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What's In Your Marketing Toolbox

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It's time for the launch of your company's latest product, and as the marketing specialist you are the driver of the rollout and the company's marketing and public relations campaign. How do you ensure that the news of your new product reaches your customers? Do you issue a press release, send an e-mail blast and post the news to your company's Facebook page? Or, maybe you host a podcast, Tweet the news and issue a special issue of your company newsletter? Today's marketing professionals have more tools to choose from than ever before because their audiences have more ways to receive information than ever before. The key to a successful marketing campaign is: Know the tools you need to use to reach your customers.

Rule #1 – Don't Forget the Old Standbys

Your marketing toolbox has some shiny new tools, which may still be wrapped in their Social Media packaging. Next to those shiny new Social Media tools are the rusty, but still effective and important old standbys – the press release, corporate newsletter, company website and e-mail (Yes, your website and e-mail are 'old standbys'). With all the attention garnered by Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, blogs and other viral marketing platforms it is easy to get caught in the Social Media hype-machine and forget about the old standbys. Instead, ask yourself how the old and new can work together to give you the most value out of your campaign efforts.

Rule #2 – Know Your Audience

The tools you use to reach your target audience depend on the audience. When preparing a marketing campaign it is important to know your audience. Are you targeting the media, employers or employees? Is your audience national or local? Are they young or old? Once you know your audience, you can choose the right tools to reach them. A press release to national media outlets is not the best way to get the attention of your Chamber of Commerce.

Rule #3 – Don't Go for the Shotgun Blast

More is not always better. Your campaign will have more success if you focus on using two or three tools well, rather than digging out every tool. For the initial launch of our FMLA and leave management product, Leave Management Administrator II, we focused on two tools to deliver our message – a press release and an e-mail blast of our newsletter. Each tool linked back to the FMLA content on our website. We sent the press release to insurance and health feeds, and we sent the newsletter to our targeted list. Our announcement was picked up several industry publications, and we achieved our desired results.

Rule #4 – Push Your Message Out and Pull Your Audience In

Your audiences and customers are distracted and unfocused. You need to get their attention, and once you have their attention, you need to get them to act. Your marketing campaign needs to be continuous. If you have initial success, you need to follow-up with different tools to keep your customers' attention. If your initial campaign failed, re-strategize and try again.

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As you keep pushing your messages out, you want to pull your customers in. Direct them to your website, have them respond to a survey, provide a gift card for a free product demo, have them subscribe to your newsletter or become a Fan of your company on Facebook.

Building Your Toolbox

With a seemingly boundless range of options that marketers can use in their mix including: email marketing, public relations, direct mail, advertising, promotions, social media and media and association deals, strategy is key.

CDS' marketing team is assisting clients in the development of marketing toolboxes and campaigns that fit within their business needs and goals. By tailoring these tools to their audience, clients have a one-stop shop of options when strategizing how to generate more inbound leads, maintain customer expectations and keep consumers engaged with products and services.

What's in a toolbox? Here are a few suggestions from the CDS marketing team:

- Value story
- E-mail marketing campaign
- Press release campaign
- Social media campaign
- Media and association deals
- Multimedia campaign: Webinars, podcasts, videos
- Industry related conferences: Exhibiting, presenting, sponsoring
- Advertising: Web and print

When the time comes for your next marketing campaign get your toolbox, find your favorite tools and break in some new ones to build a successful campaign.

For more information on marketing strategies contact Dean Rosingana, CDS Director of Marketing and Communications at drosingana@customdisability.com. ■



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