

Keeping it personal

In an increasingly crowded and fragmented marketplace, nontraditional marketing—including special events, sports, civic and cultural sponsorships, customer hospitality, cause-related marketing and public relations—can play an important role in significantly enhancing brands.

By exponentially raising the number of impressions in the marketplace, these activities can make valuable and often highly cost effective contributions towards defining a brand.

Our experience has been that oftentimes the most effective efforts are those that most closely touch your clients and prospects. Special events, sports and cultural sponsorships and face-to-face marketing can communicate the essence of a brand in a way that develops long-lasting connections between consumer and brand.

Key concepts to keep in mind

- The brand can show its personality to its customers and prospects by establishing a human connection through people's passions. We love what you love.
- This personal connection should be looked at as a valuable tool for both reinforcing and building identity, and for attracting and retaining business.
- Customers value personal experiences over possessions—don't give them a token gift that won't last, give them a memory that will.
- Whatever that experience might be, capture the essence of the experience and blend it with your brand message—don't let it stand alone.
- These experiences should appeal to both rational and emotional buying triggers. While the left brain appreciates the more traditional aspects of marketing (which use concepts like logic and rationale), experiential marketing appeals to emotion, pleasure and a sense of belonging.
- Don't use one-dimensional ideas—immerse customers and prospects in their passions.
- Offer unexpected touches. . .people love a pleasant surprise.
- Offer unique opportunities—inside the ropes, in the locker room or at the finish line— where the positive word of mouth will extend the experience exponentially.
- Look for venues that appeal to your target audience so that your brand is associated with the audience's desired lifestyle.
- Everything you do in this arena must be authentic. People recognize what's false and that damages your brand.

Use this test to see if your experiential marketing idea hits the mark. How many of these personal-connection terms fit your concept?

Engaging	Entertaining
Sensory	Tactile
Interactive	Relevant
Involving	Meaningful
Personal	Authentic
Moving	Hands-on

Did more than half fit your program? You are likely on to something.

Ten or more? You have a hit on your hands.

Less than half? Look closely to see where you can make a more personal connection with your market.

People want to connect and they want to belong. They'll engage with your brand if you can make that happen.

We're fans of experiential marketing and—if done right—believe it should be in every marketer's portfolio. To learn more, contact us at 312.588.3380.