

Brown & Martin's

newsletter

Chip Martin Says Booby Trap



Chip Martin

Today's overly sensitive political correctness threatens to eliminate all forms of amusement in marketing. But to the chagrin of puritans, one anatomical part not only continues to flex promotional muscle ... it actually seems to be gaining popularity (if that's possible).

I'm speaking of course of "breasts." And for those of you cretins who think that the marketing effectiveness of breasts peaks (ignore the pun), with car commercials, read on.

As I was flipping through a magazine doing, uh, research for this article, I saw an ad for a t-shirt inscribed with "save the ta-tas." Proceeds from the sale of this shirt go to breast cancer research. That must cause conflict amongst prudish pundits who are disgusted by "ta-tas" but support breast cancer research.

Being a stickler for accuracy, (I have a stickler the size of a Buick) I decided to investigate these marketing instruments further.

After visiting savethetatas.com, I learned that in addition to selling several ta-ta-related t-shirts the organization is an official sponsor of something called "Bowling for Boobies." That breast cancer research-related event also has its own web site as does Racks for Research. No snickering! These are successful marketing programs for a serious cause.

To prove that not all exploitations of said body parts are infantile, I moved on to Jenifer Laycock, a vocal advocate for the rights of women to breast feed in public. Laycock sold T-shirts emblazoned with "the other white milk." Busted by the National Pork Board, (another fortuitous pun) which for 21 years

has used "Pork. The other white meat," Laycock promptly received a cease-and-desist letter.

After blog uproar all over the internet, the organization realized that it didn't look good bossing around a young mom and made amends including a donation to the Columbus Milk Bank, one of Laycock's pet charities. Laycock continues to sell t-shirts sporting ta-ta-related sentiments like "Milk Jugs." Chalk up two more for marketing mummies.

Enter a recent ad for Unilever's Suave shampoo that shows a woman with limp hair and a child apparently suckling at her breast. Accompanying copy states, "62% of moms say having a baby has left their hair and breasts flat." The next picture shows the mom with big hair and her suckling child. "Suave Volumizing shampoo provides up to 170% more fullness."

First of all, let me point out that "volumizing" is not a word. Second of all, I don't have room here to list all of the organizations that found this ad offensive.

Unilever responded to these protests with, "Our lighthearted campaign gently encourages moms to take care of themselves as well as their children..." I say, "If you don't like the ad, don't buy the product."

I could go on but I've been doing so much research that I'm starting to see double.

Suffice to say that most marketing-related ta-ta labels have their hearts and their pink ribbons in the right place. If you're offended, show your disgust by making a healthy donation to a different worthy cause. If you're not offended, consider yourself part of the infantile majority and make a donation to breast cancer research.

Chip Shot

I can keep a secret, but the people I tell can't.

How to Get the Press You Want

Earned Media. You may call it "free press."

It's "earned" because you have to work for it. You work to do something newsworthy. You work to package it for the media. And you work to deliver it to the right people, at the right times, in media-friendly formats.

Experts claim that earned press is worth more than paid advertising because it has the appearance of third-party endorsement. Here are tips for gaining earned press:

- Editors and reporters are intelligent people who know when they're being yanked around. So avoid puffery in anything you put in front of them.
- Send a "media advisory" instead of a press release. Lay out the specifics in simple, "see Spot run," language. Include something factual that will move their "So what?" meter.
- Reporters are busy people with unforgiving deadlines who are often assigned stories on totally foreign subjects. Prepare a fact sheet that lays out detailed background facts.

Surefire SEO

Search-engine optimization is critical for getting your web site listed among the top-ranking spots. Here are some strategies for improving your online exposure.

- Your site should be "architected" properly, coded cleanly and use proper keywords. Keywords are vital, but don't overdo it. Search engines know when keywords are overused.
- Link your site to other active sites and make sure it has more text than flash-based components. Search engines will pickup your site faster as it gains viewers.
- Sneak keywords into your drop-down menus, site headers, site footers and tabbing system.
- Be patient. It can take up to 18 months to get properly optimized.

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Too Many Solutions

Several of the top companies in the plastics industry, metals industry and packaging industry all label themselves as "solutions providers" in taglines that live under their logos ... that priceless real estate that serves as a company's first and loudest announcement of who they are and why others should care.

"Solving problems" is as expected today as quality, speed, innovation and a host of other entry-level attributes. Yet vast numbers of companies use tag lines that tell prospects to think about them the same way they think about competitors. Why? Because vast numbers of companies think they are different, but market the way they've seen others in their industry market.

It's risky to be different. It's also memorable.

Would UPS settle for "Package Delivery Solutions"? Not a chance. "What can brown do for you?" is singular and branding gold.

In today's hyper-competitive marketplace, you can't afford not to spend the time and money necessary to truly differentiate your company. B&M can help. We get your message noticed.

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Issue: Keep Your Clothes On!

"Hunting without drinking is like fishing."

(Clem from South Park)

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.

Attract More Attention to Your Web Site

We're swamped with way too much information today. I'm not talking about junk, but really good stuff that we've asked to receive but just don't have time to process.

Your customers are in the same quandary. They don't have time for your message, promotion or lesson. In their minds, they've heard it all before.

So how do you make your web site stand out?

1. Video. It's every where. Web visitors expect it. Go beyond talking heads to graphics, demonstrations and text design to step up from the competition. Visit www.dale-brown.com for an example.

2. Make it relevant: Before prospects invest their most precious commodity (time) in what you have to offer, it has to stand out from the blizzard of other information out there. Invest in finding out where they are "hurting" and provide relevant information that can solve their problems.

3. Make it entertaining: Information that is consumed the fastest and the most is usually entertaining. Remember, people will pay more to be entertained than to be educated. Blend education about your products and services with entertainment. Buyers will be more willing to open a file and look at it ... remember it ... and buy from you ... if they are entertained during the process. Again, www.dale-brown.com is a great example of this.

ANOTHER MARKETING CHALLENGE

Selling nudity as a lifestyle to families is undoubtedly a challenge. But a press release from the American Association for Nude Recreation reminds us that July 9-15 is Nude Recreation Week. The release claims, "A national study found that 15% of Americans are looking for a nude recreation experience." I hope that's not true. But something at AANR.com (Be Careful! It's what you'd expect) caught my attention ... they have a store. What do you sell to nudists? They don't have pockets! Which it turns out is exactly the point. For instance, if you need shade AND a place to keep your room key they offer a Nudist Pocket Hat. Talk about target marketing.

Groups, Blogs and Chat Rooms Boost Contest Entries

Swingline recently promoted one of its new products through a Performance Rewards contest with a \$100,000 AAA bond Grand Prize. Contestants could enter the contest once per day on the Swingline web site.

Swingline asked B&M to supplement existing print promotions with internet vehicles to increase the number of entries.

We posted short blurbs about the contest on web sites, blogs and chat rooms. Then we joined appropriate Yahoo and Google groups such as Win on the Web, Sweepstakes and Contests, Winners R Us, Contest Tracker and more, and sent information about the contest to group members on a regular basis. (These types of groups are simply online versions of book clubs or dog clubs whose members share interests and post information of value to the group.)

As a result of B&M's efforts daily entries increased more than 25% resulting in 594,265 total entries.

If you want to learn how to take better advantage of internet groups to promote your products or services, contact B&M.