

# Brown & Martin's

## newsletter

### Chip Martin's Column



Chip Martin

Here's a list of eight things that I've learned after 20 years of being B&M's spokes-puppet. (Note:

I've learned more than "eight things." These are just the eight that I'm sharing.)

**1. Everyone wants things good, fast and cheap.** Reality is that you usually can only have TWO of those options at any given time.

**2. Loyalty plays a big role in B&M culture.** For the past 20 years B&M has partnered with the same banker, accountant, attorney, printer and photographer. The list of vendors that have worked with us for 15 years or more is even longer.

When we've incurred problems, we've given these people the opportunity to fix them...and they have.

The vendors who weren't able to solve issues that we brought to their attention, no longer do work for us.

We can only hope that our clients give us the same courtesy.

**3. Staff loyalty earns high levels of client loyalty.** B&M has extremely low employee turnover. I'm sick of looking at them, but apparently, you're not. I'm told that they're very nice people. I'd have to be in the office more to find out.

Anyway, clients like Master Lock and Kohler Engines, who have been with us since our inception 20 years ago, tell us they appreciate working with the same people. Almost 20 other clients have been with us for 10 years or longer, so they must agree.

**4. I enjoy the fact that in twenty-year-old photos I look the same, while Dale has aged...a lot.**

**5. Responsiveness provides the perception of good service.** Thus, everyone in this office is continually under-the-gun responding to client needs. That's why we drink.

**6. It's very productive to aggressively seek out client complaints.** For most companies, only 10% of complaints get articulated by customers. The other 90% are manifested in many counter-productive ways including loss of business.

That's why, after almost every major project, B&M asks clients to fill out short "How did we do?" surveys to make sure we met project and client expectations. If we don't do well on those surveys, we quickly work to fix problem areas.

That's one reason B&M's client retention is so high.

... Continued on Back Page

### Attention Deficit

**Wonder why it's so hard to get a little attention for your company's latest product?**

According to "New Product Launch: 10 Proven Strategies" 92 products were introduced yesterday in the food, beverage, health and beauty aids, household and pet product categories.

Today, 92 more new products will be launched in those categories and tomorrow, 92 more new products will hit

the shelves. Do the math and you'll discover more than 33,000 new products are introduced annually in just that handful of categories.

Add electronics, cars, housewares, toys, fashions, etc., and the number becomes mind-numbing. The key to getting noticed is having a product that is truly "different" backed by advanced planning and marketing/PR follow through.

### B & M Web Site

Yes, that's me, the editor of this publication who is the "tour guide" on B&M's web site [www.bmpr.com](http://www.bmpr.com). On most of the pages you can simply click on my photo and I'll provide a quick, honest summary of the material...saving you the time and effort of having to read the propaganda written by other members of our staff. Go ahead, visit our site right now and click on "staff" to learn about the "characters" who comprise B&M.



### Icons and Slogans

Master Card's "Priceless" was recently judged the Best Slogan and the AFLAC "duck" the best ICON in the annual Financial Marketing competition.

The top scoring slogan's were short, punchy and designed to stimulate trust. Interestingly, two top scoring slogans, "Thank You Paine Weber" and "When E.F. Hutton Talks, People Listen," represent companies that are no longer players in the financial service industry.

Two other credit card companies scored high. Visa's "Everywhere you want to be," and Don't Leave Home Without It," from American Express. In both cases the universality of the cards' usage was germane to the message. "They Make Money the Old Fashion Way, They Earn It," for Smith Barney also scored high.

Notable icons included the Merrill Lynch, "bull," Met Life's "Snoopy," Citigroup's "umbrella" and the Prudential "rock."



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## retel s w e n

*"Chip's Column"*  
 ...Continued From Front Page

7. Clients want projects to be as hassle-free and gratifying as possible. They want service that is pleasant, productive and personalized.

We manage to deliver on those expectations despite some clients' best efforts to prevent us from doing so, i.e., telling us that a project has to be done in 48 hours, but not getting back to us with approvals for two weeks. (You know who you are.)

8. It's good to be a puppet. I can double-entendre and insult my way into your awareness and then educate you through humor.

If I were a person I'd have offended my way out of a job long ago.

Am I talented, or what? That's it...I'm asking for a raise.



### How to Generate Customer Good Will and Publicity

Many companies institute an annual "awards" program as part of their customer recognition/customer relations programs. The awards recognize efforts of customers while often generating publicity for both the sponsor and the winners.

It's easy and inexpensive to create your own "Awards" program. Just think of something that is meaningful to your business or community.

Manufacturing-related companies could recognize companies or distributors that:

- make the best use of

automation,

- improved manufacturing efficiencies,
- made the biggest gains by using a specific product,
- found the most creative use for a product,
- sold the most products or made the biggest gain over the previous year.

Service companies and distributors could create awards for facility design, product use, community service or something else related to their business.

After you and your staff come up with an award idea, do the following.

- Write down the rules for winning (this can be pretty subjective if you're the judge.)
- Set a date to give the award and inform customers about the award program.
- Choose a physical form for your award, (trophy, plaque, certificate, etc.)
- Announce your winners at a banquet or special function, or at the customer's facility.
- Send out press releases about the award.

Or just call B&M and let us handle the details...even judging the entries.

### Go Figure...

2,000 . . . . . The number of attendees at "Festival in the Pit" in Battle Mountain, NV. The three-day event was sponsored by Old Spice and organized in response to an article in the Washington Post that labeled the city as "the armpit of America." A highlight was the beauty contest for men, women, children and pets in which "overall pit appearance" was a key judging criteria.

1,000,000 . . . . . Hunters in PA, the most of any state.

4,000,000 . . . . . Emails that Bill Gates receives daily, making him the most spammed person in the world.



### Brown & Martin's Newsletter

Issue: White 836

Don't do anything you wouldn't want to explain to the paramedics.

Editor: Chip Martin

This newsletter is produced for clients of Brown & Martin, Inc., a marketing and public relations firm serving companies across the country. If you're not a client, quit reading! Or, call us and become one.

### Tips for Email Releases

Some reporters prefer to receive story ideas or news releases via email. Others resent it. If you send information to the latter group you may be placed on the reporter's block list which will filter out your emails as spam. Check with the reporter before sending email releases.

Here are a few tips for increasing your chances of

getting the attention of those reporters who do accept email releases.

1. Use a five word "reader benefit" as your subject line.
2. Headline and subhead should tell the complete story.
3. Limit the length of your release to a single screen. Link to the full release for those who

4. Don't include an attachment. Most reporters won't bother opening it.
5. Move contact information to the end. Include your email address and phone number; and link to an appropriate web site to help the reporter obtain more information.