

4R ! Marketing Matters

Say No to Andy Hardy Marketing

Andy Hardy marketing rarely produces results because few firms pay sufficient attention to the parts between the initial idea and the departure of the audience after the curtains close.

We have so many marketing choices today, more than ever before. Newsletters, direct mail, seminars, trade shows, brochures, white papers, advertising, all in online and offline forms—those are just some examples of the alternatives



we have for creating awareness and interest in our products and services. And, ultimately, to generate sales leads, which is what's it's all about at the end of the day.

This is great, except for one thing. With all those choices, we have also never had so many marketing activities underperform. Generally speaking, the return on marketing investment for many firms is dismal.

I believe that one reason for the low ROI is that a lot of companies are doing what I call "Andy Hardy Marketing." For those of you who have never seen the old Mickey Rooney-Judy Garland classics on cable TV, the formula goes something like this:

1. Someone needs a whole bunch of money to solve some problem, and the kids are determined to help.
2. After a bit of brainstorming, one of them (Judy or Mickey, I can't remember which) says, "I know! We can put on a play in your father's barn!" Or something darn close to that.
3. Just a few scenes later, we are treated to a full on musical extravaganza with costumes, lights, and choreography. No muss, no fuss.

4. The kids make scads of money, and there is inevitably a Broadway scout in the audience who comes backstage with a contract in hand.



Andy Hardy marketing follows a similar pattern, at least in the beginning. Someone says, "Let's do a webinar!" or, "Let's do an email campaign!" Everyone agrees and the project is put into motion. Unlike the movies, though, Andy Hardy marketing rarely produces the results everyone is looking for. Why? Because few firms pay sufficient attention to the parts between the initial idea and the departure of the audience after the curtains close.

There are a fair number of moving parts to any kind of targeted marketing campaign. Every single marketing project has three very distinct phases: pre-event, event, and post-event. The pre and post phases rarely get the attention they need.

Just by itself, the event is often a lot to contend with. Let's use a webinar as an example. There is the logistical part—registration, phone bridge, web viewer, system to capture

attendee information—and the content part—moderator, presenters, presentations, rehearsals, Q&A prep. Getting all those pieces working right is a feat in and of itself. But it's not enough to produce the best results.

To get the most return from a marketing project, thought and work needs to be devoted to the pre and post phases. Let's stick with our webinar example: how will

the event be promoted? What communications will go out about it? To whom? Are there VIPs that merit special attention to ensure their attendance? Will you offer an incentive—like raffling off the latest technology gizmo—to encourage attendance?

On the post-event side, will the webinar be used in other ways after the live event? What kind of follow on communication campaigns need to be set up? How will captured attendee information be used? What about the people who registered but didn't attend? Will they be contacted? Will some kind of fulfillment document be offered?

I've barely scratched the surface with this example, but I hope it's enough to illustrate the true scope of a successful marketing project. Now consider all the marketing initiatives you have on the table. Attention must be paid to execution all the way from pre to post in every single instance.

Successful marketing projects—in other words, those that generate qualified leads and help shorten the sales cycle—are more than an idea, a barn, and a Busby Berkeley dance number. Execute on all the details—before, during, and after—and you will see a far better return on your efforts.



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4R creates content that connects and produces measurable results through well-planned marketing initiatives. We will work with you to increase the awareness and interest of your target audiences so that sales opportunities increase and your sales cycle decreases.

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