

2011 GCAA Annual Conference

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Marketing Session: From Grassroots to High-tech!

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THE COMMUNICATION PLAN...

“Telling Your Story”



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Welcome Georgia Community Action Association!

Dear GCAA Attendees!

I am truly excited about the information I will share with you!

As a presenter, I am aware of all the struggles that many organizations are experiencing due to the slow economy and small budgets. Many of you would like to increase your staff, help more people in need and generate more money. But often times you are faced with many budget pitfalls.

Today, I am here to show you how you can be more effective with your day-to-day marketing resources, improve your communication plan and tell your story!

Remember... telling your story is a journey for others to enjoy!

Sincerely,

Yolanda McFadden

Yolanda McFadden
Consultant
Savvy Socials

Are You Out of Money and Resources?

Is Your Answer Yes to the following?

- ✓ Are you doing more with less?
- ✓ Is your marketing budget shrinking?
- ✓ Is your agency turning away people who need your help?
- ✓ Do you need a communication facelift?
- ✓ Are your communication collateral materials out-of-date?
- ✓ Are you using social media tools?
- ✓ Do you have a communication plan?
- ✓ Are you telling your story effectively and with passion?

If you answered YES to the majority of these questions, let's take a look at your communication plan.

How Is Your Communication Plan Working?

Communication Plan

It's essential to have a communication plan.

Why is a Communication Plan Important?

A communication plan is important to your agency's brand. Having a successful communication plan will help you get your message across clearly to your targeted audience. It also helps you keep an eye on the bottom line and avoid any unnecessary expenses.

Having a communication plan will help your agency better plan for long-term goals and help you be more proactive than reactive. It will also help you be more effective when implementing resources, marketing initiatives and man-power.

7 Questions to Ask Before Creating Your Communication Plan and “Telling Your Story”...

1. Is your brand recognizable?
2. Is your communication model up-to-date?
3. What are your communication goals?
4. Who are you targeted audience?
5. What is your story?
6. How do you tell your story?
7. What is your timeline?

Is Your Brand Recognizable?

Branding

- How is your brand different from other agencies?
- Is your brand recognizable?
- Is your brand influencing your targeted audience to donate to your agency?

Marketing

- How are you marketing to your targeted audience?
- What tools are you currently using to market to your audience?
- Where are your marketing dollars being used?

Public Relations

- How are you getting your name out the market?
- What's included in your press kit?

Social Media

What type of social media are you using?

Next Steps...

Hopefully, after answering those few questions you are now ready to create your communication plan and your story!

Here are the next topics to help you do so...

- Create Your Communication Plan.
- Who are you targeting?
- What is your story?
- Write your story.
- What is your timeline?

Create Your Communication Plan

Here are a few steps to help you get started on building your communication plan!

1. At the beginning of your plan, state the purpose of your communication plan. List who will be responsible for owning and creating the plan. Be specific about the time frame – set dates and time tables.
2. Write your agency's vision and mission statements. Make sure it matches your business strategy, culture and values.
3. List any methods within your communication plan that has worked and what has failed. This will provide a historical reference. Also, mention any issues that may affect future decisions.

Tech Savvy Communication – A Toolkit for Nonprofits

For a more comprehensive Tech Savvy Communication Plan, please view the “*A Toolkit for Nonprofits*” by NPower Seattle (located at the end of this document).

We will focus on these topics from the Toolkit:

- What is a Communication Plan?
- Tech-Savvy Tactical Communication Planning
- Why do you need to have a Tech-Savvy Tactical Communication Plan?
- Who to influence – Identify the audience?
- What to say?
- Take Action

What Story Is Your Brand Telling?

The best ways to tell your story to make sure you are different from the others. Make your story interesting, believable and compelling. The most memorable stories come from directly from the heart.

Should storytelling be important to your agency? Yes, it should be.

Here are some reasons why:

- A genuine story is memorable.
- It gives your brand creditability.
- Your target audience becomes intrigued.
- It sets you apart from other agencies.

Be a brand ambassador! This is an important role so be careful of how you present it to the public. What is your brand saying right now? How is it being presented to your audience?

Make sure your brand has personality. No one will remember a stiff brand! Give your brand life, energy and substance. Also keeping your message and brand constant will help other easily recognize who you are. For example, make sure your message on your marketing collateral, press release and websites are cohesive to your brand.

Now that your brand is strong, it's time to tell everyone! It's time to tell your story.

See How Others Are Telling Their Stories

The most important aspect of a brand is the emotional connection between the company and its consumers. The emotional connection is so vital because people are emotional creatures, making decisions based on their gut reactions rather than logical reasons. That's why perceived value is so much more important than price.

There are a number of companies that have cultivated strong brand stories that go a long way to forging that emotional bond. For some, the brand story is deeply entrenched in the company's early beginnings. For others, the brand story is completely fictitious, yet powerful. Regardless, these stories are the magnets that engage consumers time and time again.



Corona

Everyone knows that when you order a corona it needs to be accompanied by a wedge of lime. Why? Budweiser - no lime. Miller - no lime. Heineken - no lime. They don't even get lemons. So why does Corona get a lime? The brand story is all about beers served on the beaches of Mexico and the flavors of the citrus that brings out the essence of the beer. Plus the lime on the rim of the bottle discourages insects from taking a sip. But the reality is the whole thing was made up. No ancient Mexican tradition. In fact, putting a lime in a Corona was started by a bartender in California and it worked like marketing magic. Great brand story - but it would be even better if it were true.

Source: The Russo Group Online – The Razor Brand Blog

See How Others Are Telling Their Stories (cont.)



Life Is Good

Two brothers, a van and an improbable dream. The story around Life is Good is a heart warming tale that will connect with even the most reserved consumer. Bert and John Jacobs designed shirts and traveled around attempting to sell them for five years. They eat peanut butter and jelly, slept in their van and showered occasionally. Jake and his simple message of optimism saved the day. With an emphasis on simplicity, humor and humility the company connects with consumers and they define themselves by the products they wear. People want life to be good so they support the message of the company. The company has grown to include a mission of sustainability and community service. This expansion of the brand story has further increased sales.



Coca-Cola

First created in an Atlanta pharmacy in the mid 1860's, Coke is now enjoyed around the globe. From the distinctively shaped bottle to the impeccable brand identity consistency, Coca-Cola is a master class in brand management. An important part of the brand story is the history of the company and it's growth around the world. But, the part of this history that makes the brand story so emotionally powerful is the super secret recipe. For all of the wannabe duplicators out there - without the secret recipe no one can really reproduce the original. Even when Coke made new Coke they realized that they couldn't outdo themselves.

Source: The Russo Group Online – The Razor Brand Blog

How to Tell Your Story (cont.)

- Now talk about what will happen in your brand story. What will cause it to move forward? Why should other be interested in your story?

- How you want your audience to react and feel about your story. What do you want them to do? How do you want them to react?

Additional Resources

There is a lot of information in this communication guide. It can be overwhelming. Therefore, Savvy Socials and Partners can offer additional resources to help you:

- Press Release Kits
- E-blasts and Social Media Tools
- Measuring your Marketing Dollars
- How to Write Your Story
- How to Tell Your Story
- How to Update Your Communication Guide
- Updating Your Marketing Collateral
- How to Partner with Others
- And so much more...

For more information, please contact us directly at info@savvysocials.com or Yolanda McFadden 404.453.5536 for your free hour consultation.



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