

# Brown & Martin's

## newsletter

### Chip Martin Says...

#### Think There's No "Free Lunch?" You're Reading One



Chip Martin

In these difficult economic times there is a marketing truth you must understand: People buy when they are ready to buy, not when you are ready to sell.

You probably already know that ... but your boss and upper management don't seem to "get it." That's because they want to make sales "now." (You might want to show them the first paragraph of this column.)

There is a sure-fire way to stand out, generate attention for your products or services and "prime the pump" for future sales. However, your boss and upper management may be reluctant at first because "priming the pump" infers "future sales" and this activity involves the word "free."

"Free" is a powerful word. But it's a word managers often despise because ... well, you're giving something away and managers are notoriously cheap.

But there is a "free" that's rather inexpensive for your company. And it can reap big rewards in terms of future sales. (Again, see paragraph one.) Equally important, it's something you can do now (management likes it when you're busy) and use immediately.

Whether you realize it or not, you're an expert in your industry, and there are things you know that

your contacts can certainly benefit from. (I know for some of you that's hard to believe ... but it's probably true, none-the-less.)

By offering "free" reports, how-to tips or technical papers you can:

1. Provide customers and prospects with added value in a down economy
2. Bring in leads (when you offer your free report as a download)
3. Keep your name in front of prospects so that when they're ready to buy they buy from you
4. Educate customers and prospects about your services, experience and what makes you different
5. Build relationships with customers and prospects
6. Demonstrate to your boss that you're actually working on selling

Giving paper-and-ink reports, tips and information will return a value far higher than the cost to produce these types of tools. When people are ready to buy, they'll be much more likely to think of you and buy from you.

B&M can help. We can write the informative papers, make them attractive, distribute them to your customers and prospects ... and often get them published in trade magazines or other types of publications. So call us.

Or you can just sit back and wait until someone is ready to buy and "hope" that they buy from you.

**Chip Shot**  
It's Only a Gambling Problem if You're Losing

### Just Like You, Your Web Site Needs an Annual Checkup

When is the last time you looked at your company's Web site? If you're like most people, you were very invested in the Web site's creation, but the Web site is no longer a priority. Now is a good time to look at your Web site and test it. Here is a handy checklist:

- Make sure your domain name records are up-to-date.
- Update the copyright notice.
- Test the Web site forms.
- Check password protected areas.
- Check for broken images.
- Validate your links.
- Are items outdated, have contacts changed, do new products need to be added?
- Review Web site email addresses.
- Check any automated messages.
- Review key words to enhance search engine visibility.
- Check your Web site's search function.



This is also a good time to check your competitor's sites and see how you compare. Here are a few guidelines.

- Is your Web site design dated?
- Is the navigation easy to use?
- Is your content aimed at your customers?
- Do you update the Web site on a regular basis?
- Where do you rank in the search engines?

B&M can help you with your annual web site review. In addition, we can implement them so that you start the new year with an attractive and effective web site.

### Gentlemen, Start Your Gerbils

IS YOUR PAL BUILT FOR SPEED?

Bring your hamster in a hamster ball and get on the fast track to fame.

Practice rounds begin at 1:30 pm.



SMALL ANIMALS, START YOUR ENGINES!

PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED.

NAVTEC



Okay this just struck me as funny and good marketing. The PetCo web site is promoting "Hamster Ball Races." Gerbils, hamsters and rats are all eligible to win prizes. Clever way to get customers into PetCo stores.

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## Ads That Caught Our Attention

On my blog, <http://feeds.feedburner.com/ChipMartin>, I routinely provide examples of effective, ineffective and controversial marketing programs. This past weekend I was paging through a book of advertising from the 40's and 50's and I thought I'd include some examples here so that you can see how far our marketing efforts have come ... not very.



Who knew second hand smoke was sexy? "Blow in her face and she'll follow you anywhere." Smaller print says, "Hit her with tangy Tipalet Cherry...It's wild. It's new..." They could have added, "And...it's deadly."



This WWII ad rather blatantly warns readers that if they spread STDs they won't be able to defeat the Axis Powers.



Here's a recent ad that got a lot of attention on my blog. It's a campaign promoting organ donations. The copy on the right says, "Becoming a donor is probably your only chance to get inside her." Startling. Controversial. Effective.

## Build Your Business by Creating a Customer Community

Want to stand out during these tough economic times? Invite some or all of your customers to enjoy a great speaker, food, maybe drinks and educational entertainment. (That would be me!)

There is something magical about gathering peers and acting as a catalyst for community building. The primary benefits are stronger loyalties and referral building. You know it works; so why aren't you planning an event now?

Or you can invite several happy customers to participate in a panel discussion on issues in your industry and include a couple of prospects. The discussions should revolve around solving challenges. The key is that your products and services can often be positioned (without any selling on your part) as part of the solution by your happy customers. This type of event can be held in conjunction with the suggestion in the first paragraph or as a stand alone experience.

So, what have you done to involve your customers and build momentum for yourself when the economy turns around? Call B&M, we can help.

## Trade Show Schwag

I work at a lot of trade shows ... because I attract a lot of attention, qualify leads, entertain and inform. And let's face it ... I'm memorable. But people can't take me home like the give-a-ways that some companies offer.

At a recent show in Chicago, I noticed that in terms of booth schwag, there wasn't much that stood out. There were pens and pens and more pens. There were hats, cups and mints. There were stress balls, pins and shotglasses.

A few items rose above the toss-in-the-nearest-trash-can category.

One company

had yo-yos which were popular and could be seen being used throughout the hall

Another company had miniature stereo speakers which could plug into an iPod. And nightlights that come on automatically were also popular.

One of the most original and memorable items though was created by a custom cigar maker who sat in a booth and rolled cigars for attendees. People stood and watched, and were happy to listen to pitches from sales people.

But once again I attracted the most attention and garnered a lot of qualified leads.



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Issue: What's Your Resolution?

Ask Me About My Vow of Silence

Editor: Chip Martin

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