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How to market to people who tune out our cacophony of advertising AdChoices



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Advertisers today have a myriad of marketing channels available to them, from traditional print and television media to the expansive reach of social media and the blogosphere. Finding the right mix for product and service communication is a challenge for even the savviest marketing teams.

Perhaps the most difficult challenge is capturing the attention of potential customers who are increasingly turning a deaf ear to the cacophony of media messages competing for their notice.

Clever ideas executed with precision can reach customers where traditional media falls short.

"Nobody reads anymore," laments [West Herford](#), managing director of the Jacksonville, Fla., advertising firm On Ideas. "Media consumption is essentially a passive activity. Many opportunities to build brand and engage potential customers comes with experience-based marketing."

Herford cited the enormously successful guerilla-style marketing promotion the consumer products giant Gillette did in association with the USA Summer Olympic Team's 2012 success.

Teaming with **BBDO** and Klip Collective, Gillette's "Light It Up" [large-scale projections on various downtown Boston buildings](#) of [Tyson Gay](#) running and a giant water-mist screen in Boston Harbor showing swimmer [Ryan Lochte](#) created fantastic buzz and extensive word of mouth/water cooler discussion for days.

"Gillette was immediately able to associate themselves with a high visibility event like the Olympics and create all sorts of peripheral buzz and coverage as a result of this unique event," said Herford. "People crave unique experiences. That is one reason pop-up boutiques and restaurants are so popular. The exclusivity of the event and the ability to tell your friends and let them benefit from your knowledge lends an aura of desirability and good will that transfers to the brand."

Cause based marketing

Cause-based marketing and taking direct action in support of a particular ideal as an organization can be a strong tool in building brand identity and letting potential customers see your brand's values in action, according to Herford.

Pedigree Brand dog food demonstrates solid execution on this front as it is known to support and supply animal shelters and humane societies with its product free of charge. Building relationships with the animal welfare community and showing their strong ties to animal well-being engenders them to customers who hold the same values – namely pet owners. AdChoices

[Matt Ferguson](#), managing partner with [Eric Mower](#) + Associates in Charlotte, N.C., once worked for the creative team at **Walt Disney World** in Orlando, Fla.

"Disney is an organization that knows how to create buzz and excitement without using the media directly in its campaigns," said Ferguson. "During the millennium celebrations, the iconic Spaceship Earth at Epcot was totally transformed and dramatically relit with a giant "2000" to bring in the new century. This style of guerrilla marketing is "affection marketing" — or creating a friendship with the brand."

Ferguson spoke of direct mail as a mechanism that can be effectively used in reaching target audiences.

"Part of reaching through the clutter is the old-fashioned way through the mail," said Ferguson. "People enjoy getting something special, and we used this recently as a way to connect with influential food writers and bloggers on a campaign we were doing for Breyers Ice Cream."

The packages mailed out contained ice cream sundae sample kits along with coupons for the product. There was a specific call to action inside the package to visit a particular website, and close to 40 percent of the hits to that site came from the targeted audience.

Flash mobs

Flash mobs, which are synchronized, large-scale crowd activities at public events, are a fun and often effective non-traditional way to generate enthusiasm around a brand or product.

Ferguson said that in working with Blue Cross Blue Shield of New England, Mower + Associates took advantage of the "Healthy Changes Everything" tagline and had an original song and synchronized dance routine launched at outdoor festivals across the region this past year.

One non-media tool that companies should never overlook in their arsenal of reaching new customers is satisfying and delighting current ones. The old adage about a dissatisfied customer telling 10 people about her experience when a satisfied customer tells only one is as true today as it ever was.

There is perhaps no better marketing tool than a dynamite product with a loyal customer base.

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