Marketing
Ask SCORE

Keeping Customers “Engaged” Using Digital Media

My latest email response deserves a follow up. It refers to the column last week and states. ”OK, Dean, you said that communicating with customers using digital media is tricky and that the answer seems to be in keeping the customer engaged, but give us some more examples”. I had cited the Alterian “2010 Annual Survey” of marketing professionals. They reported that nearly three-quarters said they or their clients tried to create personalized customer experiences through email.

Let’s draw some practical examples from current business practice. eMarketer Daily, an online newsletter reports in a recent article that “Engagement, interest and constant connection keep fans coming back on Facebook. For example, well-known brands like Coca-Cola and Starbucks have had success turning their Facebook fan pages into popular sites with millions of fans. Local businesses are also leveraging the site and can learn from their global neighbors.

According to the financial services firm Wedbush, local small businesses make up 17.6% of Facebook fan pages, while large companies come in at 6.3% and products at 3%. I thought it was interesting to read what Alexandra Wheeler, Director of digital strategy for Starbucks told Marketing Week in the UK at a conference this fall, “It’s about making sure that we do our job every day to give those fans some sort of meaningful value,” she said. “Having 10 million people on Facebook who like us would be useless if we did nothing with it.”

Social media marketing agency Cone found 77% of new media users want companies to offer them incentives online.

Coca-Cola, with 19.8 million Facebook fans, used a year-long social media campaign, Expedition 206, to keep its Facebook page constantly updated with content posted by brand ambassadors. Sounds like testimonials to me.

Oreo launched an interactive game on its Facebook page in September, MediaPost reported, and the brand jumped from 8.5 million fans in August to 15.2 million in November. The campaign continues and was also recently extended offline, with in-person events.

eMarketer Daily summarized their observations, “engagement, interest and constant connection keep fans coming back to a company’s Facebook fan page, and local businesses can learn from these larger examples as they create and populate their own Facebook fan pages.”
So my question is how are our small businesses making sure that our clients/customers (our fans) are getting meaningful value from us through our digital communications on a regular basis?

I urge you to keep your business ahead of the digital curve. Learn more about how to make your messages more interactive with your customers. Also, for more information about participating in the new Small Business Round Table or expanding or operating a small business here in Southeast Minnesota, contact SCORE on our website: www.score-SEMinnnesota.org.

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