

puretalentreview

Q U A R T E R L Y N E W S A N D P R O M O T I O N A L T I P S

April is National Humor Month



The month of April starts with April Fool's Day and contains one of the most stressful times of the year – tax deadline day. And it has been designated National Humor Month. Larry Wilde founded National Humor Month 28 years ago to heighten the public's awareness of how the joy of laughter can improve health, boost morale, increase communication skills and enrich the quality of life. Studies show that the best way to relieve stress is with laughter.

Did you know that humor aids problem solving and contributes to creativity in the business environment? Humor makes you more efficient and allows you to function better. And, if you can point out what is humorous or absurd about a stressful situation, it will give you the upper hand. So read up on the positive attributes of humor this month at www.larrywilde.com/month.htm and start putting laughter to work for your health and your business.

It's Tax Time and Uncle Sam's Bearing Gifts

It seems that the very same Uncle Sam that relentlessly collects your hard earned money in taxes has a generous side. Of course, there are ulterior motives. With small businesses offering Uncle Sam a huge income tax base, it is in his best interest to take care of those businesses that represent 99.7 percent of all employers and employ 53 percent of the private work force. In the process of keeping that tax base, the Federal Government also works to support your business by offering a wealth of resources to help you succeed.

1. Free shipping materials and information from the U.S. Post Office: Just for the asking, the USPS will send you a supply of boxes, packing tape and preprinted mailing labels complete with your business address. Visit <http://shop.usps.com> to request your free stuff. And, the USPS web site offers information on growing your business including direct-mail marketing.
2. Free CD workshops from the IRS: Just visit the IRS web site at www.irs.gov and search for "small business products." Free CD workshops include, "Small Business

Resource Guide" and "Introduction to Federal Taxes."

3. Free loan guarantees and start-up information from the Small Business Administration: In addition to guaranteeing your business loan for free, this agency's source of free information is extensive and the site at www.sba.gov offers many links to state government agencies and a database where you can register and search for government contracts.
4. Free business advice from experts provided by SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives): This organization that calls themselves "counselors to America's small businesses" offers free advice based on actual business management and ownership experience by e-mail or through face-to-face counseling sessions. For more information, visit www.score.org.

Make sure you take advantage of Uncle Sam's generosity.



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Arm Yourself with Guerrilla Marketing Tactics

Get the Most Out of Your Marketing Budgets

Marketing is essential for business success. Traditional marketing methods, such as media advertising and direct mail campaigns, can be cost prohibitive for small business budgets. Guerrilla Marketing developed by marketing specialist, Jay Levison, is the solution.

Levison defines Guerrilla Marketing as "achieving conventional goals, such as profits, with unconventional methods." With Guerrilla Marketing the focus is on the investment of time, energy and imagination to effectively promote your business instead of the investment of large amounts of money. Guerrilla Marketing offers a list of 100 creative weapons

for establishing your business identity, promoting your business, maintaining your customer base, and getting new customers. Sixty-two of these creative weapons are free!

A marketing plan based on Guerrilla Marketing principles is easy to establish and can be written on a single sheet of paper (see plan outline below). Make your move with Guerrilla Marketing weapons to successfully promote your small business without depleting your marketing budget. For more information on Guerrilla Marketing, visit Levison's site at www.gmarketing.com.



A Few of the 100 Guerrilla Marketing Weapons

- ⊙ Logo
- ⊙ Referral Program
- ⊙ Business Card
- ⊙ Gift Certificates
- ⊙ Signs
- ⊙ Toll Free Numbers
- ⊙ Brochures
- ⊙ Networking
- ⊙ Posters
- ⊙ Testimonials
- ⊙ Web Site
- ⊙ Customer Service Guarantee

The Seven-Step Guerrilla Marketing Plan

1. Define the purpose of your marketing. State your goals specifically. What do you want to accomplish with your marketing efforts? What goals do you wish to reach? Specific goals can include: increasing sales, getting new customers, etc.
2. Determine the benefits and features of your products or service. Describe your unique features and most desirable benefits. Establish your unique selling proposition.
3. Specify your target audience. Clearly define the people who want and/or need your products or service. Who can afford your prices? What problems can you help them solve? How your product or service will benefit them? Don't waste time, money and energy promoting to the wrong audience.
4. Define your marketing niche. What puts you ahead of your competition? What makes your products or service better than the rest?
5. Select your marketing weapons. Marketing weapons are those things that help you communicate about you and your business and your products or services. You should utilize at least 10 weapons from the Guerrilla Marketing list of 100. (See partial list right.)
6. Establish your business identity. Determine the reputation you want for your business and your products or service. What image would you like to project? How do you want your audience to perceive your business?
7. Set your budget. Decide where your marketing dollar will best be spent. According to Guerrilla Marketing experts, the most important place to spend the money is on your business presentation – your logo, business card, stationery, brochure, web site – where ever your audience will get their first impression of you. You should establish your budget as a percent of your monthly profits.



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If you build it, will they come?

Getting visitors to your web site

Ninety percent of Internet users count on search engines and online directories to find information on products and services. If you want them to find your business, get your web pages listed with as many of the most popular search engines and directories as possible.

How do you get listed? There are different way sites get listed in search engine results and directories. Search engines use "spiders" that

crawl through web sites and index pages on the Internet to compile listings, while directory editors manually compile their information for listings. Therefore, if you have an active web site, properly coded with a description and keywords (see below) it will eventually show up in a search engine or directory without you having to do much at all. And the best way to get listed for free with crawler based search

engines is to get other sites to link to your web site. Crawlers follow links, so if there are several links on the Internet to your site, the crawlers are more likely to pick you up.

However, if you rely on search engines and directories to get visitors to your site, you can take an active role and spend a little of your marketing budget to make it happen. You can submit your site to major directories and get listed, then the crawler search engines will pick up the links to your site.

Actively submitting your site to the most popular search engines and directories (Google, Yahoo, MSN Search, Lycos, AltaVista, etc.) will get you listed faster and higher up in the results. Paid submissions work even faster. Fees for paid submissions run from \$25 to \$300.

So if you want to improve your position in search results, log on to the popular search engine and directory sites for information on how to ensure you are listed.

Keywords are Key

Keywords are the words Internet users type into search engines in order to find sites containing the information, products and services they need. Therefore, the proper use of keywords within your web site is essential to your listing results. Keywords should be carefully chosen and embedded in your web page programming along with a well written description of your site. Online directories base ranking on the quality of the content of your site, not keywords, so when submitting your site to online directories, remember it's the content that counts.

For more information on getting listed and using keywords, visit www.searchengines.com, <http://searchenginewatch.com> and www.netmechanic.com/news/vol3/promo_no9.htm.



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