



gephart
marketing solutions

Promotional Times™

Information and Ideas for Improving Sales, Image and Profits

The goal of our newsletter is to help our clients grow their business. Promotional products can increase awareness, name recognition and lead generation. Awards and premiums will improve customer loyalty, employee morale and productivity.

Summer/Fall 2008

2

BRIGHT IDEAS

Turn Unhappy Customers Into Repeat Customers

INCENTIVES & REWARDS

Motivating Your Employees

LAGNIAPPE

Quotable Quotes

3

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Write Away
New and Unique Products

MARKETING TIPS

Five Steps to Networking Success

THE RIDDLER

Your Chance to Win a Free Gift

4

DEAR ADDY

Answers Your Promotional Questions

SUCCESS STORIES

Profitable Planning



Get Your Company in the News

Looking for a great return on your marketing investment? Focus on public relations. The costs are minimal and the rewards can be huge!

Editors are always looking for something new and different to report on, so it's important to develop a creative story angle.

Introducing a new product or service? Create a catchy theme around the launch and send reporters a promotional item that ties into it. A company with a new water-saving washing machine, for example, could use a "How thirsty is your washer?" theme and include an eye-catching logo'd water bottle or mug with the press release.

Or, try maximizing a current trend or event. After a new study about childhood obesity hit the news, one daycare center pitched a local reporter a story about how their center has a dietician on staff and serves only organic, nutritious snacks and lunches. This resulted in a high-profile article — and an increase in inquiries from potential clients. The center sent interested parents a free nutritional guide and an imprinted bottle of hand sanitizer on a carabiner.

To generate more awareness of your business, hold a unique event and invite the press. One local salon garnered a lot of positive publicity by providing free haircuts and manicures to the residents of area nursing homes. They gave imprinted hairbrushes and pocket mirrors to the residents and the press.

You can't beat the "free" in "free publicity!" Contact us today for more great ideas on using promotional items to create a memorable public relations campaign.



ROUTE TO:





Turn Unhappy Customers Into Repeat Customers

Despite our best efforts, we're all faced with a dissatisfied customer from time to time. An unhappy customer doesn't have to turn into a lost customer, though. Here are some tips for correcting the situation and gaining repeat business:

- **Listen.** Start by calling the customer and letting them explain the problem.
- **Acknowledge their frustration.** Say, "I understand that you're upset because..." and then paraphrase what the customer told you.
- **Take responsibility.** Whether or not you are at fault, don't make excuses. Instead, tell the customer that you want to make things right.
- **Ask how the customer would like the situation to be resolved.** What they ask for may not be reasonable or deliverable, but by asking, you demonstrate that their opinion is important to you.
- **Offer a solution.** If the customer isn't happy with your solution, ask what they feel would be a fair alternative and then work toward a compromise.
- **Follow through.** Once you agree on a solution, take personal responsibility for making it happen. Follow up with a handwritten note telling the customer that you appreciate their business. Include a nice gift, such as a box of gourmet brownies, cookies or coffee, or an attractive vase, clock or desk set. We can give you some great gift ideas!

Statistics show that unhappy customers will tell eight to ten people about their experience, so it's important to address the problem quickly... and turn a negative situation into a positive one.



Motivating Your Employees

Whether caused by a reorganization, merger, economic slowdown, or product launch, change can have a negative impact on employee morale. It's important to acknowledge the toll change can take on your staff and take steps to reduce employee stress and anxiety.

The customer service staff at a cable company experienced higher stress whenever there was a customer rate increase. To reduce the high amount of sick time and turnover that occurred during these periods, the company implemented an employee motivation campaign. Each customer service rep received a care kit with gum, lip balm, a stress ball and information about the change. The goal was to provide a fun, educational way to help employees deal with stress. Sick days and turnover were lowered to less than 1% during the campaign, and employee morale and performance were higher than during previous rate-change periods.

This is just one example of the many ways you can motivate employees... and improve results. Contact us for additional ideas today!



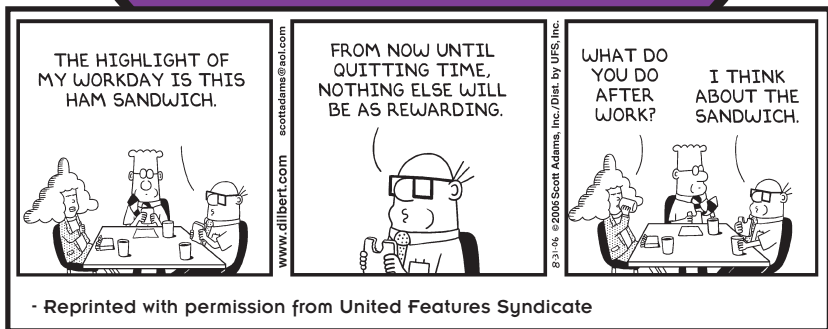
Lagniappe
[a little something extra]
Quotable Quotes

Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right.
- Henry Ford

I really didn't say everything I said. - Yogi Berra

Actually, I'm an overnight success. But it took twenty years. - Monty Hall

You can have everything in life that you want if you just give enough other people what they want. - Zig Zigler



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New and Unique Products

Here are some examples of the newest and most interesting promotional products:



Energy Booster – This solar backpack is great for students and contest giveaways. It can be used to charge most hand-held electronics. Also includes a backup battery pack that can be powered with an AC travel charger or car charger.

Sing in the Savings – This cute piggy bank makes saving fun! It “oinks” every time a coin is placed in it, and also features a LED clock and AM/FM radio.



It would make a perfect promotion for a bank, credit union, or any savings program.



Office On the Go – Take it all with you! This handy pocket office includes a calculator, tape measure and pen. Perfect for sales teams, contractors, electricians, teachers, busy parents and anyone on the go!

Write Away

Pens are an indispensable promotional item. Everyone uses them and they’re perfect for a wide variety of situations, including tradeshow giveaways, employee rewards, corporate meetings, retirement gifts, presentations, training sessions, job fairs and much more. We’ve put together some interesting ideas to give you the “write” stuff:

Call Me – Never miss a call again! This helpful pen blinks to silently alert you to incoming and outgoing cell phone calls.

Get a Grip – Everyone will want one of these ergonomic pens, which are as stylish as they are comfortable. They’re available in a variety of eye-catching colors.

Triple Duty – Why juggle several gadgets when you can do the job with just one? Techies and busy sales people will appreciate a multi-functional pen with a USB drive and laser pointer.



Five Steps to Networking Success

Attending a tradeshow, conference or business event? Many people dread networking, but it’s easy to maximize your networking efforts. Just follow these steps:

- 1. Arrive early.** This will give you the opportunity to meet the event organizers, board members and other key attendees.
- 2. Relax and be friendly.** Focus on how you can help the people you meet, by giving them valuable information or introducing them to a business lead.
- 3. Ask interesting questions about the people you talk to, their business, or the event.** This serves as an icebreaker, helps you learn more about the other person, and helps them form a positive impression of you.
- 4. Take notes.** Be sure to bring your business cards, pen and paper with you. Jot down notes about the conversations you’ve had, such as a reminder to forward someone an article or lead.
- 5. Follow up.** Write an e-mail or note to people you met and reference your conversation. Consider sending valuable leads a book they’d find interesting or a memorable item like these chocolate business cards.



The Riddler

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A FREE GIFT

Q: A man goes on a trip on Friday, stays for two days and returns on Friday. How can this be?

Note: The first five people to correctly answer the riddle will win a free gift. Email, call or fax your answer (see form on back). Answer to last issue’s riddle: Queue





Profitable Planning

Promotional products are important traffic generators when they are presented properly at conferences and tradeshows. One company put a little extra thought into theirs and reaped big rewards on a small budget.

To stand out in the crowd at an annual conference, one publishing company decided to use a promotional product that would serve as a fun reminder of the event, which was held in a different location each year. The company gave away hats imprinted with their logo, plus the conference name, year, and a fun image representing the host city. One week before the conference, they sent an e-mail to prospects asking them to stop by the booth and pick up the hat.

The result was a fun, attractive gift that recipients looked forward to receiving. The company has repeated this promotion with a different design for each of the past seven years. Last year, they saw a 430% return on their investment of just \$3,394!

We can help you create a memorable promotional item your customers will look forward to receiving. Just contact us for ideas today!



Dear Addy,

ANSWERS TO YOUR PROMOTIONAL QUESTIONS

Q: We're holding our first company picnic this year. What are some fun ways to commemorate the event?

A: Start by giving each family a T-shirt and sunblock when they arrive. Then, be sure to plan activities that will appeal to a wide range of attendees, such as softball, three-legged races, tug-of-war and a pie-eating contest, all with fun awards. Door prizes are also always a hit. Consider prizes like mp3 players, radios, frisbees, movie tickets, and music and ringtone download cards.



Q: I own a gourmet food shop and I'm looking for gifts to give loyal customers. Any ideas?

A: Why not reward your favorite clients with tools they can use while cooking up the food they purchased in your store? Items like a cheese board, oven mitt, knife block, wine stopper or this fun coffee cup-shaped timer are all great options. Bon appetite!



Please copy and fax or mail your request

Do you enjoy reading our newsletter?
Call, fax or email us with your comments.

This Newsletter Provides Information and Ideas for Improving Sales, Image and Profits.

Want to make your next promotion a success?
Please contact us at:

David Gephart
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Fax: 919-732-9953

dave@gephartmarketing.com

I'm interested in:

- Lead Generators
- Employee Motivation
- Golf Promotions
- Apparel
- Tradeshow Giveaways
- Fall Promotions
- Incentives/Awards
- New Products

I need: literature pricing samples of these products: _____

Contact _____

Company _____

Address (if different from addressee) _____

Phone/Fax/Email _____

Riddle Answer _____



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