

Brown & Martin's

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“Special Edition” Designer-Named Vehicles Too Much

An Editorial by Chip Martin



Chip Martin

Marketing geniuses at auto manufacturers have been using “special edition” vehicles to

obtain additional sales and publicity for years. It’s been a good idea.

But the Special Edition Armani Mercedes proves that the concept has gone too far.

It’s bad enough that drivers are forced to fight for a share of the road against over-built Army vehicles the size of the Titanic that cost as much as a two bedroom condo and are named after a sex act. Now we have to share the road with special edition cars that are basically designed to announce that the owners are better and richer than everyone who doesn’t own one.

Granted, I’m not the target audience. The only label I wear is “Made in Malaysia.” But think how out of hand this could get.

Next we’ll hear about the special edition Rush Limbaugh sedan that comes in any color but black. The Doug Pederson station wagon that never starts. (Only Packer fans will get that one.) The special edition U.S. Postal Service car that moves just slightly faster than the speed of smell. The Evil Kneivel Yugo that can’t be crash tested because it always breaks down before it gets to the wall.

As far as I’m concerned, the only special edition vehicle that makes sense is the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile. The others are just status symbols that I can do without ... and can’t afford. But if I could afford one, it probably would be pretty cool.

Power Up Press Releases

One study recently claimed that ninety-seven percent of all press releases sent to media outlets are never used.

There’s a reason press releases written by PR pros are more likely to be among the three percent that successfully make it into print.

Here are two secrets that B&M uses to attract editors’ attention.

- 1. Help editors and reporters grasp your point at a glance.** Boil your story down to eight words or less in a headline that has a verb in the second or third word. Answer the question, “What happened.”
- 2. Sell the story in a sub-head.** This second layer of information is essential in communicating to today’s media. Highlight a reader benefit, a secondary news angle or an expansion of the headline. Explain a single point in no more than fourteen words. That makes it easy for reporters to read and understand why the story is important to their readers. This is valuable real estate, so don’t repeat words from the headline. Make every word do new work.

(Remember, these are secrets so don’t tell anyone.)

Chip Shot

The Three Types of Lies: Lies, Damn Lies, and Statistics

Learning from Laughter

Are people listening to your presentations? Do they pay attention to your written communications? Do you know?

Here’s a tip. Laughter leads to listening. Audience members are about seven times more likely to hear and remember something in a presentation if it is delivered immediately following a statement that was funny.

Here’s an example. No one ever listens to flight attendants when they give the safety instructions prior to take off. I was on a flight a couple of weeks ago and the flight attendant started out this way, “Hi. My name is Mark and I’m the lead flight attendant. My ex-wife, Sandra, and her new boyfriend, Bill, will be serving you today. This should make for an interesting flight.” Everyone started laughing and everyone was listening. And we listened to every word he said from then on. After the seat belt instructions, he

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Email Etiquette

We’ve had a lot of requests for our email guidelines, aimed at improving the quality of email generated

by your employees. If you want a copy simply email me at chip.martin@bmpr.com.



Brown & Martin's

1 e t t e l s w e n

One Man's Junk

We may complain about excess "junk" mail, infomercials and telemarketing, but one thing is for certain: **they work.** And there are statistics to prove it. But, because of the "Chip Shot" in this issue, I won't bore you with the statistics.

Instead, I'll provide some information about the people who respond to direct marketing offers ... because they're different from non-respondents.

Those who respond to direct marketing efforts:

- Are anxious to save time. (Often, time over money.)
- Regularly multitask.
- Are more likely to buy takeout food, give up sleep and hire people to do things for them.
- Lean on the Internet to gain information, shop and make financial transactions.

Brown & Martin's Newsletter

Issue: R U DIZE?
No. 903

Anything can fly if you throw it hard enough.

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.

How to Use Testimonials to Increase Sales

When you say something about yourself, it's bragging. When other people say it about you, it's proof. That's the essence of testimonials.

But, many testimonials communicate the same old, tired, "They are wonderful people to work with. I have been doing business with them for ten years." That's nice, but it doesn't do much to "spur" others to action.

To be most effective, testimonials:

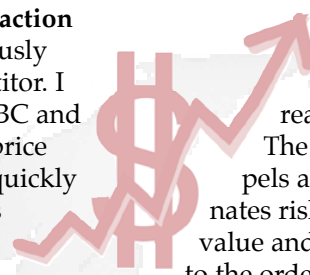
- **Need to have a specific message** that demonstrates a benefit with value.

- **Should show action like**, "I previously used a competitor. I switched to ABC and although the price was higher, I quickly realized it was the best value because ..."

- **Reinforce a claim.** "I increased productivity and generated more profits."

- **Demonstrate a happy ending.** "We have ease of use and speed of service. Now our employees are happier and more productive."

The power of a testimonial



is the proof it offers when a customer is ready to decide. The testimonial dispels any doubt, eliminates risk, substantiate value and paves the way to the order. It provides proof that you are what you say you are.

B&M can help you identify meaningful testimonials, obtain the information, write the articles, contact publications for placement, and design effective reprints. Call us.

"Isolated" Newsletters

Do you want to communicate specifically targeted messages to a small group of individuals? Try an "isolated" newsletter.

This concept allows companies to send informative and entertaining messages to a handful of customers, prospects, dealers or other select groups on a regular basis in a recognizable, repeated format.

Because of the small quantities, these "isolated" newsletters can be color copied for fast, cost-effective production.

One B&M client uses this type of newsletter to communicate to twenty-five of its largest dealers. Another

aims its bi-monthly newsletter at fifteen of the company's top prospects.

B&M not only creates and produces these types of newsletters for others, we use them ourselves.

Recently, we created a newsletter aimed at twenty-five of our key contacts within a single company.

All of these newsletters provide information of specific interest to targeted individuals in formats that are attention getting, memorable and easy to read. If you want more information on "isolated" newsletters, give us a call.



(continued from front)

Laughter

continued, "If you're caught smoking we throw you off the plane. And if you brought a TV on board, it won't work." Then he went on with the smoking and electronic devices rules. Perfect. Laugh then listen.

It's the same with written materials. Read something funny and you'll read on for more enjoyment. And you'll be more receptive to any serious messages in between.

Go Figure

4...Canadians who changed their surnames from Goodyear to Dunlop for a piece of the \$25,000 put up by Dunlop to do so.

25%...the percent of all weekly emails are sent on Tuesday, the most popular day.