press, the Presstek 34 DI, delivers the highest quality printing in the industry and is so hi-tech it even saves your color profiles so we hit your company colors right-on every time. Besides accurate color, it doesn't use traditional printing plates and chemistry, offering an eco-friendly printing

(Continued on page 2)



We Put The WOW In Digital Color!

Golden Belt Printing, Inc.

Digital Color • Calendars • Envelopes • Pro Mailing

1125 US Hwy 281 Bypass • PO Box 997 • Great Bend, KS 67530
800.299.6351 • 620.793.6351 • Fax 620.792.5322 • GoldenBelt.com

In this Issue:

- Growing in Tough Times pages 1-3
- Navigating our web site page 3
- "Top Five" for Convenience page 3
- Question & Answer page 4
- Idea Corner page 4

Enjoy our new calendar!

Marketing Communication Ideas That Work

Continued from page 1

ing process. Plus, it does all this without water, so the ink dries quickly allowing a faster turn around. When consistency is executed, "branding" is the result. Branding, like the cowboys branding range cattle, makes a statement of what your business or organization is and what it does. You need to translate this message graphically into a consistent look and feel in all your marketing communications materials.

TWO, you need a well-designed company or organizational brochure, printed with your "brand." The brochure provides an overview of your company or organization and its products and services. It mentions any rewards or connections you have with other organizations. (Watch the mail for our new brochure promoting a new facet of Golden Belt Printing.) We can write, design, print and mail a brochure for you.

THREE, you need a targeted direct mail marketing piece branded with your logo, color palette etc. that introduces your business or organization, and drives prospects to your location whether it's a physical address or a web site. An effective promotional effort informs customers and prospects about your products and services. It builds awareness of your brand and creates an interest in buying.

"For most small and medium-sized businesses and organizations, direct mail marketing - periodically sending a mail piece to a target audience - is the #1 promotional method."

The effectiveness of targeted direct mail advertising, as measured in response rate, increases with each subsequent mailing. We help you carefully select a mailing list and consistently mail at regular intervals. Over time, correctly using these "Success Ideas," you will reach the people who are in the market for what you sell and buy it from you. From our experience, working with many different clients through the years, their best long-term results have occurred when they sent mailings every month. What should you mail? We can easily think of many things: a postcard directing customers and prospects to your web site (or your door) where they can find product and service information, special offers stating a discount or value, or alternating with useful information such as tip-based articles on

your expertise in your industry.

You are not alone in this venture. We compile or purchase targeted mail lists for a number of our clients. We attend seminars to (1) learn how to identify those demographics important to your target audience, and (2) keep up on the latest USPS requirements.

Let us design a series of 12 postcards. By using Golden Belt Printing to design, print and mail everything you need for a year's campaign, you'll enjoy some pricing benefits and be ready to mail on time every month. We can "tag" each mail piece so you can measure the success rate. We can also personalize everything you desire to send in your mail package.

Also, if you haven't had your current marketing material reviewed for consistency and branding, contact us at 1-800-299-6351 or 620-793-6351 to arrange for an analysis. If you are missing an element (such as a direct mail marketing piece), we want to help you create, print and mail it. We're experts at helping customers. We even make "house calls". So please call.

Successful Idea #3

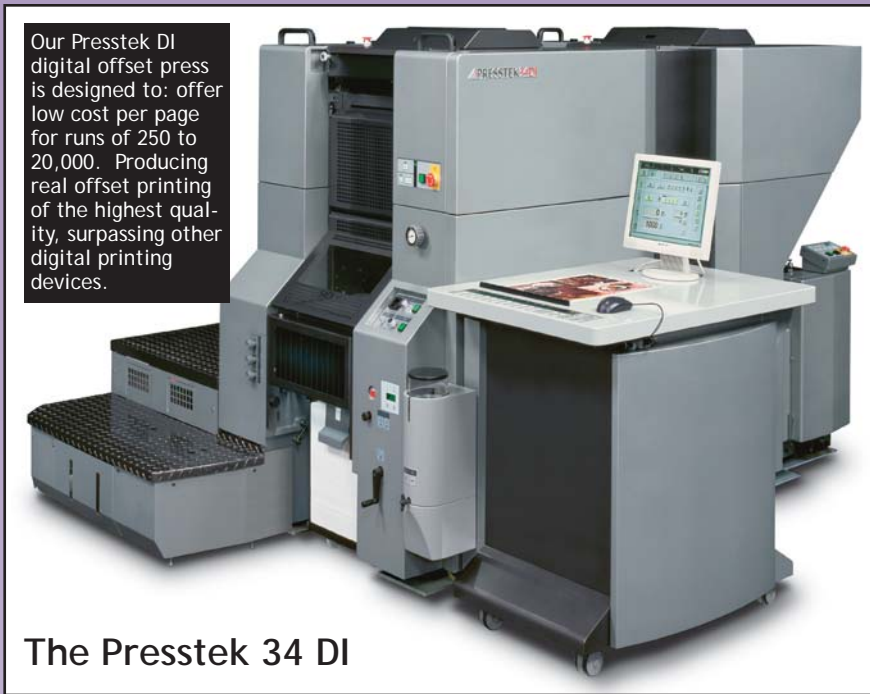
Leverage Customer Good Will

Satisfied customers are like gold to your business or organization. As a group, they provide a demographic profile that can be used to identify prospects. As individuals, they represent a source of leads. At Golden Belt Printing much of our business comes from referrals. So, check-in with your customers. A periodic staying-in-touch check-in is vital. During a check-in, hand your client one of your calendars and some notepads (all of which Golden Belt Printing can do for you with your own "brand"). Ask your customers about business and encourage them to talk about their challenges and opportunities. At a minimum, you'll be building a relationship, and you might discover an unknown need that your company's products or services can meet. (If distance prevents a face-to-face check-in, look at the "Top Five" for convenience on page 3 or call us for ideas.) While you're with your customer, ask for referrals. Be prepared with a form or checklist so you can get all the necessary contact information and background.

Perhaps your customer will phone or e-mail the referral name in advance of your contact! But don't wait for your customer to act before you do. Promptly contact the refer-

Our Presstek DI digital offset press is designed to: offer low cost per page for runs of 250 to 20,000. Producing real offset printing of the highest quality, surpassing other digital printing devices.

The Presstek 34 DI



ral, and let your customer know you've made the contact with a hearty thank you card. (We can design and print these cards with your personal, consistent company "brand.")

Another marketing activity during a check-in is to ask for a testimonial. But don't place the burden of actually writing it on the client. Have wording in mind (especially if you want the testimonial to address a particular point), perhaps even write out a projected testimonial, so your customer can quickly and easily complete the task. You may even be able to walk away from the "check-in" with a signed testimonial in hand. Always send one of your thank-you cards for the testimonial. **GBP**



Review:

1-2-3 Successful Ideas for Marketing Communications

If marketing is finding out what your customers want and providing it, then selling is getting those customers to buy from you instead of someone else. And, promotion is the vehicle that makes it all happen! We can help you with all three of these vital points. We do not say this idly. We truly do like to help you! Remember, our Marketing Message is...

Overview of How to Grow in Tough Times.

For most businesses and organizations, successful marketing means:

- You refresh your promotional message to show how you are in business to serve.
- You get consistent with your stationery, envelopes, logo, etc.
- You direct-mail to your customers and prospects.
- You physically check-in with customers and leave them your calendar and notepads.
- You ask for referrals and follow them up, remembering to send a thank you.
- You ask for testimonials and send a thank you for each one.
- You net customer retention and gain new prospects.
- You grow even in tough times.

Contact us right away! We want to help you be successful with your marketing communications!

GoldenBelt.com

Visit our web site where you can see photographs of printed samples for everything we're talking about in this article. Just click the "Products" link and scroll through the text. You'll see the "Samples" link after each product heading.

The "TOP FIVE" for Convenience

Make it convenient for your customers to do business with you, and they will.

- **ONE:** Make it easy for your customers to choose how they like best to be reached. As part of the initial "Check-In," ask whether your customer prefers a personal visit, phone call, FAX or e-mail as the usual means of personal contact.
- **TWO:** Conform to your customers' accounts payable practices. Find out what the purchasing and accounts payable departments require to facilitate payment of your invoices and how they like to receive invoices.
- **THREE:** Be sure your business or organization is easy to find. Review signage to be sure it is visible and in good repair. If your location is off the beaten path, have directions printed on the back of your business card or add a map on your web site.

- **FOUR:** Provide a way for customers to contact you 24/7. For many customers, the traditional "40-hour work week" is fiction. Give customers a way to contact you when they are thinking about you - e-mail is an excellent method for back-and-forth communication. They will also jot ideas on your "branded" notepads, mousepads, deskpads or calendars. (Our customers often come in with ideas sketched out on a Golden Belt Printing handout. They really like the deskpads; they're a large venue for large ideas.)
- **FIVE:** Keep your web site useful and interesting. Provide relevant content on your web site so customers will think of it as a reference tool. Note who visits your site for technical information, tips and tricks, frequently-asked questions and other useful material and give them a call or personal e-mail. (One of our biggest customers in North Carolina came to us because of our web site.) **GBP**

Enjoy Our New Color Calendar (Enclosed)!

The photographs featured in this year's calendar are from amateur photographers from central and western Kansas. These award-winning photographs were exhibited in the 2007 Sunflower Showcase Photography Fest sponsored by Rachel Harmon of Sagebrush Video Productions in Otis, Kansas. Check the back cover for photo credits.

Question:
I've heard that it is important to profile my top customers. How is that done?

Answer: The benefit of profiling your best customers is to help you understand where your customers are coming from. Profiling will determine their common characteristics such as geographic location, sales volume, number of employees, years in business, or age, income, gender, ethnicity, household income, etc. If you are profiling a small number of customers, you may want to conduct a brief survey by phone or e-mail and ask the appropriate questions. For larger customer lists, we can arrange for the appending of data to add characteristics, when available, from publicly-available sources. Call us and we'll explain the process in more detail.

Have you been asked to give a presentation?



Idea



This is a great way to promote your business or organization. Here are a few tips for making the presentation effective:

- **Make available conference-style notepads.** This is a lined oversized notepad that looks like notebook paper with three-ring binder holes along the left side and your "brand" along the bottom or top. We hand these out when we attend a conference. Of course, we design and print them here. Every audience has expressed thanks for the pads. Notepads work too, but the conference-style pads are really appreciated.
- **Be yourself.** Realize that you alone have this particular message and the audience needs it. Let your personality shine as part of the presentation. This helps you establish a connection with the audience. Also, share something about yourself as part of the presentation, or use a delivery style that is professional but distinctive. When you become one with the audience, you will increase their understanding and comprehension.
- **Be prepared.** It's a groaner when a speaker starts off with, "When I was asked to do this I..." Please be prepared for the sake of those in the audience and start with a punch. Prepare a great beginning sentence then go to your polished delivery. This delivery comes from your familiarity with your topic and from rehearsing.
- **Keep your slides simple so you aren't tempted to read them.** During your presentation, elaborate on the information that appears on the slides. Remember that slides capture the essence of your presentation, not the details. Too much information on the slides may cause people to tune out. (At the last conference Roy spoke at, he printed his slides and elaboration notes in a 4-color slick brochure that everyone loved—Butch designed the slides and the brochure to match. They were spectacular. There was not a single brochure or conference pad left behind; and afterward, people began to describe their printing ideas and projects.)
- **Add something memorable.** Give the audience something they won't be able to find on their own - an anecdote, an example from your personal experience, or an analysis based on your expertise. (At Roy's conference near Atlanta, GA in October 2008, he told some great personal stories about what to do when business goes down. Everyone loved the stories and identified with them.)
- **Be a good teacher.** Usually, the purpose of presentations is to inform, seldom to entertain. However, there almost always needs to be a little light humor, even in serious presentations. Use humor or anecdotes to teach your audience something new or improve their understanding.
- **Respect the audience's time.** Begin and end your presentation promptly. If answering questions, factor in that time and control the Q & A period so you can end on time.

Corner

