

What I *Promise* to Do...



Read a Book

Blog
Blog
Blog

Customer testimonials

Clean up Website!

Write new white papers

 Cheryl Strege

As a kid, you probably remember your first writing assignment after the long, luxurious days of summer. Getting back to school meant a lot of things – a new classroom, new friends, new school clothes – as well as a goodbye to hanging out at the swimming pool and riding your bike every day. It usually meant the essay titled “What I Did on My Summer Vacation”.

I don’t know about you, but I dreaded that assignment. Not that I wasn’t busy doing something all summer long, but it seemed boring compared to what I thought everyone else had done. Now that I’m a “grownup”, I have lots of things to do (and write about) over the summer. It’s the time when the weeks are a little less frantic, and those “I’ll get to them when I have time” marketing activities step up to the forefront.

If you want to excel this summer and really impress your leadership team when it’s “back to school” time in September, add a few of the ideas below to your summer “to do” list. You’ll be sure to get a good grade from your manager!

» Take a hard look at your Web site. I would suggest...

1. Clean it up! Remove all the outdated content such as past events, former employees, and products you no longer sell.

2. Optimize the site with unique page titles for each page and keywords specific to that page. For example, your products page should have keywords relevant to Microsoft Dynamics® ERP and CRM, not keywords spe-

cific to the founding of the company (which belong on the About Us page).

3. Refresh the content. Search engines love new content! After all, you wouldn’t subscribe to a magazine if it featured the same articles month after month. Give visitors a reason to come back to your site instead of serving up the same old stuff year after year.

4. Include ways for visitors to get engaged in your site. You want them to take some sort of action, such as “download”, “view”, “read”, “register” or “contact us”. In other words, make sure you have offers such as whitepapers, brochures, analyst reports, videos, webcasts, reports, and so on to capture their attention.

5. Try to include content for different roles on your Web site. Think about what the CEO might want to read versus what the IT person is looking for. They’re both important prospects for you so cater to their interests when you can.

6. Have a link on your Web site to encourage visitors to opt into hearing from you. Whether it’s an e-newsletter, a printed newsletter, an invitation, or some other communication, you want to be sure you have permission to contact them. It’s a non-intrusive way to build your permission-based e-mail marketing list.

» Review all your profiles on various Web sites and ensure they are consistent from site to site: Manta, Goliath, LinkedIn, Facebook, FindAccountingSoftware, Partner Solution Profiler, and Pinpoint™, to name a few. You might even do a few searches online for your company –

on My Summer Vacation

you'll often be surprised at where you're listed!

- » Set up a LinkedIn group for your customers. Invite them to connect with you and be sure to post content relevant to them. You can promote your user group meetings, your "lunch 'n' learns", new customers you've added, a press release, a promotional price on a product or module, or a dozen other things they might find useful.
- » Write a new whitepaper. If Microsoft doesn't have a whitepaper for your specific vertical, say "pet shampoo services", then write one. After all, who knows more about ERP or CRM software for pet shampoo services than you?
- » Set a goal to capture five to 10 customer testimonials and put on them on your YouTube channel. Promote them in your newsletter and to your LinkedIn and Facebook groups. After all, having customers talk about how much they love working with you is good for your company, your marketing, and maybe even your ego!
- » Read! What's better than an afternoon in a comfy lawn chair, with a captivating book and a summery "umbrella drink" close at hand? Some of my favorite marketing books are:

1. **Anything by Seth Godin such as "Linchpin", "Tribes", or "The Purple Cow".** Great ideas combined with an "easy read" make them perfect for an afternoon away from the computer.
2. **"Word of Mouth Marketing" by Andy Sernovitz – fantastic book!** I jotted down a ton of ideas (now I just have to find time to accomplish them) for myself and for my clients.
3. **"Marketing Champions: Practical Strategies for Improving Marketing's Power, Influence and Business Impact" by Roy A. Young, Allen M. Weiss, and David W. Stewart.** This is an excellent read that opened my eyes as to why marketing doesn't always get the recognition it deserves. Learn how to convert your marketing "speak" to a language your CEO and CFO can relate to.
 - » Plan your fall marketing campaigns. Knowing it takes 30 to 60 days to get something in-market, what are you doing right now to ensure a healthy pipeline in September, October, and November? Do you have a variety of "touches" planned out, such as direct mail, e-mail, telemarketing, events, referrals, and social media?
 - » Get your holiday card list together. It's an easy task during the summer when

you're not under a deadline. Less easy to accomplish when it's December 15th and you haven't started yet!

- » Get caught up on your blog entries. You don't need much more than a paragraph, maybe two, about a topic of interest. Scan the news, Microsoft Web sites, and other sites your prospects might be visiting. Write the next dozen blog entries so you're not under pressure in October when you're in need of content.

I hope this article has given you a few ideas on some marketing goals to add to your "to do" list for the summer. You don't have to accomplish them all at once, but if you can knock off three to five (especially the Web site one), give yourself a pat on the back. I'm going back to my lawn chair and my book now. Like me, I'm sure you have plenty of your own ideas on how to enjoy the non work-related days of summer! 🌞

Since Cheryl Strege and The Partner Marketing Group team are all living in northern climates from East Coast to West, we'll be enjoying the (short) days of summer alongside you. But we're here if you need help accomplishing your own list of marketing tasks. Contact The Partner Marketing Group at info@thepartnermarketinggroup.com or 605-574-9432.

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