

Don't Include eMarketing in Next Years Budget



You should include is a line item for imagination in next years budget. The Web 2.0 tools and services can be used for a powerful eMarketing campaign with very modest budgets. You see, some of the most successful eMarketing campaigns are not about big budgets but rather about interesting hooks. What you need to do is open your mind and let the creative juices flow to tell your company's story. By doing so, you can hit your marketing milestones including enhancing your search engine rankings, driving relevant traffic to your site and demonstrating your skill while expressing your firm's personality... it's all in the hook.

To help loosen your spigot here is a scenario that will get both clients and staff on board and involved with the campaign: The perception of many outside the accounting industry (and even some inside) is that accounting firms don't have an interesting story to tell. However, consider a Cleveland accounting firm that has a very nice kitchen and conference room space. This space is the "home" of their firm and any client who has ever visited the offices remembers it because it is a special space, unique to their culture. Accountants are numbers people who are known to work like crazy at tax season. Put a cool kitchen space, numbers and over worked people in the idea juicer and see what comes out.

Coffee

Let's ask these "numbers" people to start measuring the coffee use during tax season. How much is consumed by clients verses the staff; how much is consumed overall. Is coffee a treat or necessity during tax season? Does junk food consumption correlate with coffee? To break up the stress of the busy season put a Flip video camera by the coffee pot with instructions to staff to make a personal video entry reporting how much coffee they are having, what they last snacked on and a comment about what drove them to the coffee pot. When pouring coffee for a client, ask them if they would like to participate by telling their favorite coffee story. Post the best on YouTube. Place a laptop at the kitchen table with a three question survey to get a more official count. Set-up a Twitter account and have it opened on the laptop to post brief thoughts throughout the day – presumably on coffee and tax season. Now that we have engaged the team let's take it on the road.

- Build a micro-website that's called Tax Tips on a Caffeine High. Schedule a new tax tip to be posted daily and distributed using a RSS feed.
- Link to the videos you posted on YouTube.
- Add links to the company's website to the Twitter comments and send the tax tips of the day out via "tiny URL's".
- Post the table top survey results on the website weekly.
- Link the microsite to the company website that is rich in resources such as calculation tools, white papers, forms and podcasts of presentations the staff has given at events and conferences. These pages are all set-up to be tagged with de-lic-ious, Digg, Stumble Upon...
- Start a blog that expands upon each tax tip of the day and links to the website.
- Register the podcast with podcatchers such as iTunes and Juice.
- Send an email invitation on April 16th to a party and awards banquet for the person who drank the most coffee, the best client video coffee story, who served the most coffee, who survived on just decaf...you get the idea. Link the invitation to a landing page telling the whole story and an RSVP form.

Now you have created an eMarketing campaign that's engaging, strategic, and targeted and the most expensive part was the coffee.