

New Year Can Also Mean New, Fresh Ideas

by Dave Willems

This column originally published on February 1, 2010, in The Appleton Post-Crescent.

What better time than the new year to give some serious thought to new things you can be doing to build brand momentum. This is, by the way, true whether you're building your organization's brand or your own personal brand in preparation for a new job or promotion.

We'll focus on the organizational perspective here, and start by noting there's no shortage of opportunities to be considered when it comes to finding new wrinkles to add to your game plan. There are a few fertile categories, though, that are some of the first places we like to look in seeking fresh opportunities, including:

- Publicity, which continues to be a backbone of most marketing programs and offers bonus points in terms of credibility. What are your best opportunities for gaining beneficial business or community coverage?
- Joint-Promotions, which can help reach new audiences and stretch budgets a bit. Think about who you can partner with to create a helpful sales promo or traffic- or image-building activity.
- Internet efforts, which may involve fine-tuning your Web site or seriously looking at fresh ways of email marketing.
- Social Media opportunities, which, of course, continue to grow. A good barometer of potential is to see how your social media opportunity can connect to a major media source, a factor that can help greatly in expanding your message. It becomes a good blend of social and traditional marketing. Also, before you leap, make sure the social media tactic being considered is both strategic and appropriate to your marketing program *before* you waste valuable time and money.
- Event-based opportunities, which are hot again and can tie nicely to the aforementioned options. These can include sales events, seasonal events or community-oriented activities. Take a look only at activities that fit your strategic marketing plan. This might involve connecting to an existing event or initiating a new one.

There are many other options to be considered, of course, but this is a quick list to get the wheels turning.

Hopefully, you'll be able to implement a couple of the ideas you come up with without having to drop something else. That's a nice position to be in. However, if your budget is really tight, look for one or two things that might be under-performing and replace them with one or two of your new ideas.

Using the first month or two of a new calendar year to set aside some time to look at new ways of doing things can uncover some better, fresher marketing opportunities. And, of course, it can add some much-needed momentum, which should be a constant consideration for your brand.

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