

Finding and Building Your Market

Getting people to your district is all about creating a compelling offer and then determining the best way to tell your story so that your audience is drawn in, again and again. In order to be most effective, it's important to understand who your target markets and key audiences are, how to craft a relevant message for them and what marketing tools are most appropriate to help you meet your goals.

Finding and building your audience means utilizing a strategic marketing approach that helps you know your consumer, and then understanding which creative marketing strategies - both traditional and emerging - are most effective and relevant for getting your district's story out there.

*“What makes content engaging is relevancy.
You need to connect the contact information with the
content information.”*

– Gail Goodman, President & CEO, Constant Contact



Creating a strategy to market your district means...

Identifying who you want to reach

In Webinar News #1 and #2 we talked about utilizing quantitative and qualitative data to understand who your audience is. No doubt, you probably want anybody and everybody that will come. But to really be effective, it's critically important to identify and profile who your key audience is. Are they younger or older? Are they family-oriented? Do they have certain values and beliefs that resonate with your offer? Make sure you understand who they are, and what's most important to them in an experience, so you can speak to them directly and deliver something valuable to them.

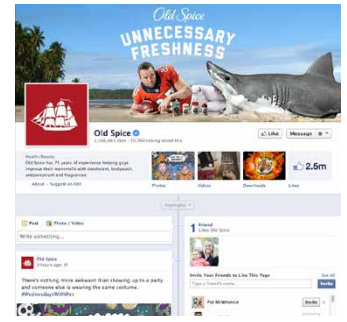
Being clear about the message you want to send

What is your district's elevator pitch? What is it - specifically - you want your audience to know about you and what is your call to action for them? A "we have everything for everybody" approach rarely works in place

marketing. People want to feel that you've created something special for them, and that you are speaking to them directly. Create different messages for different audiences and different purposes, and be consistent in how you speak to people.

Determining the most effective channels and tools to use

Different people prefer to receive information in unique ways, so knowing your audience also means knowing how they get their info and where they get it, then crafting a marketing and messaging strategy that you are certain will reach them. Younger generations will veer towards social media, apps and web materials as their go-to information source. Older generations prefer something they can hold in their hands and so look to printed marketing materials, maps, etc. Likewise, bold design materials - bold, bright colors and a larger font size - make a piece more



welcoming and friendly for everyone. Finally, look for other channels you can use, be they advertising (radio stations, publications, etc.) or use of the public realm (posters, flyers, banners, stickers, etc.). Don't forget that good relationships with the media can help win you FREE press in the form of news stories and interest articles that are often more impactful than an expensive advertisement.

Being consistent

Your efforts are minimized by inconsistency. Always be consistent in the use of your brand, in your messaging, in your tone and in the look and feel of the materials you produce. People should be able to look at several different marketing tools (web, print, social media, etc.) and know inherently that they are all coming from the same place. Consistency builds brand recognition and trust.

Times, they are a changin'...

The only thing that is constant is change, and perhaps nothing changes more quickly these days than the way people are receiving (and sharing) information. In some ways, marketing has become easier and cheaper, but that also means you need to stay on top of trends else you'll be left behind quickly. A few tips to keep your marketing relevant with your audience:

- People are going to continue to live, work, shop, play, explore and travel in completely new ways going forward. Adapt or risk extinction.
- Authenticity, honesty and a personal voice underlie much of what's successful in marketing. Be real, be light, be silly. Communicate in a way that reflects who your district is.

- Passionate and positive language is key. If your passion and excitement for your district can shine through in your words, other people will feel it too.
- Create opportunities for more than a one-way conversation. Social media, apps and websites allow you to have conversations and discussions with your audience, and gives them opportunities to promote and support you. Engage as much as possible (just remember to keep it light and positive).

“Increasingly, mass marketing is turning into a mass of niches.”

– Chris Anderson, Author of The Long Tail

Final Thoughts

Marketing is one of those things everybody thinks they are an expert at! But GOOD marketing is not as easy as just throwing something out there and hoping it sticks. The best use of your time and resources is to be very strategic. Know who you are speaking to, know how to speak to them and then be consistent and clear in your messaging.



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