
Bringing
back that
loving feeling:
*building a
fan brand*

Thanks



Thanks for having us at your conference — we loved having a chance to talk with you about the past, present and future of kindergarten, as we see it, and especially enjoyed all the great ideas that came out of the workshops.

Here's a brief summary of the ground we covered in our presentation.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

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1

Make it about them

“I want it how I want it, where I want it, when I want it and how I want it. Or my money back. *Now.*”

This latest consumer wave might have been spawned by fast food, but it's taken a firm foothold across the board. And those expectations are there, for-profit or not.

Today, it's a brave brand that talks before it listens. That assumes anything, about what their customers or staff want, without asking. That tries to impose its ideas, values or priorities on anybody, before answering 'what's in it for them?'

Whether it's service delivery, information delivery or customer services channels, this generation of consumer expects to have it their way.

Have conversations

2

We live in a world where interactivity is the norm. Gone are the days of organisations talking ‘at’ people; of strictly broadcast media, and one way messaging; leaving it until tomorrow to return phone calls, and missives with one way functionality. Today’s consumer (and potential staff member) expects to be able to contribute, express an opinion, get a fast response to their questions, and engage with the organisations in their lives where and when it suits. Increasingly, there’s even an expectation around being a part of product and service design.

There’s nothing to engage with, if you’re absent from the conversation (and like it or not, it’ll be going on without you). Worse still, you’ll look like you don’t care, you’ve got something to hide, or you’re just not up with the times.

If you don’t have a social media strategy, get one. Decide how you’ll operate in this space, how it will be resourced, what you’ll do when things don’t go your way (because they won’t, always), what you’ll talk about in these spaces, and how. If you don’t have a participation/engagement strategy for the people who matter to you, get one of those too.

Create & nurture communities



Great communities are built around things like shared ideas, values, passions, goals, philosophies and experiences.

They're egalitarian, respectful, welcoming and open to all. More often than not today, they'll be a hybrid online and offline mix, operate 24 hours a day and slide between the real and virtual worlds, and be led by participants, as well as the organisation that owns and moderates them. In a funding, sociological, political and business environment that is just beginning to tap into the power of community, getting it right in this area is a fundamental.

4

Keep it real

Gone are the days of the stock-photo shot, the made-up quotes and the stiff, formal corporate-style annual report — and for good reason.

Not-for-profits and social causes have so much to offer in a consumer world where authenticity, humanity, transparency and genuine values rule.

Use your staff, parents and children as your public face — not only will your parents, local community and staff love it, they'll attract others just like them. Sure, there are some privacy hurdles to jump through — but they're worth it. Tell real stories about real people, real successes, and real outcomes.

5

Mission, Vision and Values statements that mean nothing to anybody — and that provide no useful purpose outside of the board room. Alienating, academic language that creates a divide between the organisation and the people whose hearts and minds you want to engage. Jargon that strips the humanity out of your every sentence.

It was useful in the 80s and 90s, as the not-for-profits organised and professionalised, but its time is long gone.

Real words, with real meaning that reflect the culture, the values and the real language of an organisation are so much more powerful.

*Ditch the
corporate/
sector speak*

When was the last time you got really excited about screeds of tightly spaced A4 sheets? No matter how good the idea, if you really want to win hearts and minds, you have to think about presenting ideas in a way that moves people, makes them relevant, and is easy to digest.

6 7

*Inspire, excite & engage;
tell better stories*

Maybe it's imagery. An idea or theme that wraps up the things that you are trying to achieve, that will resonate with their own wishes, desires or needs.

Perhaps it's the use of video, graphics, or other tools that cut through information overload and allow you to connect at a heart level, and go beyond the facts and figures.

Whatever it is that allows you to express the things that matter, and your success stories better, find it.

Give people something to connect to



The world is full of people searching for meaning and community in life, in work, and increasingly, in the organisations they interact with.

Values, culture, community, humanity and making a difference have never mattered more. If ever there was a time for not-for-profits to connect back to some of these fundamental ideas (ironically, the things that they were likely founded on) it is now.

Great fan brands aren't built around products and services. They're built around something that unites everybody — an idea, an attitude, a goal or aspiration. Find out what that 'something' is, and then find a way to express it that resonates with everybody.

Break it down into bite sized chunks



We live in a world awash with information, and the flow just never stops.

Twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, it's coming at us.

This consumer generation puts added premium on information that is filtered, sorted, ordered and condensed in a way that makes it easier to process and consume.

Take a tip out of the books of the corporate brands when planning your communications calendar. Make the priorities crystal clear. Only focus on one campaign at a time. Run your promotions for a limited time, across all your channels. Tie them together with a consistent theme or idea not just to make it easier for your audience — but to get more bang for your buck. Think about timing, and what else is going on in peoples' lives.

*Tomorrow is
closer than
you think*

10

The use of data for more engaging and tailored marketing; mobile marketing; location marketing and real time marketing are the next big things. Where are the opportunities for you? Where do they fit? What does it mean to ignore these things?

You won't want to jump on every trend that pops up, but some will fundamentally change the way that business is done, and the way people expect to interact with organisations — across the board. Staying relevant means understanding the way people are living their lives, and what that means for you.

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