

BASIC
ELEMENTS

INTERNAL
ELEMENTS

NOBLE
PURSUITS

INERT
FUNDAMENTALS

Se

Setting
Expectations

Bt

Building Trust

Sr

Marketing
as Service

Sc

Showing
Courage

P

Planning

O

Customer

Ss

Customer

Pb

Personal
Branding

R

Reputation

Li

Listening

The **CMO'S**

Periodic Table

A RENEGADE'S GUIDE TO MARKETING

Learn the science (*and art*)

of marketing from

64 THOUGHT LEADERS

Cy

Consistency

C

Culture

S

Living the
Brand

Sp

Sharing
Passion

Np

New Products

E

Empowerment

Sm

Social Media
Success

Cm

Crisis
Management

Gv

Going
Viral

So

Social
Purpose

Ai

Always
Innovating

Drew Neisser

Founder & CEO, Renegade LLC

Foreword by

Don Peppers

Bestselling business author

Praise for
The CMO's Periodic Table

"*The CMO's Periodic Table* is a remarkable collection of advice and ideas from dozens of senior executives. It's a Ph.D. in marketing science, all in one book."

Jay Baer, President of *Convince & Convert* and
New York Times best-selling author of *Youtility*

"Drew is a marketing guru. His interview questions leave no ground uncovered, making you feel as if you're getting crucial insider knowledge from these CMOs. You'll want to keep this book on your desk so you can refer to its content time and again, applying it to your own marketing goals and challenges."

Robin Landa, Distinguished Professor of Design,
Kean University, author of *Graphic Design Solutions, 5th edition*

"Whether you're an entrepreneur or an executive at a Fortune 500 company, Neisser's book is an invaluable guide to the essential elements of marketing with riveting insights from sixty-four of the best and brightest."

Bryan Eisenberg, entrepreneur and
New York Times best-selling co-author of *Call to Action*

"I have been reading Drew's blog for years and found *The CMO's Periodic Table* to be a really useful progression, rich with insights for marketing students and professionals alike. Although all of the interviews are thought provoking, I particularly recommend the element called Marketing as Service, which aligns perfectly with my Marketing with Meaning philosophy!"

Bob Gilbreath, best-selling author of
The Next Evolution of Marketing

"Drew provides invaluable lessons from the CMOs and marketers on the front lines to help you create a disruptive company...or prevent your company from being one that perishes."

Ted Rubin, co-author of *Return on Relationship*

“Along with being written by an exceptional marketing thinker and practitioner, *The CMO’s Periodic Table* is an artfully conceived goldmine of marketing wisdom. Drew distills practical guidance from his illustrious interviewees on the very topics—strategy, metrics, data, customer-centricity, innovation, and more—that are essential to every modern marketer.”

**David Rogers, faculty at Columbia Business School
and author of *The Digital Transformation Playbook***

“*The CMO’s Periodic Table* opens with a bang and remains a riveting read throughout, thanks to its clever organizational structure and deeply insightful interviews. Drew has gathered an amazing collection of professionals, many of whom share the passion and perseverance that it takes to be successful in any field, especially marketing.”

**Linda Kaplan Thaler, Chairman of Publicis New York, best-selling author,
with Robin Koval, of *The Power of Nice* and *Grit to Great***

“This book, with its selection of interviews from marketing, advertising, and media communication experts, is an excellent complement to any undergraduate or graduate marketing course. Students are always eager for advice from practitioners. The interviews cover a wide range of topics that anyone interested in the discipline of marketing needs to understand to excel in the marketplace.”

Martha Reeves, Professor of Marketing, Duke University

“Students and marketing executives won’t find a better way to learn about cutting-edge marketing than from those who have cracked the code. Drew Neisser has skillfully assembled the combined wisdom of sixty-four CMOs. Insights gained from the book will help executives up their game and students think like a seasoned exec.”

**C. Samuel Craig, Professor of Marketing,
Stern School of Business, co-author of *Global Marketing Strategy***

“Having been a CMO and now an advisor to many, I believe *The CMO’s Periodic Table* is a must-have resource for anyone interested in decoding the complexities of marketing. The thought leaders gathered in this book are rich with insights that can save you innumerable missteps whether you’re just starting your career or are a veteran looking to sharpen your chops.”

**Paul Dunay, Financial Services Marketing Leader at PwC,
best-selling author of *Facebook Marketing for Dummies***

“Every C-Suite executive has to deliver success—and this book gives CMOs the formula.”

**Jeffrey Hayzlett, primetime TV & radio host, keynote speaker,
best-selling author and Global Business Celebrity**

“*The CMO’s Periodic Table* is like going to the best marketing buffet you could imagine. Each chapter is a delectable morsel of insightful commentary from some of the tastiest ‘chefs’ in the biz. Read it from cover to cover and you’ll be stuffed with insights you’ll be able to apply to just about any marketing challenge on your plate.”

Joel Comm, *New York Times* best-selling author of *Twitter Power*

“*The CMO’s Periodic Table* is a masterful collection of insights thoughtfully arranged for marketers of all vintages. As a fellow writer, I really appreciate Drew’s deft writing style and how he draws out the wisdom of his sixty-four marketing connoisseurs. It is definitely worth reading AND sharing.”

Bryan Kramer, CEO of PureMatter, best-selling author of *Shareology*

BASIC ELEMENTS	INTERNAL ELEMENTS				NOBLE PURSUITS	INERT FUNDAMENTALS
Se Setting Expectations	Bt Building Trust				Sr Marketing as Service	Sc Showing Courage
P Planning	O Organizing	TRANSITIONAL TRENDS	VOLATILE FACTORS	SILICON RALLY	Ss Social Customer Service	Pb Personal Branding
R Research	Ro Reorganizing	Ma Marketing Automation	Ap Agency as Partner	Cr CRM	Pc Pure Creativity	Li Listening
S Strategy	Ga Global Agendas	Bb B2B Content Marketing	Ca Changing Agencies	Md Mobilizing Digital	Cc Customer Centricity	L Learning
B Branding	Re Retooling	Bc B2C Content Marketing	Rp Retail Partners	Im Integrating Mobile	Bu Building Community	Ev Evolving
Rb Rebranding	Lc Leading Change	Ug User-Generated Content	Rt Risk-Taking	Ee Email Efficacy	Gg Going Green	Em Empathizing
M Measure	C Cohesion	In Influencer Marketing	Bd Befriending Data	Rm Real-Time Marketing	F Foundations	N Networking
Me Metrics	Cs Consultative Selling	Gm Grassroots Marketing	Mm Media Mixing	Oo Online Optimization	Sd Sustainable Design	Pn Power Networking
Cy Consistency	Cu Culture	St Storytelling	Tb Tiny Budgets	We Web Experience	Lb Living the Brand	Sp Sharing Passion
Np New Products	E Empowerment	Sm Social Media Success	Cm Crisis Management	Gv Going Viral	So Social Purpose	Ai Always Innovating

The
CMO'S
PERIODIC TABLE

A Renegade's Guide to Marketing

Drew Neisser

Founder and CEO, Renegade LLC

THE CMO'S PERIODIC TABLE

A Renegade's Guide to Marketing

Drew Neisser

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*To Carl Neisser, my father, best man
and unicameral Board of Directors.*

*To my friend Pete Krainik,
founder of The CMO Club,
home of the best CMO conversations.*

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Foreword

Better Interviews, Better Learning

The CMO's Periodic Table serves up the best, most comprehensive, and most up-to-date lessons the new or seasoned marketing professional can find in one place. Drew Neisser has pulled off this admirable feat by tapping the minds of the most accomplished marketing executives working today. In the pages ahead, Drew asks his most distinguished peers pointed questions informed by his own exemplary career, and persists until reaching one or more invaluable conclusions. He also adds his own breakthrough insights—the same ones that have fueled two decades of success at his NYC-based agency, Renegade LLC.

Reading and pondering these sixty-four one-to-one interviews is to absorb the hard-won wisdom of a select group of very smart marketing practitioners—men and women with genuinely real, market-tested ideas, all of whom have their own reputational skin in the game.

Full disclosure: Drew and I have a history. More than twenty years ago we worked together at the astonishingly creative ad agency Chiat/Day. It was there that I first came in contact with Drew's astronomically high standards when it comes to marketing and advertising, which you'll get to see on display in every chapter of *The CMO'S Periodic Table*.

The subjects of these interviews manage the marketing processes at companies selling products and services ranging from airlines to credit lines, and from the groceries to the Grammys. With each one of these very different perspectives you'll be able to derive an interesting or useful lesson to apply to your own business, whatever that may be.

How does Allstate maintain its "You're in good hands" slogan for more than fifty years? What did Dunkin' Donuts achieve by teaming with Zynga? Why does American Express offer some of the most helpful small-business content marketing anywhere, and make it available even to non-AmEx customers? All is revealed inside. You'll hear the former CMO of AXA Equitable and Vonage, Barbara Goodstein, talk frankly about the whys and hows of changing agencies, freely admitting, "The advertising agency

is always at the short end of the straw.” Sprint’s Doug Duvall will recall his stint as communications director at Freddie Mac, when he had to manage through the crisis created by the suicide of the company’s CFO.

These are just a few of the truly fascinating glimpses of life in the CMO lane. Reading *The CMO’s Periodic Table*, in fact, feels a bit like browsing through the transcript of a reality TV show starring top CMOs from around the world.

Perhaps, however, because of my own history with Drew at Chiat/Day, some of my favorite stories within these pages come from the CMOs who are prone to push the envelope a little further, taking extraordinary risks in order to make extraordinary gains—as Drew does today at Renegade. At Chiat/Day we used to chuckle to ourselves that you knew it was a good meeting if your presentation made the blood drain from the client’s face. Well, there are more than a few blood-draining moments in this book that are a thrill to read as well as very instructive.

For example, when Jack in the Box’s CMO Terri Funk Graham launched a breakthrough campaign based on having the brand’s smiley-faced Jack character run down by a bus. And at SAP, the mission of the innovation team managed by CMO Jonathan Becher was “to try new things, break rules, make people uncomfortable.”

Or consider the implication when Tesco’s CEO Sir Terry Leahy tells us about launching his company’s groundbreaking Club Card loyalty program more than twenty years ago, long before he became either a CEO or a “Sir.” Virtually all grocery chains have loyalty programs now, of course, but Tesco’s was really the pioneer in basing such a program entirely on customer data. Launching it meant wagering some 25 percent of the firm’s profits on its success. It’s not hard to picture the blood draining from the boss’s face as Sir Terry pitched the great idea.

If the Papa John’s promise is “Better ingredients. Better pizza” (see Element P, for Planning, within), then Drew Neisser’s promise with *The CMO’s Periodic Table* is “Better interviews. Better learning.”

And it’s a promise he delivers on.

—Don Peppers, Founding Partner of Peppers & Rogers Group



Introduction

WHAT IS A RENEGADE MARKETER?

I'm not going to presume to give a “sound byte” answer to that question in this short introduction. It's taken me three and a half decades in the trenches of advertising and marketing to form the understanding of Renegade-hood that today guides the work my team and I do at Renegade, LLC.

The fact is that it just can't be boiled down to a sentence, or a paragraph, or even a few pages. It's bigger than that. It would take a whole separate book of its own. (Stay tuned, I'm working on that one right now.)

As far as this book goes, I can promise that after you've read and absorbed these sixty-four targeted interviews with the brightest brains in marketing today, from “living legend” Fortune 100 CMOs to rule-book-torching whiz kids at nimble, disruptive startups, you'll have a strong foundation for understanding how Renegade marketers think—and more importantly, how they act. (And, of course, you'll have a plethora of brilliant new ideas you can apply right away to supercharge your own career.)

This isn't to say that everyone I had the privilege of interviewing for this book would necessarily self-identify as a Renegade. But the work they do and the energy they exude caught my eye so powerfully that I

knew I had to sit down with them, hit the “record” button, and get them to talk about what drives their day-in-day-out excellence.

And if there’s one thing in the marketing world I’ve always been inexorably drawn to, it’s Renegade thinking. In light of that, I daresay it’s not a coincidence that I was hell-bent on interviewing these specific sixty-four luminaries. The work these marketers do resonates—big time—with what matters most to me and to my company. Whatever your core marketing values are, I’m confident these interviews will resonate similarly with you.

It’s taken me over five years to track down the folks you’ll meet shortly and get them to pry open their vaults of priceless marketing know-how. I shudder just a little to think of all the trial-and-error I could have bypassed with a resource like this at the beginning of my career...heck, at every stage of my career. The ability to instantly reference the pithy-yet-substantive advice of the world’s best marketers on today’s and tomorrow’s most critical marketing competencies is practically an unfair advantage.

If only marketing were a science. We could memorize a bunch of formulas, gather some data, apply category variables, get a few grad students to help with the mixing and measuring, and presto—we’d have a failure-proof, go-to-market plan that builds the brand, generates serious sales, and skyrockets our reputation. Next stop: Nobel Prize. (Or at least a CLIO or a CMO Club Award.)

Alas, reality begs to differ. For one, there’s that whole pesky (by which I mean, awesome) element of successful marketing that is at best a distant cousin of science: Art. With all due respect to the great physicists, chemists, and biologists who have made our modern lives possible, if marketing were as objective and predictable as those fields we would lose the creativity that defines the best campaigns.

And now we find ourselves in the era of big data, programmatic media buying, search engine optimization, social platforms, CRM, marketing automation, and (this space reserved for the next hot buzzword). The rate at which our available tools and metrics are changing defies belief, and today’s game-changing, must-use software or widget is tomorrow’s “remember when?” punchline.

So, a detailed formula for success that will be repeatable for decades to come? Forget about it. Just staying current with the changes and the snowballing complexity of it all is practically a full-time job.

Here's the good news: Marketing does share some important traits with the sciences. And they're traits we marketers can leverage to create better work, faster. There's one such trait I'm excited to focus on in this book.

It emerged, as I conducted more interviews, that effective marketing is like a complex molecule, composed of common "elements" that bond together in a logical, inevitable way. Some elements are universal and timeless—things like leadership, customer-centricity, courage, and innovation. Others are not exactly household names, though they're no less important to the "molecule" performing its unique and vital function.

With each interview it grew clearer that the elements were interrelated and begging to be categorized. It was a short hop from there to start thinking in terms of this Periodic Table. And so with a nod to Russian chemist Dmitri Mendeleev, who in 1869 created the earliest version of the table we all studied in high school chemistry, I set out to do the same with the elements of marketing.

The table I offer you now may or may not do justice to Mendeleev's astonishingly logical arrangement, but I do promise you this: When you have a firm grasp of these sixty-four elements, it's as certain as the attraction between a proton and an electron that you will generate state-of-the-art value for your company and your customers.

You can read this book front-to-back, consuming the interviews in order. Believe it or not, there is a method to the madness herein. But you can also jump straight to the elements that interest you most, whether they're urgent issues you need help with right away or just something you've always wanted to know more about. I don't know any great marketers who approach learning (or anything else) in a totally linear fashion, and accordingly this book is designed to be conducive to jumping around.

As you'll see when you immerse yourself in these conversations, the interviewees and I were ourselves prone to a little jumping around—both only when we stumbled upon a truly exciting and valuable sidetrack from

the primary topic. There are so many overlaps in this business, and no element of marketing can be tied up with a neat ribbon—especially as the purview of marketers continues to expand into areas like customer experience and product development.

However you choose to process this material, I urge you to pause after each interview and carefully consider how its content might be applied to your marketing goals and challenges. Perhaps imagine the subject of the interview you're reading will be calling you in twenty-four hours expecting an outline of your action plan based on their advice.

The most essential characteristic of a marketing Renegade is a voracious hunger for new perspectives and ideas. Without this, there's no escaping business as usual. *The CMO's Periodic Table* is a record of my ongoing (and never-ending) attempt to satiate that hunger within myself. If I've done my job, it will help you do the same.

One last note: Marketing is a dynamic industry, and these interviews span the better part of the past five years. As such, some of the marketers you're about to hear from no longer work at the companies they did when I interviewed them. In such cases, the chapter titles typically identify the subject with his or her former company—the one where they performed the work that caught my interest in the first place.

May the insights and wisdom these sixty-four visionaries so generously share give you as many “Eureka!” moments in your marketing laboratory as they've given me.

Drew Neisser
September 2015

IV. Volatile Factors

If you're far enough along in your career to have found this book, you already know that marketing isn't for the faint of heart. We can apply all our smarts and experience to predict outcomes and anticipate surprises, but sometimes we just need to throw it all into the pot and stir it up.

Sometimes a million-dollar breakthrough bubbles to the surface, and sometimes...the whole thing goes boom. Hope you remembered to wear your safety goggles.

This is the volatility inherent in marketing. This is how we play with fire (or, if you prefer, Pop Rocks and Coke). And let's be honest, this is a big part of what makes our jobs so much fun. No, there's nothing fun about your campaign blowing up in your face. But once you've tasted the intense satisfaction of one of your big "mad scientist" bets paying off, you know it's a risk worth running.

And there's a big upside: Like any risk, this one can be mitigated. How? Step one is identifying the Volatile Factors that are part of modern marketing. Identifying the elements that have high potential to precipitate trouble makes you much more able to handle them like a pro and nip disasters in the bud. Step two is listening to what today's most intrepid and level-headed marketing leaders have to say about turning the elements' volatility from a cause for fear into a competitive advantage.

That's what this section of the Periodic Table is about. Get set to make the acquaintance of eight folks who don't waste time in their comfort zones, nor do

Ap
Agency
as Partner

Ca
Changing
Agencies

Rp
Retail
Partners

Rt
Risk-Taking

Bd
Befriending
Data

Mm
Media Mixing

Tb
Tiny Budgets

Cm
Crisis
Management

they succumb to panic when things start to get hairy. These are men and women who are energized and inspired by Volatile Factors, as we all should be.

These natural leaders don't shrink from the challenges presented by tiny budgets, retailer relationships, sharing creative control with agencies, and crisis management. They know that change is natural and good in marketing, and it's also inevitable despite the potential disruption. To see this brought to life, look no further than this section's no-holds-barred conversation with Barbara Goodstein on the whys and hows of changing agencies, a quintessentially volatile reality of our business.

Perhaps the embodiment of Volatile Factors is the topic that closes this section, crisis management. Doug Duvall's cool head and deep, quiet confidence in the face of potentially brand-destroying chaos is something that we should all aspire to, no matter how big the crises we face day-to-day. And he's very forthcoming with his methods in our interview.

But if you're not staring down a crisis right now, please don't skip to the end of the section. Because then you'll miss my conversation with Terri Funk Graham, longtime CMO of Jack in the Box, who faced down a branding nightmare and won...with the vital help of an agency partner. Nor should you skip the insights of Julie Garlikov who truly did more marketing with less money at Torani, and shares how this elusive goal is possible for all of us.

Of course, there are more volatile factors than just these eight. But the mindsets and transferrable techniques you're about to discover will equip you to manage them all with the poise a CMO needs for success.



A Pairing as Perfect as Burgers and Fries

“Approval by committee is the death of a campaign.”

Terri Funk Graham

Jack in the Box

For most CMOs, sharing creative control with outside agencies requires putting ego aside for the sake of the best final outcome...not to mention shouldering a share of the risk should the chosen agency miss the target. Often, it's a less-than-appealing proposition.

But a big gamble was practically required when, over two decades ago, fast food chain Jack in the Box was facing a potential branding apocalypse in the wake of a nationally publicized E. coli outbreak. Looking to turn things around, the marketing team, along with the help of creative director Dick Sittig, who spun out of Chiat/Day into his own agency (Secret Weapon Marketing), brought back the beloved smiley-faced “Jack” character—who had been “killed off” in the 1980s.

Sparking a renewed engagement between customers and the brand, the “Jack” campaign endured for nearly two decades, much of that under then helm of CMO Terri Funk Graham, whose partnership with Dick Sittig

remains a model for highly productive client/agency collaborations. Here's how they did it.

Can you describe how the Jack Campaign came about?

Well, it came out of the E. coli crisis back in 1995. The reality was the company needed to do something to revitalize the brand and make the brand relevant again in the marketplace. So it came from a crisis. When you're in a situation like that, you're willing to put a lot more on the line. I think it actually drove the ability to take more risks.

How did the campaign launch?

The very first spot had some controversy around it because it showed Jack coming back. He'd had plastic surgery and he blew up the boardroom, because the folks from the boardroom are the ones who blew him up in the '80s. So Jack reintroduced himself in the marketplace as coming back, better than before, and he was going to be a big advocate for the consumers.

What was Dick Sittig's role?

Dick was really the creative mastermind behind the Jack campaign. We constantly challenged him to keep Jack relevant, and because he used this sense of humor that was a bit unconventional and irreverent, he kept rising to the occasion. Of course, he's Jack's voice in the ads. He had done the voice for the initial pitch, and then we hired an actor to do it for the ads. But there was this gradual realization that everyone liked Dick's voice more, so that's what we ended up sticking with.

What does it take to keep a campaign like this together for so long?

One is that I was always willing to take a risk and be unapologetic about who we were. Dick Sittig would present things that would make us feel uncomfortable. But we knew that it wasn't going to hurt the brand as

long as we were true to who we were. I am not a believer in dealing with any sort of pretesting of advertising, and we never did anything of that nature. One key reason I don't like to pretest is that we live in a politically correct world where you're always guaranteed to upset someone, which can hold you back from developing great creative work. I also think that approval by committee is the death of a campaign. You end up with mediocre work that way. Dick and I truly trusted and respected each other in our work, and we would constantly challenge each other to keep it relevant.

Were there any other factors instrumental to this relationship?

The account director at Secret Weapon Marketing—Joanne O'Brien—was a critical, integrated part of my leadership team. Joanne and her team spent two or three days every week at headquarters.

What do you think were some of your most risky efforts?

Running Jack over...that was a trying moment. We were essentially taking the biggest brand equity that the company had, Jack, and putting him on the line to see if people cared. Because if they didn't care that he got hit by a bus, we were going to be in trouble. So we took a chance and introduced "Jack Gets Hit by a Bus" in 2009. It proved to be quite a success.

How did you develop that campaign?

We only showed the ad one time and it was on the Super Bowl. And then everything went digital and social from there. That was our way of stepping into the whole social media arena. So all of a sudden it got millions of views on YouTube, and it was talked about all over the place. We had amazing press and impressions on that. We had people sending cards, teddy bears, and flowers for Jack's recovery. Then we created a storyline. Multiple ads followed up that talked about how he was doing. It became a campaign within a campaign.

*So what about the hallucinating kid who sees Jack on his dashboard?
That must have stirred things up.*

Yes it did. We really wanted to focus on selling our 99-cent tacos. There is a real following to those tacos. Young people, after they've gone to the clubs, tend to head to Jack's for their tacos. So we played off of that, if you will. We had a young guy in a van come up and he wanted to order as many as 30 tacos. Needless to say, that got quite a bit of attention.

You took a rather unique approach to handling the protestors, right?

Well, that's true. We had heard that these protestors and media were going to show up at our corporate headquarters. At that time, we had grass all around the building so that afternoon I suggested we turn on the sprinklers! I thought it was a good way of stalling their activities and sure enough, after we became a "water park" no more protestors showed up the rest of the week.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *If you are lucky enough to find a creative partner that truly understands your brand AND is capable of producing advertising that cuts through year after year, stick with them.*
- *Treat your agency as a critical strategic partner because that is what feeds truly great creative work.*
- *Challenge your agency to challenge you. If you don't ask for it, you'll only see the safe stuff.*

Further reading:

David Ogilvy, *Ogilvy on Advertising*



Reviewing the Review Process

“If the relationship isn’t working, there are many, many agencies out there and it’s in your best interest to make a switch, as opposed to tolerating underperformance.”

Barbara Goodstein
Tiger 21 Holdings

If you’re reading this book in a linear progression, you just heard from Terri Funk Graham about the intricacies of working with an outside agency. (If you’re not, be sure to check out Terri’s interview immediately preceding this one.) In any case, you must understand that forging a strong, profitable relationship with an outside agency takes significant time and effort invested from all sides.

So changing agencies, thereby starting the whole process over again from the beginning, is not something a marketing executive can take lightly. To understand why such a change can become imperative and how to get the most out of the process, I reached out to Barbara Goodstein. Currently the CEO of Tiger 21 Holdings, Barbara led agency reviews during her recent tenure as CMO of Vonage and before that as CMO of AXA Equitable.

You've initiated agency reviews a couple of times. What are top reasons for needing to change agencies?

In the case of AXA, we didn't have a full-service advertising agency. We had a small promotional firm that was doing brochures and sales information, but they were never doing a complete positioning and they didn't take us through a full process to understand what we were trying to accomplish. So, I upgraded the whole process by bringing in a very sophisticated agency with loads of creative talent.

So this was not about replacing as much as it was upgrading, right?

I identified that there was an upside opportunity if we improved the quality of the creative and the advertising. So nobody said, "We need to bring in an advertising agency." I just said, "Oh my gosh, think about how much better things would be if we brought in a strategically sound creative agency."

What was the reason for the switch at Vonage?

At Vonage there were multiple agencies. When I arrived, it was clear that the CEO was frustrated by the lack of strategy and planning at the primary ad agency. We would have quarterly business reviews and the CEO was miserable with what he was getting back. I said to him, "If you're that unhappy, let's start an agency search." Initially, he was very reticent to do so because he thought it could derail our whole program and he really had no confidence that it was going to work. He was most concerned about there being horrible switching costs. But, as it turns out, there weren't any. The handoff between agencies was completely smooth. Absolutely nothing bad happened.

What were the keys to making a switch like that work?

Because we did a whole review process, we had basically identified the creative that we wanted to move to. As part of the agency review

process, multiple agencies prepared very well-thought-out, deliberate strategies. The pieces that we were missing with the incumbents were delivered even in the pitch process. And as we were buying into the strategy, we were being led down the road to buy into the creative, simultaneously. By the time we made the decision, we had strategy and creative ready to go. What also helped was that the future agency started working for us for about a month while we were winding down incumbents, and we did the same thing with both the media agency and the creative agency.

When managing reviews, how helpful to you was it to have a search consultant involved? What value did they add to the process?

I used Dick Roth Associates and he was fantastic. I used him both with AXA and at Vonage because we had such a good experience with him at AXA. He was able to identify all of the potential agencies that could help us. We then narrowed it down. We said we wanted an agency of a certain size because we wanted to be important, but not swamp the agency. Then we pinpointed what experience they needed to have. He also did a scan for the ones that had account conflicts. In the case of Vonage, it was particularly difficult because phone companies spend so much on advertising that it's hard to find an agency that's not already booked.

What are some of the lessons you learned about managing the review process that other CMOs might want to do (or not do)?

I think we did it the right way. I think that the "don't" is don't hesitate. If the relationship isn't working, there are many, many agencies out there and it's in your best interest to make a switch, as opposed to tolerating underperformance. That really became clear after we switched and we were getting everything that we previously wanted. People were thinking why didn't we do that sooner. It just wasn't as painful as people had anticipated.

How did you persuade these agencies to invest so much during the pitch process before you'd made your decision?

In the case of Vonage, there was so much value and so much upside to them that they were all willing to make the investment. Vonage was a very significant size opportunity for the agencies, so everyone did it on spec.

Would you recommend including creative development in the pitch process? Does seeing actual ideas make a big difference?

Yes. Because I think that if you don't include the creative you don't really know who you're "marrying." That's a big part of what you're buying. And in both cases we ended up running the creative that was developed during the pitch process.

At what stage of the review process would you recommend including the financial negotiations?

We started in each case with multiple agencies, then narrowed it down to about five, then from five to two. Once we got down to the two, that's when we would start pushing them on costs. Because at this point we knew who we wanted to hire and we had to make sure that the costs worked. It's just a lot easier to negotiate the cost down before anyone knows the final decision.

You've done the review. You've hired the agency. How do you make sure that the new relationship takes?

I think that you have to have a rapport with the people that you're working with and you figure that out during the pitch process. And then you have to stay close to them during the creation of the first round of advertising. Everyone needs to be connected at the hip when you start because you still don't know each other. You've only been dating for a while. So I think it's mainly about time spent.

Agencies are notorious for bringing out all of their senior people for the pitch who never show up again. Has this been the case for you?

We pushed on that during all of the upfront conversation. Are you the people we're going to be working with going forward? And we cemented it. So they were on our account until they left the agency. But, while they were at the agency, they were the people that we worked with.

Once the decision is made to go into a review, all parties involved want to speed things along. Are there some steps that you think could be eliminated in the typical process?

Not really. The first step was the comparisons—the capabilities presentation and knowing who you're dealing with. The next step was explaining our business to them. Then we had multiple rounds of reviews with them. I don't think that there's anything in this process that you could or should cut out.

As part of this process, I think that every client would love to hold their agency accountable based on performance. Is that possible?

I don't know if it's really possible because there are so many things that are happening concurrent with advertising. Let's say measures like awareness and Net Promoter Score go up with the new campaign, yet sales went down. Sales might have gone down because a competitor introduced new functionality.

You're not going to give your agency a big round of applause as sales are collapsing nor can you blame them since the competitive activity was out of their control.

So let's flip this and go back to the AXA situation in which the "800-Pound Gorilla" campaign you introduced was super-effective by just about any measure. At that point, could the agency have been rewarded more?

We didn't specifically reward them but we were winning awards and so were they. So the reward was that everyone was getting external recognition. In this case, the sales were going up and it was partially because of the Gorilla campaign, but then the question becomes, how do you attribute it to the agency?

So here I thought the agency was driving the sales, but others within AXA felt they deserved the credit. Which is predictable. At AXA, I think it was truly the advertising campaign that drove a lot of the success.

Sounds like the agency just can't win!

The advertising agency is always at the short end of the straw. When they're successful someone else takes the credit, and when they're not successful, they're responsible, even when it's out of their control.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *Changing advertising agencies is a time-consuming process but made easier by hiring a search consultant.*
- *Make sure you meet and bond with the team that will actually lead your business, especially the strategic and creative heads.*
- *Even with all the sophisticated data tracking available, it is still very hard to hold your agency 100 percent accountable for sales results.*

Further reading:

Fred S. Goldberg, *The Insanity of Advertising: Memoirs of a Mad Man*



Rp

Retail Partners

Shining Up Your Relationships

“Build on what is proven, optimize what we know should work, and always test new efforts in small ways.”

Colin Hall

Allen Edmonds

High-end men’s shoe brand Allen Edmonds pulls off a precarious balancing act with elegance and style. On one end, they sell their product directly in their own retail shops. On the other, they make their premium footwear available through major third-party retailers like Zappos and Nordstrom.

If you take a moment to think about all the conflicts and other difficulties that could arise in this system—if, for instance, there weren’t a top-notch team, including the CMO, holding it all together—you’ll be properly impressed by CMO Colin Hall’s ability to keep the entire marketing machine running like clockwork.

In addition to his success ensuring AE stores and third party retailers aren’t stepping on each others’ toes, Colin’s shrewd integration of cutting-edge digital content and old-school media such as catalogs continues to pay off in double-digit growth numbers for Allen Edmonds.

Allen Edmonds sells directly to the consumer via your own stores as well as via large brick-and-mortar and online retailers. How do you balance supporting your own stores and supporting your retail partners?

As a manufacturer based in America, we can easily react to customers' desires and needs. A big advantage for us is the ability to fill in orders with our partners as needed. Competitive brands that warehouse inventory from overseas are forced to do exactly what you imply: Choose between their own needs and that of their retail customers when inventory is low. From a marketing perspective, we make our marketing materials available to our partners so that the brand is, ideally, presented in a cohesive fashion across all sales channels. Sharing creative assets allows the work to be seen by more eyes than just those shopping our company-owned channels. Customers can determine where they want to shop based on their unique tastes, experiences, and geographies.

One of the advantages of having your own retail stores is that one can control the entire customer experience, and—in theory—elevate it to the point that you engender brand love and loyalty. What kinds of things have you done to achieve this?

Our strategy is pretty straightforward, and it amazes me that executing the straightforward well differentiates our in-store experience from competitors. First, we have a terrific presentation of product including styles, colors, and sizes. Customers who have feet outside the “norms” know that Allen Edmonds has shoes to fit their needs. Second, our store and call center co-workers are incredibly knowledgeable and helpful. We refer to our longest tenured in-store co-workers as Master Fitters. They will measure your foot and help solve your style and fitting needs. Customers have a lot of confidence knowing our co-worker has fitted literally thousands if not tens of thousands of feet in their career. Third, we don't stop at the sale. Our co-workers will also service a customer post-sale, ensuring the fit and performance of the shoe. Fourth, we present the customer with an outstanding value proposition. Our shoes last a long time based on our 212-step

manufacturing process, higher quality materials, and our legendary recrafting service. We recraft roughly 60,000 pairs of shoes a year making us one of the world's largest cobblers as well as a manufacturer. This "hug your customer" mentality is why we have so many loyal customers and why they choose to recommend Allen Edmonds to their friends, colleagues, and sons.

How do you ensure the customer experience with your retail partners meets Allen Edmonds' standards?

Each channel we sell through has unique attributes, so we don't dictate to them. But we try to help them whenever they need it. Our brand guidelines are well-documented and they help partners present the brand consistently. We also ask that our partners try to present our core brand pillars of American Made, size and style availability, Recrafting (a strong value proposition versus cheap shoes), 212-step handcrafted process, and highest quality leathers as much as possible through imagery, copy, and video content as examples. We will supply the content, although the partners may interpret and personalize the manner in which these pillars are portrayed based on the channel and target (e.g. millennials vs older businessmen).

How does working so closely with retail partners impact your marketing priorities? Do you focus on sell-in or sell-through?

We focus on both, but place more emphasis on sell-through. Sell-through means our wholesale customers are succeeding and our product is turning. Sell-through success leads to more confidence in our brand and ultimately stronger sell-in. We support our wholesale accounts with various co-op materials including digital photos, in-store signage, catalogs, videos, in-store appearances by reps, trunk shows, and recrafting services, just to name a few.

What are some recent new marketing initiatives you've rolled out?

We initiated two new marketing efforts. The first was an old-school approach based on ramping up our paper catalogs by leveraging co-operative big data

for prospecting. We match back to our database and these efforts are driving sales of existing customers and new customer acquisition.

The second was more new-school, and included display network advertising targeting new customers. We've enjoyed huge increases in sales through digital media including retargeting, affiliate, email, and other channels, but DSP allows us to serve ads to those who look like our primary customers but have never been to our site. We're seeing a \$5 revenue return for every \$1 we spend on DSP customer acquisition.

How as CMO are you staying on top of the increasingly complex landscape of budget allocation and optimization?

This is one of the biggest questions year in and year out. Our approach is to build on what is proven, optimize what we know should work, and always test new efforts in small ways. If I had to put an allocation on it, I would say we allocate 70 percent on proven media, 20 percent on optimizing and 10 percent on testing new ideas. As a private equity-owned company driving by EBITDA, we never bet the farm on anything unproven. We stair step our way through testing, optimizing, and then investing in media.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *Retail partnerships are becoming increasingly difficult to manage since so many brands also sell directly to consumers.*
- *Managing these relationships means providing clear brand guidelines along with all the assets they need to make your brand shine in their particular environment.*
- *Good old-fashioned paper catalogs are still remarkably effective.*

Further reading:

Bernd Schmitt, *Happy Customers Everywhere: How Your Business Can Profit from the Insights of Positive Psychology*



Risks and Sky-High Rewards

“For about \$10,000 in spend, we generated almost \$10 million in impressions. We had captured the moment in a fun, creative way.”

Marty St. George
JetBlue

The air travel business is risky on multiple levels, and seeing the numerous mergers and disappearances of once-proud airline brands in recent years shows that certain worst-case scenarios have been realized. But relative newcomer JetBlue shows time and time again that a bold marketing and service philosophy based on that never-gets-old principle of putting the customer experience above all else can still keep an airline brand flying high.

EVP of Commercial and Planning, Marty St. George pilots JetBlue’s efforts to reach new passengers and retain loyal ones, and wise risk-taking is a cornerstone of his continued success. The result is one knockout promotion after another. We focused on that in this interview, and I also capitalized on the chance to ask him about some of the other factors keeping JetBlue in the upper stratosphere relative to their competition.

What is the biggest marketing risk you've taken at JetBlue? How did it play out?

I've taken a lot of risks, but I think the biggest was the "Election Protection" promo we ran in New York during Fall 2012. It went out to the folks who say things like: "If my candidate loses I'm moving to Canada." The promo revolved around JetBlue giving away 2,012 free tickets out of the country. It was risky because election promos are inherently risky; voting is a sacred duty, and there are many examples of brands commercializing the election to their detriment. Luckily, we played it perfectly and got more buzz than we ever imagined, and zero blowback.

Any others you're particularly proud of?

We did a promotion called "Carmageddon" when the 405 Freeway was closed in L.A. We flew for a day back and forth between Burbank and Long Beach. I need to give my team a lot of credit for this one. When they brought the idea to me, I said: "I can't imagine this getting buzz but feel free to do it, if you can do it cheaply." The result? For about \$10,000 in spend, we generated almost \$10 million in impressions. We had captured the moment in a fun, creative way.

JetBlue CEO David Barger famously posed the question 'How do we stay small as we get big?' to the JetBlue team. As CMO, how do you take on this challenge?

Every leader at JetBlue takes full ownership of that challenge. There are elements of the JetBlue experience that naturally lend themselves to helping us stay small. We don't ask our people to do anything that we wouldn't do. For example, when leaders take a JetBlue flight and the plane arrives at the gate, we become a full-on hands-dirty part of the cleaning crew alongside the flight attendants and pilots. On the holidays, many of us work at the airport helping customers during the busiest days. But specifically as CMO, I am focused on making sure that our mission and values come through in every

communication we do, both internal and external. When we start looking like a faceless conglomerate to our people, we'll have lost the battle.

What steps do you take to better understand and communicate with your customers?

I'm very lucky in that our founders gave us a mission and a set of values that are core to our DNA. Our mission is to inspire humanity, and part of what we try to accomplish is that personal connection between the brand and our customers. Our customers feel personal ownership of the brand, and they're very vocal about the things they love and the things they want us to change.

How do you evaluate/measure the success of your marketing?

On a macro level we look at brand metrics for ourselves and our competitors. On a micro level, we measure every dollar we spend digitally and translate it into a cost-per-booking. We share our metrics with our media partners and expect them to help improve campaigns and targets to get our CPB lower.

Has marketing become more complex for you? How are you dealing with that complexity?

We deal with it by keeping up with technology, and by finding partners in that space who can help keep us current. In fact, every year we have a "digital day" where we invite current and potential marketing partners in to pitch our entire team. We've found several exciting new technologies and channels that way, just through an open "casting call."

Do you agree with the notion that marketing is everything and everything is marketing? If so, how have you extended the boundaries of your job beyond the normal purview of the CMO?

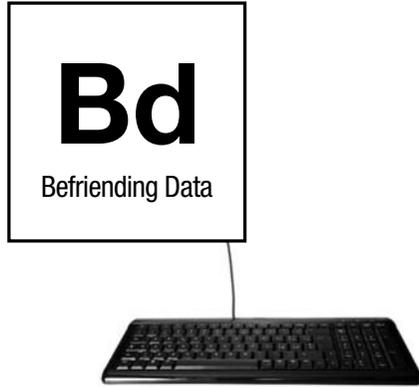
Absolutely agree, and luckily at JetBlue we all recognize that the experience is the ultimate manifestation of the brand, and our people learn this on day one. How? Every month we hold an orientation for new crewmembers at our training center, and many senior leaders attend. When I speak at orientation, my first line is to welcome everyone to the marketing team, since everyone who touches a customer owns a piece of the brand.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *Creative risk-taking can dramatically increase brand exposure.*
- *Stunts like “Carmegeddon” work so well for JetBlue not just because they are timely and clever. They are also relevant to what JetBlue does and consistent with the brand’s friendly personality.*
- *Lean on leading vendors to keep you on top of the latest digital opportunities.*

Further reading:

Seth Godin, *The Big Moo: Stop Trying to Be Perfect and Start Being Remarkable*



Data, My Dear Watson

“We are engaging a consumer who is living in a massively digital world.”

Mayur Gupta
Kimberly-Clark

The sheer volume of data that flows in and out of consumer goods giant Kimberly-Clark every day could make even the most diligent bean-counter quake in his loafers. But with the perspicacious and prescient Mayur Gupta as Global Head of Marketing Technology, this flood of information becomes the fuel for a powerful marketing machine. My interview with Mayur will make clear to all of the data-phobic marketers out there that it's time to welcome it with open arms.

The way Mayur observes data and deduces action plans from it reminds me of Sherlock Holmes, digging for hidden clues no one else can see and reassembling them into a cohesive fact-based narrative that concludes with a major breakthrough. In our interview we also had time to touch on Mayur's exciting data-centric work with programmatic marketing.

What new technologies have you leveraged recently, and did the results of using them meet your expectations?

We have tried to keep it simple. We orchestrate the entire marketing technology ecosystem at Kimberly-Clark across four overlapping bubbles—media, content, data (context), and commerce. We strongly believe that the ultimate seamless consumer experience occurs at the intersection of these bubbles. Underneath these, though, we have enterprise, tactical/localized, and innovative capabilities. Enterprise capabilities that need to be globally scaled. Tactical and localized capabilities that need agility and speed and pertain to local market and consumer needs. Lastly, technologies and startups that we need to partner with to drive innovation. While we have brought on a number of technologies across these buckets, a huge focus has been on connecting context, content, and commerce capabilities and constantly ensuring that we establish a connected ecosystem and not isolated technologies.

I'm paraphrasing here, but your CMO Clive Sirkin has said something along the lines of "We don't believe in digital marketing; we believe in marketing in a digital world." What does that mean, and how is it part of your work?

That's correct and through Clive's leadership we now have that as a foundational mindset and behavior across the organization. It's quite simple if you think about it. We are engaging a consumer who is living in a massively digital world. She is dependent on digital technology, which is now part of her daily life. She no longer differentiates between the analog and the digital world in her expectations from brands and how they engage, she expects the same value and experience seamlessly across the board. However, on the flipside, brands continue to consider digital as a "thing" or a "silo" which breaks and fragments that experience. We at Kimberly-Clark believe in breaking these silos by driving convergence across functions and capabilities that eventually builds legendary brands in this digital world. It's a shift from being multichannel (channel focused) to truly

becoming “omnichannel” (consumer focused). We all have a single mission to deliver seamless experiences in a complex omnichannel world.

What’s next for your leveraging of data?

Data is massive; it’s the oil, it’s the currency for the industry. I think most of the industry has a big “small” data problem and not so much of a “big data” problem. It’s not so much the volume or size of data but how well connected and harmonized it really is. Do we really understand “her” universally as a human, and that’s been our biggest focus. We call it data convergence, by which I mean an ability to stitch the fragmented data ecosystem across first-party, second-party, and third-party data. In order for us to drive relevant, personalized, contextual, and seamless consumer experiences across channels and touchpoints, we need this universal data and view of the consumer just in time, and an ability to make decisions and predictions relevant to her as she hops from one touch point to the other. Ultimately it’s converging her context (consumer data and insights) to influence content (her experience) which will ultimately inspire the ideal behavior (commerce). These are the three “C”s of modern marketing.

How has programmatic marketing helped you reach your overall marketing objectives?

It has helped us become smarter as well as more relevant and personalized from a media buying and consumer engagement standpoint across paid channels. Having utilized and scaled the obvious benefits of programmatic, we are now on the next horizon, where we are starting to leverage the impact of programmatic across the rest of the ecosystem, including our owned and earned channels as well as our retailer partnerships. The early horizons of programmatic have helped us optimize our media buying efforts and maximized the ROI, but the subsequent horizons will include leveraging consumer data and insights in driving stronger consumer engagement and inspiring behavior across the board.

This, arguably, is the most underutilized and ignored benefit of programmatic buying.

What were some of the challenges of adopting programmatic? What advice would you give to another marketer who is just getting started with it?

Programmatic has been at Kimberly-Clark for a few years now, and was there before I joined. So the credit goes to our media leadership and our CMO. We were clearly one of the early adopters and pioneers in the space. The challenge for us now is to go beyond the obvious and scale the capability globally. We have already seen tremendous success with our current trading desk and programmatic buying capability; we are now challenging ourselves to take it to another level and impact the broader marketing ecosystem, smartly leveraging consumer data and insights that will drive seamless experiences and inspire consumer behavior across paid, owned, and earned.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *Understanding how to find, analyze, and use data are now mandatory skills for CMOs.*
- *The three C's of modern marketing are context, content, and commerce.*
- *Programmatic marketing is quickly evolving beyond paid channels.*

Further reading:

David L. Rogers, *The Network Is Your Customer: Five Strategies to Thrive in a Digital Age*



Media Mixing Keeps Allstate in Good Hands

“People still watch TV—a lot of it.”

Sanjay Gupta
Allstate

In an age of constant brand refresh, companies like Allstate are increasingly rare. Allstate stands firm on one message (“You’re in Good Hands with Allstate”) delivered via two main campaigns: one featuring Dennis Haysbert’s comforting, iconic baritone delivering the familiar slogan, and the newer “Mayhem” advertisements utilizing “worst case scenario” humor to drive home the need for top-notch insurance coverage.

How does Allstate keep managing to find new angles on one theme while other brands are perpetually pivoting? The answer exists somewhere in the brain of Sanjay Gupta, EVP of Marketing, Innovation, and Corporate Relations for Allstate. One element is simply the strength of the message, combined with the adage of “if it ain’t broke don’t fix it.” Another is Sanjay’s deep understanding of media mixing: utilizing a variety of methods for delivering the message in order to keep it engaging year in and year out. We also discussed some of Allstate’s most successful recent initiatives and what all marketers can learn from them.

What role does TV play in your marketing mix? Do you see that changing in the near term?

TV allows us to tell our brand story. For example, we debuted a powerful brand ad titled “We Still Climb” that helped us launch our new brand idea that Allstate doesn’t just protect people when something goes wrong, but also helps them to live a good life every day. As part of that effort, we’re leveraging our TV advertising to highlight Allstate’s innovative products and features. These include proven ones like our Safe Driving Bonus Checks, as well as new ones such as our QuickFoto Claim and Drivewise smart phone apps.

As far as our marketing mix goes, people still watch TV—a lot of it. Though we continue to increase the percentage of our digital media as consumer media consumption evolves, we’ve found that a combination of media types usually yields the best results.

You have two very different campaigns with the Mayhem and Dennis Haysbert ads. What is the strategy behind these two initiatives?

The good news is they work very well together, each campaign complementing and working off one another. Mayhem disrupts and reminds people that all insurance is not the same, so they need to be careful in terms of who they choose for their protection needs. Dennis reinforces why Allstate is the compelling choice to protect everything that’s important to you. While we know that each campaign continues to work very well individually, collectively the effect is even greater.

A lot of marketers change campaigns every couple of years. This doesn’t seem to be the case in the insurance category and certainly not with Allstate. Why is that? Are there specific signals you look for to determine if just an ad or an entire campaign has worn out its welcome?

If you have a campaign that continues to prove successful, and becomes even more successful with time, then changing for change's sake is not what's best for the brand and the business. Of course we measure and constantly watch for wearout and diminishing effectiveness. But part of the reason "You're in Good Hands" has remained one of the most recognized taglines in America is because we haven't changed it in fifty years. And while the message remains consistent, we are constantly introducing new features and different ways in which we tell our story about Allstate while also leveraging the equity that Dennis and Mayhem have built.

What are some recent ways you've innovated the core message to build the Allstate brand?

Our most recent accomplishment that I'm most proud of—and it's actually still a work in progress—kicked off in September when we launched a breakthrough program and accompanying ad campaign to reach consumers and customers who represent what we're calling "New Households." These are people who are contending with life "firsts," such as a new car, house, baby, or combination of these. With these things come new uncertainties—car repairs, home maintenance, questions about financial security, etc.—that today's young families are typically not prepared to address. These consumers typically turn to a trusted inner circle of friends and family for advice. Yet, faced with bigger dilemmas and decisions than ever before, they're finding these "experts" sometimes lack the resources or skills to help solve them.

So Allstate is offering tangible solutions, expertise, and savings to help New Households get things right the first time. Things like a free one-year membership to Angie's List, assistance finding reputable real estate agents, discounts on infant and child car seats, and more. The campaign includes a combination of national and local TV, radio, digital media, print, social media, and PR, and it leads with real life, not insurance. It depicts the reality of being a young family versus the perception you may have had of how perfect life would be.

How important is mobile marketing to your brand and what does it encompass?

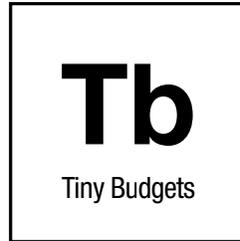
More than 50 percent of people are now accessing the Web through mobile phones, so clearly you can't ignore mobile. We do extensive work not only in terms of mobile optimizing our Web presence and our applications, but we also do quite a bit of marketing on mobile platforms. And we also leverage mobile to create new product features such as our QuickFoto Claim app and our Digital Locker home inventory app.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *TV advertising continues to reach large audiences and can be particularly effective when a brand has "news" about innovative features.*
- *Getting the media mix right for your brand is a continuous process of testing and learning.*
- *Once the media and the message are working, don't be in a rush to change them.*

Further reading:

Jeanne Bliss, *Chief Customer Officer: Getting Past Lip Service to Passionate Action*



Making a Mouse-Sized Budget Roar

“... Trying things out small scale, proving that they deliver, and then expanding.”

Julie Garlikov
Torani

It's easy to look at the marketing output of a Fortune 100 company and sigh, “If only I had a marketing budget that big...”

It's also very lazy! For proof of this, look no further than Julie Garlikov's work at Torani, maker of flavored syrups for coffee and other beverages. Torani, started in San Francisco by two Italian immigrants, has become the go-to flavoring brand in coffeehouses of all sizes. But the success of its growth as a brand hasn't been a result of dumping ever more cash into marketing. Rather, it's been the result of squeezing the maximum effectiveness out of every marketing dollar.

Julie's insights here show how for a product like Torani, which relies on retailers to establish the first relationship with customers, it pays to keep tabs on your consumer base not just by touching base over social media but also by adding to their daily lives in a fun, relevant way.

Has the fact that Torani does not have a huge multimillion dollar budget forced you to be more innovative?

We have to find the right partners to work with us who believe in our brand and who want to work with a great, local, family-owned business. And we need to focus more on things like PR and creating social buzz to get the word out. We can't do a lot of mass tactics, so we look to build really high loyalty with our business and consumer users, turning them into uber fans.

Have you been able to link your innovative marketing activities to the kinds of business metrics favored by CEOs?

I use a lot of test/invest methodology, trying things out small scale, proving that they deliver, and then expanding. It's the only way to ensure the best ROI on limited budgets like ours.

How do you stay close to your end users when the relationship with these folks is mainly owned by your retailer partners?

We get a great sense from social media and listening of what's important to our user. We've also been doing a lot of event marketing and mobile tours the past two years so we can hear more directly what our users like. Between our retail partners and our foodservice distributors, we can be one step removed. So we have to create opportunities to engage regularly and we do a lot of research like ethnographies to really understand what our consumer wants and needs.

Has social media played much of a role in driving your brand? If so, how has it helped or how do you see it helping in the future?

We have a very active, loyal fan base that we engage with daily on Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, etc. We've also done a lot of blogger outreach and we engage with various bloggers on a regular basis, sending

them new products, etc. This helps get the word out on a small brand and it forms a big part of our acquisition strategies.

Are you increasing your content marketing investment?

Yes, this is a huge area for us. We've developed videos and will be producing even more as the year wraps up—everything from how-to videos to funny content. We also continue to create enticing inspirational photos and editorial, almost like what you see in a food magazine. We've found that inspiring people with seasonal recipes and super on-trend ideas generates significant sales lift, so content is key for us.

Author's note: The remaining questions and answers are from a follow-up conversation I had with Julie, now VP of Marketing at Nuvesse Skin Therapies, right before this edition went to press.

Looking back on your time at Torani, what do you think was the key to making the most of your modest marketing budget?

Much of it comes down to people. If you pick the right partners, you have agencies and others who are really invested and do great work and are an extension of your own team. I often choose partners where the owners are very seasoned marketers, designers, etc., who have been well trained and are very experienced, but now have a smaller shop and want to work with smaller, more nimble companies. And I also select my own team carefully so that some of the work can be done in-house to make sure that I'm utilizing outside resources very carefully and supplementing with my own talent when appropriate.

Are there any other lessons you learned while at Torani that you are applying to your new position?

I'm applying the same lessons on budgets and sourcing the right people to help me that I learned at Torani. I just don't have the same internal

resources to rely on given that we're a start-up, so it's mission critical to bring in partners. Many of the people I'm working with are relationships I built while at Torani or in other roles. It's sometimes hard to convince great talent to work on a start-up, but when you've nurtured the relationships over time, people will help or work on tighter budgets because they want to work with you personally again or they know what amazing work you can create together.

Are you seeing any marketing tactics right now that are particularly good at stretching your budget?

I think there is a lot that can be done in the digital realm that is more cost effective than in the past. As well, you can actually build a brand through online influencers and social word of mouth and this is a proven strategy, allowing independent brands a real chance to compete against the big guys and their huge advertising budgets.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *When faced with a small budget, look to PR and social media to help spread the word cost-effectively.*
- *Find nimble partners who can help you multiply the impact of every dollar.*
- *Event marketing can serve the dual purposes of gaining brand exposure and gathering essential consumer insights.*

Further reading:

Jay Baer, *Youility: Why Smart Marketing Is about Help Not Hype*



Marketing's Emergency Room

“What happened? When did it happen? What did you do once you found out it happened? How can you assure the public that it won't happen again?”

Doug Duvall
Sprint

Crisis management: It's one thing to go through the motions of damage control when your social media team tweets an off-color joke that triggers a few hours of online outrage. It's quite another to protect your company's reputation while facing down a media tidal wave involving things like murders, suicides, bombings, hurricanes, and other true disasters that they don't prepare you for in business school...or anywhere else.

These situations are marketing's equivalent of when a heart attack patient is rolled frantically into the emergency room, requiring an immediate quadruple bypass. The surgeon in charge must be experienced, sure-handed, and unshakably confident in his or her ability to save the life that hangs in the balance.

With that in mind, meet Sprint's Doug Duvall. For crises large and small, every company should be lucky enough to have someone like Doug, Vice President of Corporate Communications, playing quarterback when

the you-know-what hits the fan. Crisis management is a very specific expertise, one that requires someone like Doug at the helm for everyone to sleep well at night. But it's also something every marketing professional should have a working proficiency in, and internalizing Doug's insights here can make that happen.

What types of crises have you experienced at Sprint?

Most of the routine crises involve our network. Our nationwide network is the backbone of our company and it's the infrastructure that enables our fifty-six million customers to call, text, check email, or watch a video on their mobile device. Today we're so reliant on smartphones, and when there's a network outage it's understandable that customers become frustrated. So we're really conscious about threats to our network—whether it's from a construction crew accidentally cutting a fiber line or from weather events like storms, hurricanes, floods, or earthquakes.

What is the worst crisis or near-crisis you've experienced?

Before joining Sprint I spent seven years at Freddie Mac. I managed the public relations team and we had our fair share of crises from the government suddenly taking over control of the company, to foreclosures, to protests at company headquarters.

But the one crisis that stands out to me, and probably to most employees at that time, was waking up to the news that our CFO had committed suicide. It was completely unexpected and yet another major emotional shock to employees, who had already been through a lot. And to make matters worse, our critics tried to make the incident more of a conspiracy about "what did he know, and what was he hiding?"

What were the key steps you took to diffuse the situation?

My boss and I quickly drafted a public statement and he walked it down the hall to get approved by the CEO. We felt it was important not to use “corporate speak” and to express our sincere sorrow in plain English. That’s critical in any crisis, but particularly one that involves a human tragedy. We talked about what kind of man and leader he was and how he will be most remembered for “his personal warmth, his sense of humor, and his quick wit.” We posted the statement on our website and quickly sent it to reporters who covered us regularly. But given this was in the midst of the financial crisis, we had calls from all over the world, and from non-traditional outlets like Entertainment Tonight. I even did a radio interview with BBC, talking about the kind of person he was and what a tragedy it was for the company and his family. We also developed an internal communications plan that included a memorial event, and to respect his family’s privacy, we developed protocol on who would have interaction with the family.

What are the organizational requirements to avoid surprises?

It’s important to have designated crisis representatives from across the company. We have a person on Sprint’s Corporate Communications team whose primary job is to manage crises, whenever they may occur. She has a backup, and he has a backup too. But she is part of a larger company-wide team and regularly works with crisis representatives from our Network division, corporate security, sales, marketing, legal, government affairs, IT, etc.

You may hear about a crisis occurring in a number of different ways—through social media, breaking news, or a phone call. But everyone needs to know who to escalate it to and that’s why we have designated people. So whoever might first hear of a crisis, they know who to send it to for managing the issue.

Once you hear of a potential crisis, how do you begin to manage it?

Well, it’s definitely a team effort, but I start by asking four simple questions at the onset of any crisis, no matter the issue or size of the organization:

1. What happened?
2. When did it happen?
3. What did you do once you found out it happened?
4. How can you assure the public that it won't happen again?

If you have decent answers to these basic questions, you'll survive the crisis. When you see a corporate or political crisis lasting longer than it should, usually there wasn't a solid answer to questions three and four.

After you have a sense of what happened and the scope of the problem, how do you communicate it internally and externally?

Tone is important, and a crisis is not a time for spin. Mike McCurry, President Clinton's former press secretary, advises corporate clients to think about the "C's" when communicating during a crisis:

- Clarity. Use understandable, plain English.
- Credibility. Be authentic and willing to address shortcomings.
- Compassion. Remember there's a person on the other side of this crisis.
- Commitment. Devote the time and resources to resolve issue.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *Every business should have a crisis management plan in place and review it annually.*
- *Designate a crisis management team and have them go through preparatory "fire drills."*
- *Before responding to a crisis, make sure you understand exactly what happened.*

Further reading:

Gary Vaynerchuk, *The Thank You Economy*

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About the Author



Photo: Mike Albans

Drew Neisser is founder and CEO of Renegade, the NYC-based agency that helps CMOs transform marketing from mere messaging to programs of genuine value. Dubbing this approach “marketing as service,” Drew and the Renegade team are on a quest to eliminate ad pollution. The author is also a recognized authority on guerrilla marketing having won numerous awards for creativity and campaign effectiveness.

Through a long-time partnership with The CMO Club, Drew has met and interviewed well over 100 CMOs in the last five years. Ranked among *Brand Quarterly’s* “50 Marketing Thought Leaders Over 50,” he is an “expert blogger” for *Forbes*, *FastCompany*, *CMO.com*, and *MediaPost*, and pens the highly praised CMO of the Week column for *Social Media Today*. Drew is a trusted advisor to many CMOs and authors *TheCut*, a popular monthly newsletter. He regularly consults on digital and social media trends via the GLG network and currently sits on the boards of the Urban Green Council and Duke NY.

Diapered at Wells Rich Greene, trained at JWT, and retrained at Chiat/Day, Drew founded Renegade in 1996. He earned a BA in history from Duke University and lives in Manhattan with his wife Linda, their wondrous offspring Emma and Carl, and the agency’s mascot, a French bulldog named Pinky. Somewhere along the way, Drew became obsessed with Benjamin Franklin. A native Californian, he dreams of becoming a surfer but is a long way from hanging ten.