MOTIVATION | LEADERSHIP | INDUSTRY | PROMOTION | PROSPECTING

Humor opens hearts

Laughter is the best marketing so find your sense of humor. It pays.

by **Karen Justice**

1786 words | 7 pages

It overcomes resistance.

The media's constant blitz of negativity is exhausting. A lot of people let themselves get so frazzled they now have a Stephen King movie whirring away inside their heads.

We need to be good news merchants. Happy attracts. It's magnetic. People love to be around cheerful people. Humor is uplifting. It's an instant vacation.

The New York Times reported that anywhere the eye can see it is likely to see an ad. Yankelovich, a market research firm estimates that a person living in a city is subjected to 5000 sales pitches a day. We are dealing with sensory overload.

Inching along in morning traffic, streams of commercials mingle with the buzz of static crackling from our radio. Billboards loom over neon and gaudy sale signs plastered on store fronts. Walls bordering construction sites become streams of noisy ads and posters. A bus careening by is covered in marketing messages and glaring advertisements. Trucks and cars in neighboring lanes sport magnetic signs, business slogans and contact information. Pulling in for gas, we ignore the business pitches plastered on every viable inch of the pumping station. Using the opportunity we dash into the convenience store to grab a quick generic coffee. We're blind to labels, headers, beer posters and the slogan on the cashier's shirt.

Striding into our office we grab our messages and mail, quickly tossing the obvious ads. Turning on our brand name computer we check our inbox deleting the spam – ads for Viagra, pleas from membership sites, catalogue solicitations, fake designer watches, porn site promotions, unsolicited medical advice, easy profit ventures, penis enhancement products, work at home and network marketing pitches.

As our day continues we find more spam on our cell phone, we encounter Supermarket eggs stamped with the names of CBS television shows. We buy our groceries and check the labels for our favorite bottle of wine. Finally plopping down in front of the television we click through our program choices. As we surf we are no longer just subject to a stream of advertisements but find that name brand items are not only in commercials but now also appear within TV shows and Movies – a trend know as product placement.

Before dragging ourselves off to the bedroom we make a last check of our personal email inboxes.

How much tolerance will we have for your opportunity pitch?

But there is hope. Savvy marketers are onto a new trend.

> ***The New York Times reported that some advertising executives say, as long as advertising is entertaining, people do not necessarily mind the intrusion – and may even welcome it.***

A major advertising executive was quoted as saying, “If you do it the right way you actually win points.”

Entrepreneur Magazine repeatedly comments on the positive use of humor in advertising. The following are excerpts from a few of their articles:

Add It Up: *Advertising costs are high, and consumer attention spans low. The use of humor and its delivery does a very good job of driving home the main point.*

Funny Business: *Humor is a profitable tool.*

Audacious Advertising: *In your face marketing could be the best way to reach your prospects. Use humor to appeal to your customers emotions.*

Cracking Wise: *A sense of humor is a tremendous asset to any dealmaker. There is no better lubricant then humor.*

Perfect Forum: *If you take yourself too seriously you get stressed out but humor lightens things up.*

Top Ten Marketing Strategies: *It can pay to have a sense of humor about your business.*

Marketing Smarts: *OK your new advertising looks great. But how will you ensure it's success? A dash of humor and a pinch of zany.*

Sock It To Them: *Comparative advertising is happily tolerated, even enjoyed by audiences – just so long as it's dished up with a healthy dose of humor.*

Taking Stock: *Humor helps audiences understand and remember the information.*

Will Customers Buy It: *Humor is good medicine; it could also be the best way to close a sale.*

I could go on - but I'm sure you get the idea. But humor isn't just a powerful tool in your advertising campaigns. It works wonders for effective follow up with team members. Successful marketers have long understood that a card saying congratulations, Happy Birthday or Hang in There, acknowledges a persons value.

Acknowledgment of any form in Network marketing is motivational. The member feels noticed and supported - part of a team. Acknowledgment is bonding and creates loyalty.

Amway is a good example of a company that understands the value of bonding members to a sense of community. Acknowledgment is a cornerstone of their success. Companies like Mary Kay thrive on it. Ladies work diligently to show off a jacket full of achievement pins at national rallies. Businesses that acknowledge a customers importance to them, keep them and thrive. Gratitude is appreciated and it is reciprocated.

I've worked successfully with humor for many years. I've built large thriving organizations for myself and consulted in the development of many others.

I, like a lot of people, had an extremely negative concept of network marketing before becoming involved. I had been inundated by the latest greatest networking get rich quick schemes and had endured would be business builders who talked enough to get their tongues suntanned. It was dark comedy.

I'm a cartoonist. I was an artist and successful entrepreneur before ever becoming involved with referral based marketing. My first foray into the networking arena was based on a genuine love for a product. I was very successful. I didn't know anything about networking- I hadn't read the "How To" books. I applied entrepreneurial principles and ran my business like a business.

I used humor strategically and taught my team to just be themselves – to make conversational presentations. I put one of my cartoons on a recruiting CD and it pulled magically. We all had a lot of fun and I beat all records to the top of the company's compensation plan – I did in it 3 month. Sidelines wanted to know how. I became a trainer for the company, created The Justice System audios and workbook. **I taught people how to have fun.** I received the Directors' award which was presented to the distributor making the greatest overall positive contribution to the company's growth.

I had debunked the falsehoods and platitudes perpetrated by a lot of Network Marketing trainers.

I quickly saw you've got to step into the average person's shoes

and think inside their box before you can ever get them to think outside of it. Lightening things up takes focus off the everyday drama and let's us start to appreciate life's comedy.

I've created a generic e card line specifically for use in Direct and Network marketing. It's tied to my training site and designed to be a successful prospecting tool as well as being an effective part of my follow up techniques. As I monitor feed back I've discovered something interesting. A little humor not only adds entertainment to projects but also has served to dramatically uplift team spirit. Prospects have more favorable responses so builders feel more positive about their participation. The idea of prospecting becomes less stressful. My slogan has become ***"Laughter is An Instant Vacation".***

The allure of a Network Marketing opportunity is a phenomenon known as "residual income"- income that continues to flow in long after the work performed to generate it is done. This is what creates financial and time freedom for you. It's payment for the residual impact your Networking continues to have on other's lives. But that underlines a critical point -

Your income is truly residual only when your impact has been residual enough to create commitment.

Regular purchases are what make stable residual income a reality. Otherwise you just keep signing... signing... signing to stay ahead of your dropout rate.

How do you create commitment? By doing responsible follow up. By coaching your new distributors - connecting them to you, your group, your company and to your products. By getting them to attend conference calls so they feel part of something. By plugging them into successful systems. By noting and acknowledging their successes.

Modern Networking offers powerful tools. Internet marketing and CDs sent through direct mail can create rapid expansion. The key is that this type of Direct marketing is not Network Marketing. If you use Direct marketing you quickly have to apply Network Marketing principles to your recruits. You need to send out follow up emails, send a cute thank you card, some testimonials or make a caring call. Networking is not hit and run. *Your goal is to build a strong referral base.*

Some rationalize shoddy sponsoring by saying they're only looking for self-starters and go-getters. This type of thinking is naive. When I've analyzed many down lines, I see that a lot of the top builders were people who started slow and needed nurturing.

The majority of people don't sign up with the idea of becoming real business builders: They just want to buy their products at wholesale.

Follow up can change that. Show them you're interested in their success. Tell them that you build your business with testimonials and want to hear theirs as soon as they have one. – that you're excitedly waiting. Then send another thank you e card and acknowledge their achievement.

> ***Recruiting and follow up are both essential actions and selective humor can be used effectively in both.***

A note of caution is that some humor is offensive. The vast majority of distributors in the networking field are woman. Men like getting cards and gifts but women love it. My cartoons deal with situations they can relate too. That's an important key in effective promotion.

Laughter is the best marketing so find your sense of humor. It pays.

Karen Justice is a cartoonist, a successful entrepreneur and has been one of the top earners in the Network Marketing arena. Her alter ego is a hormonally altered chicken with an attitude, who by the way is not aging gracefully. Karen is the author of *Barracuda In Bunny Slippers* and is a popular trainer and speaker. She's also the creator of www.myfreebirdclub.com – an e card and training site for the Direct and Network Marketing industry.