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## Take the 'Mundane' out of Marketing & Reap Profits

By Carolyn West Price

So, it's now the "dog days" of summer and your creativity is as blah as the humidity.

But, now's the perfect chance to add some sizzle to your marketing that will carry you through the rest of the year.



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First start by taking inventory of what has worked and what hasn't. Now ask why for both lists. Finally, ask yourself what could you do in either case to make the marketing activity more effective, more exciting, more profitable.

Think about your typical sale at a retail store, for instance. Now add a fresh twist by simply adding an "enter to win" for some exciting prize, including that 'carrot' in the ads that are running anyway, and then greet customers with some complimentary snacks or drinks. What a small investment in added creativity and money for a much more memorable effect.

Or, if you're a service provider, why not offer a complimentary service or product for your each customer to offer to his or her friends and family—building your exposure and encouraging word-of-mouth marketing...all

for the sake of giving away a little to potentially gain a lot. Besides, the act of doing it gives you an excuse for a customer contact or mailing...and you can label it as "customer or client appreciation month."

Another overlooked opportunity in marketing is an anniversary. If you've stood the test of time in a community, let people know that. Plan an entire campaign around your success.

For instance, for 25 years, URTA has been providing transportation for individuals throughout the county, including those with transportation challenges due to wheelchairs and other mobility issues. As part of a several-month celebration, they have planned various activities to promote their longevity and to thank their loyal customers and the social service agencies that refer many customers to URTA.

Another tactic to add sizzle to your summer marketing can be a cooperative effort with your neighbors. Get together to plan a "family fun day" or "family health day" or something. Share in the planning and cost of the event, and just remember when you pool money, a budget often goes farther than if you individually did your own thing.

Even if you're in an office building, why not get together with the other tenants, and plan an open house event with some sex appeal (not just food and drinks) or a theme? In this way, even in the heat of August or early September, people get a break in their day if you give them enough incentive to stop by; and each of the tenants will benefit from the exposure to the other tenants' clients. Remember, you don't have to be an organized group (such as the Chamber or CBX) to host a good networking event, but give it a twist for added "pop."

Last, but not least, don't forget to get your name in the press. Think about what you can announce that is newsworthy or what articles you can contribute to local publications or trade publications that will gain you credibility and visibility that is valuable all year long.

Have a great August and happy marketing!

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