



Promotional Campaigns with Pizzazz

By Stan Breckenridge, MAS, PPAI Chairman of the Board

In an increasingly tough economy, top brands are challenged to find inexpensive yet creative ways to cut through the clutter and distinguish their products among the masses. To aid in this endeavor, savvy advertisers are turning to the power of promotional advertising and its ability to uniquely connect to consumers. As the only advertising medium capable of engaging all five senses, promotional products have the distinct ability to turn an ordinary message into a marketing experience consumers can see, touch, hear, smell, taste—and most importantly, remember.

According to a study conducted by L.J. Market Research at DFW International Airport, more than 76 percent of respondents could recall the brand name on the item they received in the last 12 months. In comparison, only 53.5 percent could recall the name of a single advertiser in a newspaper or magazine.

Still not convinced?

The following campaigns are a few examples of smart companies that looked beyond unilateral advertising campaigns and explored the endless benefits promotional products can provide when added to the marketing mix.

Nintendo of America

Objective: To assist Nintendo of America with the post-launch marketing and branding of the new Wii game system.

Strategy & Execution: The most unique aspect of the new Wii game system is the hand-held remote that allows players to interact wirelessly with the game screen. Capitalizing on this point of differentiation among its competitors, Nintendo designed a keychain flashlight replica of the remote. Even better, the lighted element of the keychain was a blue light, similar to the blue LED light on the real remote. The keychain was promoted on Nintendo Web sites as a free gift for new subscribers of *Nintendo Power Magazine*. The gotta-have-it appeal of the keychain quickly made it a hot topic on Nintendo blogs and on gaming bulletin boards. The keychain may even earn a “bonus life” as there has been significant interest from retail stores to offer the item for resale.

Results: Immediately following the promotion, there was a distinct and significant spike in subscriptions to *Nintendo Power Magazine*. To date, more than 130,000 Wii Lighted Remote Keychains have shipped with even more purchase orders submitted.

Arby's, RTM

Objective: To create a long-term coupon that customers would keep and re-use often, due to its convenience and ease of use.

Strategy & Execution: Most fast-food chains distribute paper coupons in the mail or as Sunday paper inserts. But how many of those coupons are actually in the car when consumers are ready to make a purchase? The Arby's Discount Key Card offers a permanent discount to anyone holding the card, and, as a key chain, it's always with diners. Better still, every time diners take their keys out of their pocket, they're always, “Thinking Arby's.” This is a no-limit, non-expiring coupon that has actually increased the average ticket by 20 cents. Initially targeting college students in the Fort Wayne, Indiana, area, the card became an enormous success and is being strongly considered for roll-out as a nationwide item. Arby's is the first in its industry to offer a loyalty key tag program; apparently, “Thinking Arby's” means thinking smart!

Results: One store in the target area reported a 25 percent sales increase due to use of the card. Another store reports that 25 percent of its guests are card users. With this brilliant, simple idea, Arby's has broken through the coupon clutter.

Aqua Condominiums

Objective: To boost and sustain owner excitement and commitment during the two-year construction phase of a beachfront resort condominium project.

Strategy & Execution: During the construction of the Aqua Condominium Resort, extreme hurricane activity in the area threatened to discourage owners who had signed pre-construction contracts. To keep enthusiasm high among potential owners, developers employed an ongoing promotional products campaign to build brand awareness and loyalty. A collection of premium gifts was selected and branded with the Aqua logo. Throughout the two years of construction, owners regularly received luxury beach towels, tote bags, cheese sets, chef's aprons, bath robes and other items, all designed to paint a picture of what the relaxing, carefree lifestyle would be like once the condominiums were complete. The campaign was supported by quarterly newsletters, personal letters from the developer and road-show owner



Advertising Career Feature

parties in various cities where pockets of owners lived—truly a multi-faceted, cohesive marketing campaign. The final touch was an acrylic Aqua-logoed wine bucket and a bottle of wine welcoming owners to their new condominium.

Results: Upon completion of the property, every pre-construction contract converted to a closed unit. Furthermore, due to heightened brand awareness and buzz, the 212-unit condominium tower can boast 100-percent closed status.

American Marketing Association

Objective: To generate interest in the American Marketing Association (AMA) and to increase membership by reflecting a high degree of industry expertise and credibility.

Strategy & Execution: Using a marketing program to connect with savvy, senior-level marketing professionals is a daunting task. This is an audience not easily won over by average campaigns or unoriginal ideas. Still, the AMA rose to the challenge, opting to keep it traditional by designing a pen, but adding a modern twist to this classic promotional item. Presented at the 2006 "M.planet" industry conference, the handsome, vivid orange pen doubled as a USB flash drive. The drive came pre-loaded with all conference materials: PowerPoint presentations, articles, speaker support, literature,

and seminar materials. The large capacity of the drives still allowed for plenty of personal storage space. One end of the pen could also be used as a stylus for PDAs, making this old-school item a thoroughly modern device for the electronic age. Of course, presentation is everything, and the AMA made sure the pen was delivered in a dramatic, black and silver alloy case—totally cool and stylish.

Results: The pens were an immediate hit, and when conference attendees realized they would be taking home all of the conference materials and presentations on the pen's flash drive, the buzz surrounding the pens spread even more quickly. AMA continues to get calls from marketing professionals asking about the pen.

Now more than ever advertising professionals are pressed to find budget-friendly ways to overcome the restraints of a down economy. No one can argue that times are too tough to continue with marketing as usual, so why not consider an inexpensive advertising method that is sure to set your brand apart, engage consumers, and have them remember your name? In a 19.4 billion-dollar industry, promotional products are a viable force in the marketing mix and a steady bet in tough times.

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.