

For Immediate Release



Year End Best Practices and Marketing Tune Up

Cincinnati PR, Advertising Firm Shares Five Things Every Business Owner Must Consider At the End of the Year to Be Poised for Growth, Success in '09

Cincinnati, OH – November 21, 2008 – It's the perfect time of the year to step back, take a deep breath and see what worked, what needs improved and what needs scrapped according to most business experts. Cincinnati and Cleveland public relations and advertising executive Rodger Roeser, also host of a national radio show on best practices in marketing and PR, says that while many executives may focus solely on the bottom line, he suggests that they take just a few moments and focus on marketing results – a simple investment of time that could not only save significant dollars, but also significantly improve performance.

1. Perform a communications audit

Roeser advises to take a look at all the pieces produced by your organization that were used for any type of public consumption, including letterhead, business cards, sales presentations, sales letters, press releases, advertisements and the like. Lay them all out on the conference table and make sure they follow your approved graphic standards and brand identity. Double check the messages being sent: are they hitting the mark, does it say what you want it to say? Are pieces outdated and does your material need refreshed? Is it easy to read and understand? What might some better and more interesting stories be about you, your team and your organization. Roeser advises consulting an expert if you feel you cannot be objective or lack the time.

2. Survey your existing clients

It's never been easier than with the online software that exists, such as survey monkey or zoomerang – both free services. You simply craft a survey and email it out to your clients to glean valuable business intelligence. If you're afraid to do that, you're not following a basic tenant of business: listening to your client. Analyzing the results is also quite simple and you may find some easy things you can do to make some clients happy, but almost always, simply asking the question of "how can we make things even better," is reward enough in that it lets customers know that they're feedback is valued.

3. Set benchmarks before budgets

Look at what worked, what didn't perform as expected and set a budget based on anticipated results and expectations. Marketing works because enough "oomph" is put behind it to make it work, and typically, integration is key. Look at your marketing mix and where the dollars are being allocated. Set goals, and above all, set benchmarks of where you are now and where you want to be in as many measurable facets of your organization as you can, such as overall sales, monthly sales, web traffic, store traffic, coupon redemption and the like. That way, you can look at your advertising, marketing and pr from of standpoint of "did it work" rather than "that's a pretty color." Most press releases, for example, that are crafted and distributed are poorly written because they are overly centric to the business sending it out, or mandated upon the agency to send it out. Don't impose success when the release or product is the failure. Same goes with a bad ad, or bad customer service. Creativity and newsworthiness are subjective, while sales increases are not. Understand the difference.

4. If you don't have one, find a community relations outlet for your business

There are hundreds of great causes and programs you can lend your business to, and dozens that will help strengthen and bolster your brand – if you need help, consult an agency. Cause marketing activities and community relations are proven to strengthen brand, increase sales and increase employee morale. It can be something you believe in personally, it can be large scale or small scale, but regardless, it should be part of your plan. Yes, it's a good public relations move, but more importantly, it's good for the overall health of your company and most likely, the community in which you and your employees live.

5. Do something different next year

Vow to do something different next year with your marketing, such as a podcast series, a custom publication or even start a blog. There are hundreds of new, fun, effective, inexpensive and creative outlets for marketing products, services or people. Again, consult with an expert, but do something and do something different. Remember, sometimes in marketing it can be okay to be that black sheep because the point is standing apart from the crowd and creating a distinctive and memorable brand. If your marketing is a bit stale, do something fresh. If you think blogs are new – it's time for some fresh, proactive and creative counsel. Overall, marketing should be proactively effective and fun – regardless of industry.

Roeser adds that his agency provides a free service, called EMG Bootcamp, available by appointment, where business executives and practitioners can learn best practices, new services and technology, budgeting, and brand building exercises to better understand and develop strong marketing communications and sales team. EMG Bootcamp is an interactive, informative and fun two hour session.

About EMG

With offices in Cleveland and Cincinnati, Ohio, EMG is a privately owned public relations, experiential marketing and integrated branding communications firm that specializes in developing marketing and communications programs for business seeking growth, fresh and creatively strategic marketing ideas and concepts, and marketing communications implementation. More information can be accessed at www.eisenmanagementgroup.com or by calling 859.291.4302. EMG – Let's Make Some Waves.