

The Five Essential “E’s” to Experiential Marketing

Featuring:

Brad Back
SVP, Group Management Director
361° Experiential

Dan Bowens
SVP, Executive Creative Director
361° Experiential

DAN: In today’s podcast, we’re going to talk about experiential marketing. This is Dan Bowens, SVP, Executive Creative Director from 361° Experiential.

BRAD: And I’m Brad Back, Senior Vice President and Management Director of 361° Experiential. We’re pleased to be able to talk with you today. In times like these, you need the five E’s more than ever. And we’ll talk about what those five E’s are over the course of the next five to ten minutes.

I was in a presentation yesterday and Tony Robbins said something that I thought was very striking and pertinent to the world of experiential marketing. If you tell someone something and all they do is listen to it, less than ten percent of the people will understand and remember what you said. If you write it down, 20 to 50 percent may remember what it was that you said. But if you talk to them and engage with them and people actually do what you’re talking about, 80 percent or more will get what your message is. And that’s exactly what experiential marketing is.

We know that in this tough environment smart marketers have been forced to reassess their advertising and promotional budgets. A survey that was done by the AAAA’s last year showed that 77 percent of marketers planned to reduce their advertising campaign budgets specifically in the media arena in 2009. Yet those same advertisers are under tremendous pressure to continue to grow market share while strengthening their bottom line results and still quantitatively build the brand. And that’s where experiential marketing comes in.

Experiential marketing is a discipline that is talked about a lot and at 361° Experiential we've been very fortunate in our ability to strategize and implement experiential marketing programs for many of our clients in sports sponsorship event mobile tours, sampling arenas, entertainment areas.

However it's still a misunderstood discipline. For most it offers so much more than a chance for a simple branding, for simple sampling by traditional brand ambassadors. That's what most people think experiential marketing is, very, very tactical. Yet when utilized strategically and yes experiential marketing is more strategic than most realize, can increasingly build and differentiate brand success, engage meaningfully with consumers. And it can also be significantly more cost efficient than traditional advertising and promotional mediums. In conjunction with an integrated marketing plan experiential marketing can make more sense than ever in these recessionary times. And many of those advertisers that are reallocating their budgets are funneling more dollars we're finding, we're seeing in experiential marketing.

So given this environment, given how everyone is watching their pennies. Making sure that their return on investment or their return on ideas is as significant as possible our team has identified what we call the five E's. The five important essentials to experiential success. And Dan's going to start to talk to you about them right now.

DAN: Thanks Brad. These five E's are a way for us to simplify experiential marketing to cover some of the most key elements that we think drive the success of any program.

And our first E starts out with the experience.

This is what experiential marketing is all about and is the key differentiator from any other element in the marketing mix. Through relevant live involvement marketing, this brings the voice, the sound, the personality and the taste of the brand to life. Make the brand the experience. Be true to what your brand represents in every aspect of your experiential delivery. Remember that your brand is who it partners with. Bring emotion to your brand and the brand closer to the consumer's heart.

Begin a dialogue between brand and consumer. Any brand can have a rational relationship with the consumer only the best have a lasting emotional relationship with the consumer.

Our second E is engage. Engage your audience. Break out of the norm. Be different. Do something different, say something different. Something that consumers have never heard before. When Kraft South Beach Diet frozen entrees were being introduced in key markets, 361 created a glass enclosed mobile tour beach scene complete with sand, palm trees, tan guys and gals and drove this warm weather dream into cold weather markets like Chicago during the worst winter months. We wanted to show that life is better on the beach and we did. Engaging thousands of freezing individuals who were walking by with that idea of enjoying warm weather, the beach and South Beach Diet foods.

The third E is economize the experiential solution. One of the many strong aspects of experiential marketing is the opportunity to create programs at any scale. Build them up or down, recognizing at any level we look to make everything as efficient as possible. The structure, the vehicle and the schedule to receive the greatest bang for your buck.

The fourth E is evangelizing. Evangelize your audience. This is the greatest opportunity that experiential marketing offers. Give your audience a unique and interesting experience to talk about so that they will tell a friend, a coworker, a relative.

You can insight perception and behavioral changes through experiential marketing. We do it every day for our clients. Develop the emotional connection and the tremendous power word of mouth that results from it.

Our final E is evaluate. Jack Meyers.com ,which is an online research firm, has reported that while traditional advertising has increased 70 percent in the last decade, it hasn't kept up with overall marketing budgets which have jumped 94 percent. Increased attention to experiential marketing and other marketing components such as promotion, retail incentives, couponing, etc. all that can be more greatly tied to analytics are so critical in today's environment and so achievable.

Measure the ROI, the return on the idea. Don't let anyone tell you that experiential marketing cannot be measured. It can be in today's environment, it must be.

And now just to summarize our five E's. One experience, experience the brand. Two is engage, engage your audience. Three is economize, economize the experiential solution. Four is evangelize, evangelize your audience. And five is evaluate, evaluation is critical in this environment.

And now I'll kick it back over to Brad.

BRAD: It's interesting because most marketing budget holders view experiential marketing as a more affective part of their marketing mix than ever before. Seventy-five percent of marketers surveyed said that they would be increasing spending on experiential marketing in 2009. Of those planning an increase 12 percent planned on spending between 11 percent and 25 percent more than in previous years, and almost one in ten said that they would increase their, spending in the experiential arena by over 25 percent.

So we know that major blue chip advertisers are invested in and looking for best in class experiential marketing programs. And again best in class is not just tactical. What makes an experiential program best in class is as much strategy than anything else. And we believe that experiential can even provide a better return on investment than other marketing activities.

Hope this has informed you just a bit. Thanks.