



The Dog's Bark

A PUBLICATION OF MAD DOG WIRELESS, INC.

Accountability...

By Rick Murphy - CEO



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Some people who work in my companies think I have never met a "system" I didn't like.

My job in these companies for the past decade has been to look at what is being done and give a fresh perspective. Sometimes it's as simple as seeing things that other people miss because they see it everyday (not unlike Tim's Disappearing Billboard story in this issue). But other times it is more in operational economics, the WAY we do things.

Many of us have been to restaurants where a server just

does not have the flow down. This past month at a management meeting in Victoria, BC, we had breakfast one Thursday morning at the Gadsby's Bed & Breakfast. The waiter brought the tea, then went back for the sugar, then went back for a spoon (brought us ONE for the whole table), then went back for napkins, then when he brought breakfast had to go back for silverwear, the catsup... you get the picture. This poor waiter had no mental checklist.

Last year, our company developed software that helps sales organizations keep track of their customers. Now there are dozens of these on the market, from Goldmine to ACT and others, varying in price from several dollars to several

thousands of dollars. Our system was designed to basically keep our sales people customer-focused at all times, keeping the most important information in front of them and their managers at all times. It has allowed us a top-down look at the 4000+ businesses we interact with in our radio and billboard divisions, and an artificial intelligence that projects a sales person's activities, closing radios and sales velocity into real dollar projections of business.

As of today, hundreds of businesses around the country as well as two of our advertising competitors in this area are using our systems to help keep them customer-focused and bottom line ROI (Return On Investment)

oriented. In future weeks, we are adding an insurance firm and a real estate office to this web based system. It's an exciting, stressful and rewarding time in the software division!

I like to think that if there is a problem, if you can count it, you can correct it.

How to make several tons of steel, wood and paper disappear...

By Tim McDonnell - Sales Manager, Bullhead City Office



A funny thing happened on the way to the office the other day. Okay, it sounds

like the first lines of a joke, but it fits. I was driving to work and stopped off to get a drink and met up with a customer of mine. We naturally began talking about marketing and advertising. He asked what I thought about the layout of his billboard.

Fact is I know the man has billboards. I have seen them. But for the life of me, I could

not conjure this one up. The blank stare must have given me away and he finally said, "You don't remember it do you?". I said that I guess I just hadn't seen this one. At this point he looked at me as if I had just grown a second head. He then took me by the arm, led me to the front of the store and pointed out the window at the board, sitting right across from the convenience store we were in, the one I have been stopping in daily since starting this job. Imagine what it is like when you suddenly see something as big as that board as if it magically appeared in the last five minutes. "I have had the same message on that sign for over two years now" my

customer said incredulously. "How could you miss it?".

It's funny how our brains work. When we see something new, it immediately registers. But leave that thing in the same place long enough and our brain just blots it out of the picture. I know this to be a fact by the way my wife asks about things in the garage that I have been stepping over for so long I don't even see them anymore. In our business, we know that an advertising message spoils quickly. Once someone has

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DISCOUNT TIRE CO.



The excitement and fun was obvious for this little "fisherman" at the "Kazual Fishing for Prizes" live remote broadcast at Discount Tire Co.

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What causes those slowdowns on the highway???

By Chris Rolando - President



This past month I spent a week in Michigan giving a week long seminar on marketing and

advertising in a down economy. I started in Marquette on Monday and ended in Dearborn on Friday, talking to thousands of people along the way. If you think your business is suffering in the slight adjustment we are seeing, talk to the people who live within sight of the Ford Headquarters. While there I saw a house that was listed last year for \$440,000 that is still for sale, but for the reduced price of \$230,000.

When business and the economy are booming, making money is easy. People have confidence and they spend "knowing" that tomorrow there will be more. That spending fuels more business in the economic system you are a part of, and the others in that system start spending too. So why does it all suddenly stop? Let me put it this way... have you ever been on a freeway, cruising along at 70 MPH and suddenly you are crawling along at 20 for

miles? The you reach a point and things suddenly speed up again and you wonder "what caused that slowdown?". That is what an economic slowdown is like. The things that are a part of it, things like increased inventories, rising interest rates and lack of consumer confidence are not always causal to the problem.

So what can be done when in a so called "down" economy? In our radio business, we see a lot of cancellation of advertising from people who are getting nervous. At the exact same time we see a lot of increased budgets from advertisers. What is the difference? In any economic shift, some business look to increase and some look to be "safe". The ones looking to be safe open their books, and the first thing in there is advertising. Starts with an "A", intangible, first thing to cut. The others who increase advertising know that in a down economy where people are spending less, their product or service is still going to be sold... by SOMEONE, so it may as well be them!

I am reminded of a story I was once told about RJ Wrigley, the chewing gum magnate. The story

goes (and there are dozens of versions) Wrigley at the time was spending millions per year on advertising at a time when his competitors were spending thousands. Mr. Wrigley was seated on a plane to Chicago. The man seated next to Wrigley asked why he was still spending money on advertising being as well known as Wrigley's gum was. Wrigley replied "for the same reason the pilot does not turn off the engines once we are in the air".

In a shifting or down economy, people are still going to make purchases. They are still going to need services. Do you need to trim fat from your business? You always need to review what you are doing and cut where prudent. Is cutting advertising budgets smart? The things to remember when making this very important decision are: 1) Most sales are a zero sum game. You get the sale or someone else does. In a slower economy, there just may be less prospects out there. You need to assure you get more of them than anyone else. 2) Sooner or later, like on the highway; that bottle neck will open back up. Will you have the gas when it does?

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heard or seen the message about three times, they stop seeing or hearing it. It's not personal; it's just the brains way of not overloading on input! A sort of biological Spam filter. What we in advertising must do is continue to supply new messages with new words and images to engage consumers and reach past the blocks some brains have set. If this wasn't the case I'm sure Coke would have saved hundreds of millions on new ad campaigns over the years and would still be running the venerable "Coke-Is-It" jingle of the 1970's.

I am constantly reviewing what is being said on our radio stations in terms of copy. My goal is to make sure we change every ad for every one of our customers every week of the year. It is a huge job, but we have the resources to do it. You see, I have no illusions about being the next Lance Burton, and I don't want to make one of our advertisers' business disappear!

Marketing... it isn't just about ads!

By Lani Plesko - Sales & Marketing



Kelly Doran, at Mohave Arizona Steel, shared a problem with me. He couldn't find a dedicated employee, but was open to new

ideas.

I called Dorothy Machula at Palo Verde College, who happens to have

a welding course. Mohave High School Shop teacher, Mr. Vandiver teaches welding and is always looking for a way to motivate students. The final outcome? An essay contest, the prize being a paid internship and scholarship for a welding course. Everyone's problem is solved.

The success of a business is based on the relatedness shared with those served. Note the word "served." The

question every business must contemplate is "Will I be a commodity, or an invaluable asset? Are my customers calling for the "deal of the day," or are they calling for advice on problems and issues?" Vendors are not known for bringing fresh ideas. They are a source for competitive prices.

In business, we always need to be thinking of ways to serve our business. But when business can also serve our community...that just makes it better for everyone involved.

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95.3 FM - Bullhead City
95.9 FM - Kingman



101.9FM - Lake Havasu City
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