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REAL RELATIONSHIP MARKETING IDEAS



Is Newer Always Better?

by CHAD RUEFFERT

With each new decade and each new technology advancement, marketers evolve to a “new school” of strategies and tactics to attempt to attract new customers.

The “new school” usually starts with cutting edge companies and then trickles down to smaller businesses who want to adopt the successful new strategies of these marketing powerhouses.

But is it really a good idea for those of us in the limited budget, limited time real

world to attempt to emulate “new school” marketing every time the school changes?

Yes and no.

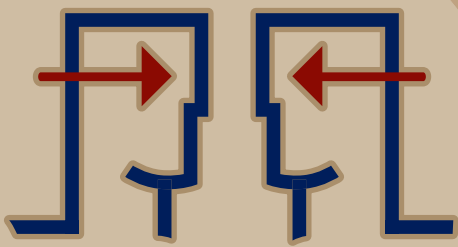
Growth and change are essential to effective long-term marketing. But how do you determine which things you say “yes” to and which you reject as a too difficult, too expensive or even

just a pointless fad? Here are a few thoughts on some “new school” trends and their older components that may help you decide.

Traditional Media vs. New Media

Why would you spend money on buying television ads when you can post a video on YouTube for free? Why write a check for postage when you can send a free email? Who would take the time for a 10-minute phone call when you can send a 10-second text? The answer in almost all cases is that the old way creates better results. Direct mail, for example, is proven to have higher purchase rates, higher message acceptance, lower message avoidance, and greater emotional impact than an email. The trade-off in almost all of

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these cases is cost. It costs more to send a direct mail piece than an email, but that cost is often offset by a better result. To be successful, you need to have a mix of both. Create a plan that includes low-dollar, high-volume new media marketing as well as more expensive & impactful but narrower focused traditional marketing.

Product Promotion vs. Customer Centric Marketing

In a recent article, real estate agent and professional business writer Daria Kelly Uhlig writes: *“The traditional marketing mix included the four P’s of product, price, placement and promotion: measurable, company-centric tactics that*

the product or service—to continue the dialog and encourage loyalty and evangelism”. So which is right, the old school or the new school? The answer is “both”, but one has to come first. Before you can go out and generate a dialog with former customers to encourage referrals, you have to create a “referral-worthy” service. The quality of what you provide your customers and the value of that service versus what competitors offer is what gives you the privilege of asking your customers to become evangelists. There are no new “C’s” that can replace product and price. But once you’ve create a referral-worthy service, forming solid relationship marketing strategies is a far more effective and affordable approach than going out and

content marketing strategy. But content marketing is not for everyone.

In *REALTOR Magazine*, real estate coach Jared James writes that one of the most common lies real estate practitioners fall victim to is that you have to be blogging to stay in the business. *“...did you also know that REALTORS® typically bring in only 4 percent of their business from their Web site?”*

I understand that there are real estate professionals who are making a killing off of search engine optimization, Internet leads, and other forms of online business. But my point is that if you’re a person who doesn’t like to write, stop thinking that you have to blog. Leverage your own personality, what you’re good at, and what you enjoy doing. Maybe you’re great at cold calling, door knocking, or marketing to past clients. Do what works for you.”

As a general piece of advice, remember that just because something is new, doesn’t mean it is better.



could be emphasized and de-emphasized individually to form a customized value proposition. The new school’s six C’s, on the other hand, focus on consumers. They include contact, connect, conversation, consideration, consumption and community. It’s not enough for consumers to be aware of your product or service. You must establish a connection with them through meaningful contact. That contact should establish a dialog. New school marketers build communities around converted customers—those who have “consumed”

just replacing old customers with new ones through traditional promotion.

The Content Marketing Misconception

Content marketing, where you drive interest in your product or service by providing information or education on related topics, is not new. But with the advent of blogs and other wide-reaching, low-cost distribution tools, it has become a growing trend in today’s marketing world. This article is part of our own

As a general piece of advice, remember that just because something is new, doesn’t mean it is better. If you have marketing strategies or tools that are generating a good return on investment, don’t stop using them. Allocate a little additional time and money to test your new ideas and compare the results before making big changes. Gradually replace your lowest performing efforts with new options to create a strategy that evolves healthily over time.

Chad Rueffert is president of Braintree Marketing, Inc. and the creator of the From Your Friends Relationship Marketing Program.

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