

CREATIVE COMPOST

Where Great Marketing Ideas Grow

Vol. I, No. 1

BUSINESS TRAVELERS: A Moving Target

The number of business travelers jumped to nearly 44 million last year, according to a recent survey. That's up 14% over the last five years. Does your company offer a product or service that could make life easier for today's weary road warriors?

When it comes to marketing your business, don't fall back on the usual imprinted pen or mug! Tom Holderith of Balady Promotions, a promotional product & business gift marketing company, has some creative ways to put your company name or logo in front of this growing market:

🌿 **Travel Candles** — The newest twist on the aromatherapy craze lets travelers freshen up a musty hotel room with this candle packaged in a small lidded tin. At approximately \$3 each in 250-piece quantities, it's inexpensive and memorable.

🌿 **Retractable Modem Cable** — If you've ever struggled to get your laptop connected to a hotel room phone jack, you'll appreciate the flexibility of 10 feet of phone line that retracts neatly into a case about the size of a deck of cards. (\$13 ea./100 pc. quantity)

🌿 **Highway Tote** — A must for anyone on the road, this handy tote contains a road atlas, booster cables and other useful items. (\$35 ea./25 pc. quantity)

Travel items make great gifts not only for your customers, but for your sales force as well. Business travel can be stressful, so it never hurts to remind your sales team that you appreciate their efforts day in and day out.

Source: Tom Holderith, Balady Promotions, 1719 Route 10, Parsippany NJ 07054. Ph: (973) 682-8440. Email: baladypromotions@worldnet.att.net

Is Your Company Becoming "Web-Centric?"

Surely you've experienced that heady rush when an Internet search leads you right to the information you need — whether it's documentation for a presentation, a helpful number or statistic, or even the answer to that *Jeopardy!* question you missed last night.

Whether we're the seeker of information or the provider, there's no doubt the Internet has fundamentally changed the way we do business. The convenience of pulling up a web page can't be beat — no time differences to deal with, no voice prompts to navigate through, and with a speedy connection, virtually no waiting.

But what about the sales prospects who might prefer traditional printed material? When a caller requests more information on your product or service, do you

automatically refer them right to your web site?

Many of us may be making the mistake of eliminating the printed piece from our repertoire of marketing tools. If your company's "web-centric," you might want to consider these points:

- **Heft.** The tactile nature of your brochure and the unspoken message it sends. Substantial stock? Top-quality printing? You must be someone worth dealing with.
- **Burnout.** Some days, the last thing you want to do is get back online to view another web site.
- **Time.** Not everyone has a high-speed connection or the latest plug-ins to view your virtual masterpiece under optimal conditions.

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“WEB-Centric?”

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- **Portability.** Who hasn't kept a stack of reading material handy to fill those miscellaneous waiting moments — at an appointment, while on hold, or in the airport?

Check your current stock of printed sales tools. Are they up to date? Do they support the marketing message sent by your web site? The last thing you want to do is to confuse prospects with conflicting messages about who you are and where your strengths lie.

By all means invest in a bells-and-whistles web site that attracts and keeps customers with its convenience. But don't discount

the continued value of the lowly printed brochure, price list or sales kit...it may just put you in the right place at the right time for your next big sale.

A WELCOME to Our Readers

Thanks for checking out the premiere issue of *Creative Compost!* Hopefully it will be the first of many filled with interesting tidbits and creative suggestions for breaking out of that marketing rut we all tend to fall into on occasion.

We're no longer just battling our competitors for a customer's attention. Smart marketers recognize time — or lack thereof — as the true enemy. We need to

be more creative, more provocative, more offbeat than ever in the effort to reach consumers at a time they'll be most receptive to our sales message.

Whether you're a creative or a number cruncher, an entrepreneur or part of a bigger entity, we hope you'll benefit from the information you'll find here. More importantly, if you've developed an unusual solution to a marketing problem, or offer a product or service that fits the bill, send it along and we'll be happy to include you in our next issue.

Until then...happy marketing!


Lisa Fahoury
Editor

A SWINGING SUCCESS: Company Golf Outings

Stumped for new and different giveaway ideas for your next corporate golf event? Check out FujiFilm's QuickSnap Golf Analysis camera! This 15-exposure single-use camera shoots eight rapid shots per frame to help golfers perfect their swing. Golfers can not only view their swing frame-by-frame, they can also send a developed print back to Fuji for analysis by a professional golf consultant. The Quick-Snap can be imprinted with your company or event logo, and film can be conveniently developed at any drugstore, camera shop or retailer that offers 35mm processing. Quantities start at 10 for stock items and 20 for custom-imprinted cameras.

Source: Awards Incorporated Customer Service (800) 451-1988

Jeff Shavitz, president of Mericom Marketing, has creative ideas for golf-related giveaways at every price point. For under \$5 per guest, why not consider:

- Stress balls or mouse pads
- Water bottles or keychains
- Binoculars shaped like golf balls
- Gumballs with golf-themed wrappers
- A ball cleaner or battery-operated fan



Up the ante to \$10, and your participants could go home with golf towels, rain ponchos, custom photo frames, a clock, or even a fanny pack stuffed with supplies. Golf umbrellas, a brass putting cup, acrylic putter/coaster or assorted golf-themed paperweights will find you in the \$10-20 range.

If you're looking for higher-end items (\$20 and over), Shavitz suggests custom-imprinted golf balls, a Rand McNally map of courses nationwide, a golf telephone, or even a new putter. Most items have a 50-piece minimum, with 2-4 weeks' typical lead time for custom imprinting of your logo.

According to Shavitz, the key to success is using a little creativity in developing a theme or logo for your event. Even a "utility" item like a sports cap can take on major perceived value with creative or offbeat use of colors, fabrics, stitching or imprint area.

Source: Jeff Shavitz, Mericom Marketing Inc., 440 Curry Ave, Englewood, NJ 07631. Ph: (201) 568-6800.
www.mericominc.com

BUT Will It Play in Peoria?

Looking for a quick means to test-market a new product? Post it for sale at one of the many Internet auction sites. Or better yet, log on to see if there are similar offerings out there, and how they're fairing in today's market.

Using an auction site gives you access to quick feedback from real consumers as to a product's viability, without the expense of launching and promoting a web site. Once you've fine-tuned your product, you can test various promotional approaches or price points by varying your callout, product description, and opening bid.

Most portals, including Yahoo!, now offer auction sites. Or you can always turn to the web daddy of them all, ebay.com, to test-drive your new brainstorm.

10 WAYS to Shine Online

What's the secret to building a powerful presence on the Web? Barbara Zaccone, founder of BZA, an Internet marketing and design agency, offers these guidelines for developing and maintaining a successful site:

1. Establish clear goals & objectives. Just what are you trying to accomplish?
2. Understand your target audience. How much information are they looking for, and how quickly do they need it?
3. Develop your site's architecture based on an organized approach to accessing this information.



4. Stress quality content over quantity. Is every bit of copy working hard for you?
5. Do your graphics serve a purpose? Or do they just delay access to vital information?
6. Develop a navigation strategy with your customers in mind, making movement intuitive and consistent.
7. Use interactive features to facilitate communication, incorporating a few special features such as animated GIFS, sound and mouse roll-over effects.
8. Give viewers a reason to return by updating your site on a regular basis. Review site statistics and use them as a guide for new content.
9. No web site is an island! Take a proactive approach by marketing your site with both on-line and traditional media.
10. Seek out a developer that has not only a grasp of the technology, but the marketing expertise to back it up.

Source: Barbara Zaccone, BZA, 870 Pompton Ave, Suite A1, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Phone: (973) 571-0520. Email: info@bza.com.

Trade Show Tips



Next time you attend a trade show, be on the lookout for valuable on-site "guerrilla marketing" opportunities:

- Trade show entrance halls or staging areas often have spots for attendees to display product literature or samples at no charge. Be sure to include a "show special" offer to track leads, and to help assess if you should invest in a booth next year.
- Hang onto your show directory! Don't rely on memory three

months from now when you're searching for that perfect product or service you saw at the show.

- Leads are often lost in the shuffle at a busy show. If you are genuinely interested in an exhibitor's product or service, be sure to grab a rep's business card rather than waiting for them to follow up with you.
- Finally, if you're considering investing in future events, don't be shy — ask exhibitors if they're happy with the turnout, how traffic seems compared to previous events, and if they're seeing qualified prospects. Most companies — as long as they're not your direct competition — will happily share their opinions with you.

FUN With Statistics

According to a survey by Ogilvy & Mather Public Relations, 40% of newspaper readers say they consult the obituaries every day, outnumbering those of us (37%) who read the comics.

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FAHOURY INK

201 Gregory Avenue
West Orange, NJ 07052-4529

Ph: (973) 324-2100

Fax: (973) 324-2111

Email: FahouryInk@aol.com

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OFF THE BOOKSHELF

Fascinated by the inner workings of a shopper's mind? Take a look at

Paco Underhill's **Why**

We Buy. Subtitled "**The Science of Shopping,**" this is a witty, fact-filled look at why our customers do what they do — or don't do. Underhill offers concrete, usable advice for taking advantage of proven buying habits when arranging merchandise, placing signs, and creating new displays. Not just for retailers — all marketers should browse through this interesting little guidebook. **Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping,** by Paco Underhill. 1999, Simon & Schuster.

Wouldn't you love to apply the big-bucks successes of the world's leading marketers to your business — without the budget-busting investment? Author Eric Schultz, a veteran of powerhouses from P&G to Disney, shares strategies that can help any business become a more effective marketing machine. **The Marketing Game** is big on practical application — what's the problem, and how do we solve it? This fast-paced read also offers tips for better

brainstorming, creating a competitive advantage, and traps to avoid when communicating to your customer. **The Marketing Game** by Eric Schulz. 1999, Adams Media Corporation.

Drawing a Crowd: Product Sampling

Put your newest product information — or even a live sample — directly into the hands of hot prospects with the "Fan Bag" from Sports & Entertainment Direct. This direct distribution company hands out goodie bags to exiting attendees at more than 20 high-profile events each year, including the PGA Tour, Breeder's Cup, Daytona 500, Superbowl, NCAA Final Four and Boston Marathon, as well as various movie premieres and other events.

Participants can insert special offers, catalogs, coupons and product samples (with certain size restrictions), or even advertise on the giveaway bags themselves for added visibility.

In addition to the core bag distribution

program, S&E maintains staffed booths at each event, drawing traffic through sweepstakes and other promotions. Advertisers can maintain a presence at these outposts for product sampling and lead gathering for follow-up mailings.

Fan Bag distribution quantities range from 50-100,000+ bags depending on the size and scope of the event, with fees starting at around \$5,000. According to S&E's

Derek Broyard, the company will also work with advertisers to create custom packages that meet any type of budget need or marketing goal. The company also guarantees category exclusivity for advertisers who participate in at least five events throughout the year.

Source: Derek Broyard, Sports & Entertainment Direct, 2470 Windy Hill Road, Suite 300, Marietta, GA 30067
Ph: (888) 880-8979



201 Gregory Avenue
West Orange, NJ 07052-4529



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