



Free Publicity Focus Group

Performance Based Marketing and Publicity

The 'New' Marketing And Publicity Opportunities

Copyright 2008 Free Publicity Focus Group

I have worked in marketing and publicity for over 29 years. I have worked personally with thousands of business owners across hundreds of business categories. I have been directly responsible for putting millions of dollars into other people's bank accounts. I tell you this not to brag, but rather to impress upon you that what you are about to read comes from broad based, real life experience - marketing experience as opposed to marketing theory.

I have seen nearly everything one can see in these past 3 decades. The changes and improvements in marketing and publicity methodologies have been mind boggling in their sheer number. In the last few years, however, I have observed change on a scale that is unprecedented. These changes were a direct result of Internet technologies.

The opportunities that now present themselves stagger the mind. However, with these new opportunities come new problems to be addressed. In this writing I would like to address a problem that I would term to be 'acute'.

The Steps

To help define the problem, I will start by stating that the key steps involved in creating marketing and publicity strategies that actually work have not changed one bit. These steps are:

- a. Define the market.
- b. Define the people.
- c. Define the message.
- d. Define the preferred delivery system(s).
- e. Deliver the message.



Quite simple, is it not? This is Marketing 101.
The business owner identifies a need in the marketplace.
He or she then determines who is likely to buy that product or service, develops a trust building message and sends it out into the marketplace and voila! Sales begin to happen!
(Oh yes I am greatly oversimplifying the process here for the purpose of making an example).
However, these days I hear the same statement over and over again. The statement comes from those who have been very successful for many years. That statement is (and the problem) is:



"It's not working - anymore."

The 'anymore' is either an aside, or goes unspoken. Yet it is there. What has always worked is no longer working as it has worked in the past. This begs the question: 'Why is it no longer working?' Has something changed?

Indeed something has changed.

What Has Changed?

Again, the basic formula has not changed at all. It is still, and most likely ever shall be:

- a. Define the market.
- b. Define the people.
- c. Define the message.
- d. Define the preferred delivery system(s).
- e. Deliver the message.

However the entire formula must be reevaluated from a new perspective that takes into account the current options now available in the marketplace. The old 'tried and true' marketing system is not working because it is being applied TO a marketplace that has changed radically, dramatically and permanently.

In her book, *Every Generation Needs A New Revolution*, author (and now good friend) Linda Thompson of Life Path Solutions (<http://www.lifepathsolutions.biz>), provides us with an extremely penetrating look into this new marketplace. (If you have not read her book, I highly recommend you do so if you intend to successfully market any product or service in this new marketplace).

"Remember the sale pitch, 'This is not your father's Oldsmobile?' That's what's happening today," Linda says. "We are trying to sell our products and/or services to multi-generations, using the same delivery, to everyone. Most likely, those who have tried this approach have not found a great deal of success. *Every Generation Needs a New Revolution* illustrates how this commonplace problem can easily be overcome and can indeed be transformed instead into a real asset."

In her book she defines the following groups of people:

The Veterans	- born 1901 - 1929
The Silents	- born 1930 - 1945
The Boomers	- born 1946 - 1964
The Generation X	- born 1965 - 1976
The Generation Y	- born 1977 - 1990
The Millenials	- born 1991 - Now

All of these diverse groups are found in the marketplace currently. However she breaks this down even more. For our purposes here I will summarize briefly just a few characteristics of these groups. Her treatment is far, far more comprehensive. (Again, I highly recommend that you read the book to get the full, unedited picture).

Veterans

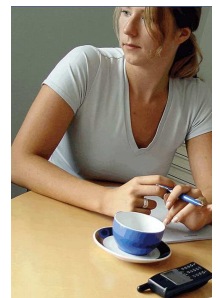
Personality Characteristics
Core Values
Think of:

Traditional, Family Oriented
Patriotism, Loyalty
Charles Lindbergh, Rudolph Valentino

Silents

Personality
Core Values
Think of:

Conformist, Conservative
Dedication, Sacrifice
Jimmy Carter, Charlton Heston



Boomers

Personality
Core Values
Think of:

Driven, Soul Searchers
Optimism, Teamwork & Involvement
The Beatles, Bill Gates



Generation X

Personality
Core Values
Think of:

Risk Takers, Skeptical
Diversity, Global Thinking
Michael Dell, Brooke Shields

Generation Y

Personality
Core Values
Think of:

Optimistic, Prefer Collective Action
Confidence, Civic Duty
Tara Lipinski, LeAnn Rimes



Millenials

Personality
Core Values
Think of

Remains to be seen
Remains to be seen
Remains to be seen

What does this mean to you and your marketing efforts? It means a great deal. For here we have 6 very distinct groups of people, with 6 very distinct ways of communicating and 6 very distinct ways of perceiving that message you are sending. All of these groups are receiving your message.

The reason 'it is not working anymore' is because it is being perceived by groups of people who perceive your words in many DIFFERENT ways, not all of them as favorably as you might hope. This is not your father's anything.

Major Differences

In regards to marketing, some would say that we are in the midst of a 'transition'. I beg to differ. It is evident that the transition has already occurred. It is not going to go away. It will not revert back to its former state.

If you wish to surf, you cannot sit behind the wave and watch it go, complaining all the while. You must somehow get out in front of the thing, if you truly wish to ride.

For instance, it used to be that, if you wished to create a buzz, you used traditional methods. These methods were newspaper, TV, radio and magazines. However, in the current marketing environment, you can also now create a major buzz using the non-traditional channels (Internet, blogs, ezines, etc, etc, and more etc). It is no wonder that the modern marketer is greatly confused! Most 'modern' marketers have no idea how these things might work.

Even the large corporations, with their buildings full of marketing and publicity experts, are falling flat on their faces in this new environment. They are finding that it is not enough to simply transfer the old television commercials to the Internet. Even though they have worked in the past, commercials simply don't work out here in cyberspace. Generally speaking, 'preaching at' your prospective customer is quite dead.

Oh yes, preaching may work on the Veteran, the Silent or even the Boomer, as they are used to these types of 'tactical communications'. However the later generations simply will not stand still for it. The modern buyer does not want a message - they want an 'experience'. That experience must come from someone who perhaps cannot program a VCR.

Let's look at an example. I will use the example of the traditional press release, as most are very familiar with this and have used these in the past.

Let's make this a fantasy. Suppose you write a perfect press release (that's the fantasy part). Suppose that this perfect press release is actually picked up and gets coverage by a large number of newspapers (that also could be said to be decidedly on the side of fantasy). Now, very briefly, here is what may happen:

Veterans	most likely will see it, as they still read newspapers
Silents	most likely will see it, as they still read newspapers
Boomers	some will see it, however many will not
Generation X	will not see it, as they generally do not read newspapers
Generation Y	will not see it, as they generally do not read newspapers
Millennials	highly unlikely it will be seen



In the old days, getting a press release run in a large number of newspapers was considered to be a grand success in regards to creating free publicity! However, in this new environment, your perfect press release, placed in a large number of newspapers, will now most likely be seen by somewhere around just 1/3 of the potential market.

This is why it's not working - like it used to - anymore.

Personally, I used to read the newspaper. As a matter of fact I worked in media for both newspaper and magazines. I have also spent many years placing press releases in newspapers. However, when it comes time to actually read a newspaper - I simply never do. Too slow for me. Not indexed or searchable.

When I get up in the morning, I grab my coffee, sit down at the computer, hit Google and Yahoo news and spend about 7 minutes getting everything I need. The only time I ever come near a newspaper is when I am checking to see if my clients' ads and/or releases have been printed, or when my bird cage needs cleaning.

My grandfather still reads them. My father reads them. I do not. My wife does not. My daughter, forget it. Her children? Unknown.

Traditional media is in hot water and they know it. It seems as though nearly every day I read yet another study talking about how newspapers are losing their market share. They are all going online. Television is now offering streaming video (and still requiring one to watch those commercials!) On and on and on it goes.

So, lets again go back to the basics, this time from the perspective of 'generational influences'.

The Basics

Define The Market

According to Ms. Thompson in *Every Generation Needs A New Revolution*, (<http://www.lifepathsolutions.biz>) the numbers break down as follows: (these numbers have not been verified by me - I reprint them here from the book)

The Veterans	63 million
The Silents	49 million
The Boomers	78 million
The Generation X	40 million
The Generation Y	70 million
The Millenials	Unknown



This gives us an idea of the scope and size of the market. If you are selling a product or service involving say, 'baking supplies', it is most likely that those who still bake at home are going to fall in the Veterans or Silents categories (perhaps more than a few in the Boomer category). It is unlikely that X'ers or Y'ers are going to be doing a great deal of baking. (As a matter of fact, I don't believe my little Y'er has ever even actually washed a dish. Yet. I am working on that.) The numbers above can help you in regards to determining approximate gross numbers.

Define The People

(Note: this is an extremely simplistic example. To actually sharply define your target market will involve many more questions than are listed here. These are primarily for the purpose of making a very simple example).

Are your potential customers or clients:

In a specific age range?

Male, Female or Both?

A specific race?

Located in a specific geographical area?

Do they have specific interests?

Now look at your prospect from the generational perspective. Who are they now? Are they optimistic? Driven? Soul searchers? John Wayne fans? Ex-Hippies perhaps? Bloggers? KISS fans? Or even, OMG, texters?

Define The Message

Here is where using generational influences become a key factor in the success of your particular message. What language or pictures are you going to use to convey your message? Sending a message using Charlton Heston as an example to an X'er is simply going to be a waste of time, ink and money on your part. However, this style of message will most likely work quite well if your market falls within the Silents category. Conversely, sending song lyrics from a current rock band will fall on deaf ears with me. (I would much prefer Pink Floyd and the like). Can you speak your market's language? Conversely, (perhaps more importantly), are you speaking a language they cannot relate to at all?

In my opinion it is also vital to understand what 'form' that message should take.

Veterans, Silents and Boomers grew up on the intrusive, *preachy* 'talk AT the customer' types of radio and TV commercials. The X'ers and Y'ers simply will not stand still for such tactics.

A Veteran might not mind a salesperson knocking at their door, as they grew up with pots and pans salespeople going door to door. The Y'er would most likely call the police without ever opening the door, should a man show up with A pot vs SOME pot. Veterans live in a world where people could be trusted. This is evidenced by the fact that a Veteran, when sending an email, will often include a mailing address and telephone number, something I would NEVER do.

Sometimes delivering an effective marketing message is not so much about communicating effectively as it is about AVOIDING MISCOMMUNICATION. Sadly, your natural communication style could be offensive to some.

Define The Preferred Delivery System

Here is another area in which generational influences play a major role. I can blog all day. Neither my grandfather nor my father will ever see my entries. I cannot stress strongly enough the wisdom of learning which delivery system a particular group will prefer. Here, in my opinion, is the short version:

Veterans	Newspaper, Radio, TV, Magazine
Silents	Newspaper, Radio, TV, Magazine
Boomers	Newspaper, Radio, TV, Magazine, Internet, Blogs, Ezines Streaming Video
Generation X	Internet, Blogs, Ezines, Streaming Video
Generation Y	Internet, Blogs, Ezines, Streaming Video
Millennials	Unknown

Traditional marketing messages will simply not work if your market is comprised of Boomers, X'ers, Y'ers or Millennials. You may place a powerful and most perfect message in a vehicle in which it will NEVER be seen.

Why It's Not Working - LIKE IT USED TO - Anymore

It is a completely different world out there. It is exciting. It is new. It changes and morphs at light speed. What is 'new' today is often outdated and gone tomorrow.

Some marketing 'experts' understand this; others do not. Some are riding the waves and others are complaining. The traditionalist is not pleased with these changes. The futurist is overjoyed. It does not matter. It has already happened. The marketer can catch this wave and ride it. Or the marketer can be left behind to tread water. One thing regarding waves is certain; when one passes, another is sure to follow.

In this new environment, there ARE no experts. There are some who get lucky. There are some who know much more than others. Some are digging their own channels. Many of the rest are confused and scrambling. It is not possible to lock down a particular 'method that works' when the medium is completely fluid and changing at the speed of light.

However, one thing NEVER changes: PEOPLE react to other PEOPLE.

Define the message and find effective ways to deliver that message to the right PEOPLE and you will always find success. In other words,

- sharply define your market,
- sharply define the PEOPLE who make up your target market, and then
- deliver a sharply defined and properly worded message to those PEOPLE
- in the MANNER they prefer.

To some, this will be an old school faxed press release, to others a phone call, to some an email, a blog entry, a streaming video, a newsletter, an ezine and to yet others, the cutting edge, new (fill in the blank) today.

The entire marketing world is completely reinventing itself as we speak. The discussions are endless. There are some who are holding on to the old systems much like our ancestors held on to the horse and buggy when the car was invented, believing it to be just a fad. There are others who are trashing the old systems completely and jumping on the new bandwagons with complete abandon. (What IS a bandwagon, anyway? Honestly, I don't really know).

Who is correct? Everyone is correct, in a manner of speaking. There is no right or wrong; there are only opinions. It is primarily the 'where' and 'how' that is being discussed in professional marketing circles. That discussion will not end anytime soon, if ever.

I do not believe the media holds the sacrosanct positions they once held. That is more than just my opinion. Read any of their own studies and you will find that they agree. They too are scrambling. They are not choosing to change; they are literally being forced to change or go the way of the dinosaur. One would have to be deaf, dumb, blind and be living under a rock not to see how they are running scared, scrambling wildly about, hoping to maintain their respective positions as the heretofore almighty keepers of the keys to the vaults of informative content.

Therein lies great opportunity. For now you can take your message DIRECTLY to your buyer, using the Internet and all it brings with it.

Even the world of books is experiencing a metamorphosis. These days, authors can no longer simply print a paperback book and expect to find the wide audience they once found, for now low cost electronic versions, in whatever form, must be produced if one is to reach across the entire audience.

Marketing failure is a fact of life. A very high percentage of businesses fail for myriad reasons. However, not counting lack of effort, all reasons could be said to be one:

Lack of information

I urge you to take the time to educate yourself before investing any money in anything. Do your proverbial homework first. Put away your own prejudices and preferences and approach the market with a clean, clear and fresh mind. Do not do what everyone else is doing simply because everyone else is doing it. It is possible that everyone else will fail and you along with them. Conversely, it is possible that what did NOT work for another may work perfectly for you.

This is why developing a valid, workable, well developed marketing plan is essential to your success. Whether traditional channels, non-traditional channels or a combination of the two are utilized, the fact is that, without a well-crafted and realistic marketing plan, it is all for naught. A marketing plan involves much more than just creating publicity. Very generally speaking, you must consider also promotional strategies, advertising, sales methodology, the list goes on and on.

As a rule, to put together a workable marketing plan for any business takes weeks, if not months of research and planning. Don't allow anyone to tell you anything different. No offense, but I never cease to be amazed by the number of people I encounter who simply swing open the front door and declare 'I am in business!'. This is precisely why such a very high number of businesses fail miserably. Do not become a statistic. Take your time. Do it right. Use common sense and do not let emotions, positive or negative, influence your decisions in any way.

Be informed. Do not cut corners because you are anxious to get going.

There are a great many free resources at the Free Publicity Focus Group site. I invite you to download or read whatever you feel might be of help to you.

There is endless opportunity here and there are challenges we have not encountered before. All in all however, the opportunities far outweigh the challenges.

Feel free to contact me at don@freepublicitygroup.com with any comments or questions.

Don McCauley
Free Publicity Focus Group
Performance Based Marketing and Publicity
<http://www.freepublicitygroup.com>
<http://freepublicitypro.blogspot.com>

Copyright 2008 Free Publicity Focus Group

This information has been copyrighted.

Feel free to distribute this as long as no changes of any kind are made to this document or any of the information contained therein.