

HIGH *on* SUCCESS

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In This Issue

- What's in store?
What is a brand and do I have one?
- Highly Recommended
Broadcasting the message
- Partner Profile
Terri Germann
- Tracking and Measuring
The unexamined life?
- Recent Projects



Congratulations to HTCC client **SPORTS IN MIND!** Their **RAVE** System was developed to train and certify coaches in the use of brain-based tools and methodologies.

A multi-billion dollar global corporation is currently negotiating with **SPORTS IN MIND** to use the tools and processes that make up the **RAVE** System in its employees' health and fitness programs.

Many Happy Returns

Allergic to Marketing?

Many companies approach marketing as if it were a seasonal allergy. In other words, they ignore it until they become seriously miserable. What happens at that point is pretty predictable. If there is no official marketing person on staff, one of the team members becomes "It" and is told to make something happen. Even if there *is* an official marketing person, he or she rarely has enough staff and often carries other responsibilities as well.

That leaves one of several approaches: the "Marketing du Jour" approach, sometimes called "Try Anything Once." Magazine ad salesmen have a nose for companies with a case of "Try Anything Once." You won't have to find them – they'll find you.

There's also the "do what we did last time" approach. (We don't necessarily know if it worked, but we're still in business, so it must have been ok!)

Then there's the "do what our competition is doing" approach. (We don't know if it works for them either, but we're running out of ideas!)

The summer months are slow for many companies. Why not consider using that time to put some allergy prevention in place by creating a marketing plan that will make this your best year ever?

If the words "marketing plan" stir images of long, formal, expensive and time-consuming documents, consider the fact that a one-page executive summary would be significantly better than no plan at all. Might it be less overwhelming if you began with the assumption

that you could start with a one-page plan and add detail over time? Here are some questions to get that one-page summary on paper:

Who is your ideal customer?

List as many characteristics of your ideal customer as you can: job title, industry, age, gender, geographic location, etc.

What is your geographic "reach"?

Global? National? Regional? Local?

What product(s) / service(s) do you offer?

List in order of importance – if you know which ones are the most profitable, put them first.

What are your key messages?

This might be your tag line (e.g., "Make people happy," "Have it your way," etc.) or it might be a more detailed message about the value you bring to your customer.

What are the best channels to reach the audience you described previously?

Keep in mind that some choices are clearly out of reach because of budget (like advertising on the SuperBowl); others don't fit your marketplace (don't advertise in a teen music magazine if you're selling hearing aids to the elderly) or your geography (billboards may work at the local level but get pretty expensive for a national campaign). Is your audience surfing the web? Or mall walking? The answers to those questions should tell you the channels that will work best for you.

Sounds simple, right? It can be, if you've done the work of understanding your customers. Why not kick your marketing allergy for good and enjoy a healthier bottom line? HTCC would be happy to help.





What's In Store?

Offering you counsel and suggestions on a variety of strategic marketing topics.

What is a Brand, and Do I Have One?

By Terri Germann

If your Coke can didn't look like a Coke can, how sure would you be about what's inside?



ust as ranchers in the American West used a unique mark, or *brand*, to identify their cattle, today we use the term

to describe the way you "mark" the elements of your company and the way in which you present that unique mark to the world. It is sometimes called your "brand identity."

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Branding in the modern sense includes your company name and logo, the colors you use, your tag line and key messages, even the way you answer the phone. You communicate your brand identity through your physical facilities, signage, marketing materials, letterhead, web site, business cards, email messages, trade show signs, presentations, faxes, and telephone manner. Anything that your customer, prospect, partner, banker or investor might see or hear is part of your identity.

How Do I Use My Brand?

The more valuable your brand is to you, the more important it is to develop standards on how that brand is used throughout your company, including any use by distributors, resellers or strategic partners. To have the maximum impact, your brand elements should be used consistently in all communications.

Imagine if an intern in the marketing department at Coca-Cola created a Coke can that wasn't red, and that didn't have the Coke curvy line (what they call their "Dynamic Ribbon"). If you found a six-pack of those cans in a store, wouldn't you worry that they might be imitations?

The best way to ensure that your employees, distributors and others use your brand identity consistently is to

document your branding standards, and to create tools that make it easy for everyone to use the brand correctly.

Some Do's and Don'ts

When you prepare marketing materials, be sure to provide the designer with your "company colors." Not just "blue" but the PMS number that describes the unique blue of your logo. Similarly, if you have invested in designing a professional and effective logo, be aware of the danger of stretching or squashing it to fit on a document. If you have a company tag line that helps establish your brand identity, make sure it appears on all of your materials. A document that summarizes your standards is a great way to help your employees, distributors and others use your brand elements correctly.

Examples of successful branding are all around us. They are the result of consistent, well-planned efforts to imprint an identity on a company. How can you do that? With templates that include company logo and your corporate fonts. HTCC can help you create these "brand accessories" for Word documents, PowerPoint presentations and more.



Highly Recommended

Brand, Plan, Broadcast



Once you've established your corporate identity and written down your strategy, it's Showtime! Time to take your story

to the target audience you defined, through the channels you selected in your plan. Sounds easy, right? Just tell your story to the right person at the right place through the right channel.

The Right Person

People sometimes tell us that their audience is "all different." That they see no pattern in age, race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic location or any other indicator. That usually means they aren't looking hard enough. What about the jobs / responsibilities those individuals hold? They may all be Purchasing Agents (motivated by cost, economies of scale, approved vendor lists, ease of administration, supply chain requirements). Or IT Managers (motivated by reputation for on-site service, quality, ease of use).

Identifying key characteristics is the first step toward shaping your message. For example, telling a Purchasing Agent they should buy from you because you are the crème de la crème of manufacturers -- expensive but very "in" is probably not a great idea. However, if you're selling designer

shoes to a group of wealthy, fashion conscious buyers, the "boring but sturdy" message is not a good choice.


The next time you watch a commercial on television or hear one on the radio, see if you can guess who the audience is -- and what the tie-in is. You won't hear an ad for the next Mike Tyson fight during the Oprah show. That's an easy one. The more you do this, the better you'll get at watching the pros do what they do so well.

As you get better at understanding your audience, the channels become more obvious. Eventually you're ready to put together a "mix" of channels that makes sense for your audience. If your ideal customer was an active member of the Widget Manufacturers Association of America (WMAA), you might assemble a marketing mix designed to generate leads by:

- Giving presentations to small, local WMAA groups (1 presentation in the first quarter, 2 in the second quarter, etc.) AND

- Exhibiting at the annual WMAA trade show AND
- Placing a small ad on the WMAA web site with a link to...
- Your company's web site with a form that collects requests for a copy of...
- Your quarterly electronic newsletter.

If you had a plan like this, you could check it against your budget. Establish tracking mechanisms. And quantify the value of one channel over another.

HTCC can help you define the marketing mix that best fits your audience and your budget. And don't forget -- next year's plan will be just another blank page if you don't track the results from *this* year's efforts. How many leads did you get from each of these activities? How many of those became sales? How did the cost of the marketing effort relate to the value of the sale? For more information on tracking and measurement, check out the last page of this newsletter. 

Partner Profile

Atlanta-based **Terri Germann** works with HTCC in documenting and communicating corporate identity standards, including the creation of "Brand Accessories" for HTCC clients. Described in the March 2002 issue of this newsletter, Brand Accessories are

templates that we customize with your logo for PowerPoint, Word documents, labels and more. In addition, Terri and her team specialize in technical documentation, policy manuals and training materials, including print and online tools.



Our Corporate Identity

HTCC's visual identity was carefully chosen for its beauty, power and symbolism. Collectively, the elements of the image come together to convey an overall sensation of power,

excitement and possibility. Individually, each element represents an important aspect of the HTCC marketing vision.

A Global Audience

The darkened half-circle in the image represents the globe, emphasizing the "global" marketing made possible by new technologies.

The Speed of Light

The comet in our logo symbolizes takeoff: the ability to increase speed, power and intensity across time and distance. And helping our clients take off is what HTCC is all about.

The Sky's the Limit

The gradient from blue to black emphasizes the illuminating glow produced by the comet, suggesting a brighter tomorrow, full of possibility for those who want their business to *take off*.

"Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there."

Will Rogers

American humorist and philosopher

Tracking and Measuring

The Unexamined Life?

Socrates said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." The way that Socrates "examined" things was by asking questions. In the spirit of TV journalism, let's make Socrates a business owner in the year 2002. He doesn't want to end up with another hemlock cocktail, so his questions have become a little more pragmatic these days. For example, he might want to know:

- How do I know what questions to ask about my business?
- How often do I have to ask them?
- How do I use the information to change the way I do things?

He's on the right track. What he's talking about are called "strategic indicators": the measurements

that tell you where your business is going. Everyone knows that it's a good idea to track revenue, growth in headcount, growth in number of customers, improvement in profitability. But what else should you be tracking? *Anything that is a pointer to how you're doing in achieving your strategic objectives.* For example, if your objective is to sell \$2 million in product this year, don't wait till year end to see how you're doing. It's too late to change course. If your objective is to add three new customers a month, you should be tracking that every month.

Whether it's your marketing effort (billboard vs. web vs. collateral vs. direct mail), sales approach or any other key activity, defining the indicators up front – and establishing a schedule to see how you're doing – will help you stay on track and out of the trap of the "unexamined business."

Recent Project Activity

Fidelity Insurance Co. Ltd. Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

www.fidinsco.com

Offers offshore annuity and insurance products.



HTCC recently completed the first phase of the company's web site and took it live. The sophisticated nautical look reflects the tropical theme of the group of offshore sites built and maintained by HTCC.

New Accounts

TekMethods

Provides comprehensive IT asset management solutions to the healthcare industry, technology outsourcers and the public sector.

TekMethods chose HTCC to develop and execute a corporate identity and sales tools and to upgrade its web site to align with its identity and mission.

"HTCC is the only web development company I know that is driven by an experienced marketing and PR professional who understands the role of the web within the marketing mix. Instead of getting caught up in the bells and whistles, HTCC uses them to move the message forward and take advantage of the web's capabilities as a component of the corporate brand or identity."

Amy Blake,

Blake & Barancik
Philadelphia, PA