

Giving Small Businesses a Holiday Glow

Padilla Speer Beardsley and Deluxe Corporation, Jan 1,2013

Summary: 2013 Silver Anvil Award of Excellence Winner — Marketing Business-To-Business — Professional and/or Financial Services

With the holiday shopping season just a couple months away, Deluxe Corp. needed to generate awareness for three of its small business units: OrangeSoda, a search engine optimization and marketing firm; PsPrint, an online customized print solutions provider; and Bags & Bows, a custom provider of personalized gifts and packaging. Deluxe turned to Padilla Speer Beardsley for a sustained, multi-channel public relations campaign. Padilla created and implemented an awareness campaign that surpassed all objectives. The campaign generated more than 5,000 broadcast and social media placements. Newspaper stories appeared in all 50 states, totaling nearly one billion impressions.

Marketing business to business includes programs designed to introduce new products, or promote existing products or services to a business audience.

Full Text: **OVERVIEW**

With the holiday shopping season just a jingle away, Deluxe Corp. needed to generate awareness for three of its small business units: **OrangeSoda**, a search engine optimization and marketing firm; **PsPrint**, an online customized print solutions provider; and **Bags & Bows**, a custom provider of personalized gifts and packaging. Deluxe turned to Padilla Speer Beardsley for a sustained, multi-channel public relations campaign.

RESEARCH

Nothing focuses strategy like a compressed timeline. In about two weeks, Padilla developed and implemented an awareness campaign, working with Deluxe and Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) to create a consumer survey on a broad range of holiday shopping trends. The omnibus survey revealed important insights for small business owners, and results were used to generate earned and social media placements across business and consumer channels.

Primary

Padilla worked with Deluxe and ORC to craft survey questions that would create a story platform by revealing consumer preferences for online versus in-store shopping, and electronic versus paper greeting cards. Gift wrap trends also were identified. After surveying 1,000 consumers nationwide from Sept. 6-9, 2012, the Padilla team analyzed results, looking for convergence between consumer preferences, newsworthy trends, and services offered by OrangeSoda, PsPrint and Bags & Bows.

Key Findings

- More than 75 percent of consumers planned to shop online during the 2012 holiday season.

- Two-thirds of the respondents said they don't scroll beyond the first two pages of search results when performing online searches.
- Nearly 90 percent of respondents said they prefer to receive a traditional holiday card in the mail, rather than an electronic holiday card.

PLANNING

Objectives:

- Generate a minimum of 1,000 print and broadcast stories across both business and consumer media, ensuring that stories contain one or more key messages.
- Generate a minimum of 25 million media impressions.
- Create a minimum of 5 million impressions across social media channels.

Target Audiences

- Small business owners
- Small business media
- Small business bloggers
- Consumers

Strategies

- Create storytelling opportunities with trade and consumer media for Deluxe small business, building on consumer attitudes and preferences revealed by the ORC survey.
- Engage at least two independent, small business experts as spokespeople for OrangeSoda, PsPrint and Bags & Bows.
- Use social media and the Internet to create exposure beyond traditional media.

Key Messages

- To drive customers to their websites, small business owners need to optimize their websites for search engines.
- Small businesses offer unique and customized products that you can't find at the large online retailers.
- OrangeSoda, PsPrint and Bags & Bows are Deluxe companies.
- When you shop small businesses, you're supporting the local community.

EXECUTION

Strategy One: Create storytelling opportunities with trade and consumer media for Deluxe small business, building on consumer attitudes and preferences revealed by the ORC survey.

- Using the survey data, Padilla wrote and distributed a news release outlining the findings, incorporating quotes and survey insights from Jay Bean of OrangeSoda and Megan Kavanaugh of Bags & Bows. Padilla also created and distributed an entertaining and easy-to-read infographic, which illustrated key survey findings.
- The news release and infographic were distributed electronically to small business trade media and consumer media. Padilla followed up by phone with key reporters to encourage story placements. Media coverage included a graphic on the front page of **USA Today**, highlighting the survey results with mentions of both Deluxe and PsPrint.
- Padilla produced a radio tour featuring Derek Miner of OrangeSoda, who was interviewed by radio hosts in key markets about how small businesses can compete with large online retailers. The interviews provided a platform to discuss the importance of search engine optimization to maximize sales for small businesses. A total of 16 stations aired the interviews on Dec. 24, 2012, for 108 minutes of airtime. During the interviews, Derek frequently referenced solutions and products offered by OrangeSoda, PsPrint and Bags & Bows.

- Using survey data, Padilla wrote and distributed a mat news release to hundreds of local, weekly newspapers. More than 3,600 story placements appeared in all 50 states, generating more than 92 million impressions and greater awareness of Deluxe, PsPrint and Bags & Bows.

Strategy Two: Engage at least two independent, small business experts as spokespeople for OrangeSoda, PsPrint and Bags & Bows.

- Padilla worked with Deluxe to engage Melinda Emerson, noted small business author and marketer, to host a Tweet Chat with Jay Bean of OrangeSoda. The chat provided tips on ways small business owners can ensure a profitable 2012 holiday sales season. Emerson conducted the Tweet Chat on Oct. 10, 2012.
- Padilla worked with Deluxe to engage Gene Marks, small business author and blogger for the New York Times, to conduct a webinar for small business owners. The webinar gave tips on maximizing sales during the 2012 holiday season.

Strategy Three: Use social media and the Internet to create exposure beyond traditional media.

- Weeks before the Tweet Chat and webinar, Padilla reached out by email and phone to high-profile small business bloggers and key small business media, building interest and participation in the events. Multiple bloggers and media posted the information on their websites and in their publications; many also retweeted the information to their Twitter followers.
- The Tweet Chat conducted on Oct. 22 was lively and successful, with 115 active contributors eliciting 538 tweets. The event reached nearly 800,000 Twitter users through retweeted content and generated 18.5 million impressions.
- The Nov. 1 webinar was a big success, with 81 enthusiastic participants. Participants were obviously engaged, asked lots of questions and had rave reviews about the presenter and the content.

EVALUATION

Objective Exceeded: Generate a minimum of 1,000 print and broadcast stories across both business and consumer media, ensuring that stories contain one or more key messages.

- The campaign generated a total of **5,453** stories across print, broadcast and online media. Newspaper story placements appeared in **all 50 states**.
- All stories contained at least one of the Deluxe key messages. More than 75 percent of stories contained two or more key messages.
- One of the highest profile placements was a *USA TODAY* Snapshot, citing the survey results and mentioning both Deluxe and PsPrint on the cover page.

Objective Exceeded: Generate a minimum of 25 million media impressions.

- The campaign generated **1.7 billion** impressions, significantly surpassing the campaign goal.

Objective Exceeded: Create a minimum of 5 million impressions across social media channels.

- Online media placements included stories referencing the news release content or the infographic, totaling nearly **1 billion** impressions.
- Social media impressions generated by the Tweet Chat amounted to **18.5 million** impressions.

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