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Guerrilla Sales & Marketing

Drive Sales With a Cause

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Lori Turner-Wilson

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Rallying for a cause you feel passionate about not only feels good but also makes good business sense. According to a 2010 study by Cone Cause Evolution, a whopping 80 percent of consumers would consider switching brands if that brand aligned itself with a good cause.

Forty-one percent of Americans said they have purchased a product in the past year because of a cause, a two-fold increase since Cone first started measuring cause marketing in 1993.

“Cause marketing,” a marketing alliance that pairs a company with a social cause for their mutual benefit, is an integral part of brand marketing strategies – for companies large and small. There are several types of cause marketing campaigns you can consider.

Transactional campaigns trigger a donation when your customer makes a purchase. Yoplait’s “Save Lids to Save Lives” campaign donates 10 cents to the Susan G. Komen Foundation for every pink Yoplait lid consumers register online. With event campaigns, your company partners with a charity to host a fundraising event such as a race or food festival.

Digital campaigns rely on electronic channels – websites, emails and social media – to spread the word about your cause, encouraging consumers to take action online (e.g., donating, volunteering, purchasing merchandise or spreading a message virally).

With sweat-equity campaigns, employees roll up their sleeves to physically help out an area charity, such as building a Habitat for Humanity house. If you select a cause that aligns well with your brand, a sweat-equity campaign has a good chance of creating a strong association for consumers between your brand and the good work you’re doing in the community. These types of campaigns lend themselves well to generating media attention due to the opportunity for compelling imagery.

If that weren’t enough reason to sway you toward a sweat-equity campaign, consider that 66 percent of people believe it is no longer enough for corporations to just make financial contributions to charities. They want to see companies getting involved and integrating good causes into their day-to-day business.

Companies looking to develop a cause marketing strategy should give careful consideration to selecting the right cause.

Identify a cause that aligns with your brand and that your employees can get passionate about. Huggies created its own charity, the “Every Little Bottom” program, which provides diapers for needy children. Macy’s supports the Make-a-Wish Foundation through its “Macy’s Believe” holiday campaign. Kids drop letters to Santa into Macy’s store letterboxes, and the retailer donates \$1 for each letter to Make-a-Wish.

Once you’ve selected your cause, work with your charity’s organizers to

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PROPERTY SALES	65	65	5,298
MORTGAGES	56	56	8,174
FORECLOSURE NOTICES	0	0	4,404
BUILDING PERMITS	141	141	13,875
BANKRUPTCIES	73	73	6,624
BUSINESS LICENSES	26	26	2,359
UTILITY CONNECTIONS	130	130	8,933
MARRIAGE LICENSES	29	29	1,963




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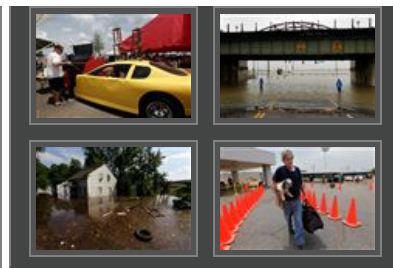
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set donation targets and define how the campaign will increase your visibility. To expand your reach and further increase brand awareness, have the organization jointly promote your campaign through its email, newsletter, website, social-media channels and direct-mail efforts.

Finally, launch a well-planned, multi-channel marketing campaign. Motivating behavior change requires frequency of message. A single press release won't do it. Consider a variety of messaging platforms to reach prospective customers on multiple fronts.

Lori Turner-Wilson is managing partner of RedRover Sales & Marketing, www.redrovercompany.com. You can follow RedRover on Facebook and Twitter.



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