



**PLUMB
MARKETING**

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*Straight
to sweet
results.*



PLUMB PEOPLE AND PLACES

Tim Dykes always wanted to be in the mailing biz

As a child, Plumb Fulfillment Manager Tim Dykes wanted to be a mailman. He notes, “My mom was a stay-at-home parent. We always went to the door when the mailman came. He was the nicest person I’d ever met. I thought it would be fun to give people things and talk with them.”

He got his wish. At Plumb for 14 years, Tim is in charge of shipping, receiving and fulfillment of orders for fulfillment clients. Basically, he makes sure that ordered items are all included in a shipment, packages everything up to be both efficient



Tim Dykes

and well-protected, then sees that they’re shipped to the correct recipients in a timely manner. He also handles inventory control and management.

“The favorite part of my job is the packaging—finding the box that will best fit the product—and hunting down the best shipping price for our clients,” Tim emphasizes.

The Lakewood native and army veteran applauds the caring, sharing and personable nature of Plumb’s clients and his colleagues. He says, “Overall, we’ve been lucky with great customers and people. All in all, everybody is pretty easy to work with, and everybody is invested in a win-win outcome.”

Tim sees fulfillment continuing to expand as more people creating new products realize the value of outsourcing this critical function instead of doing it themselves—freeing up their time for other important efforts. “They can order online and get a one-stop way to do everything fulfillment related,” Tim says.

As his department grows, Tim wants to be a model for others coming on board. “I’m always looking for improvement in processes and my performance, and I want to help other people succeed in what they’re doing. I won’t ask anyone to do anything I’m not willing to.”

Tim balances his work life with family. Married since 1997, Tim and his wife have two children.

Marketing spin cycle

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rums to see how the company rates. In this realm, legitimate testimonials, endorsements and case studies featuring clients, colleagues or partners can be far more influential than unsubstantiated claims of excellence.

Bottom line, where possible let raving fans tell the company story.

People are fed up with “pretend” customer caring

Godin complains about the pervasive customer service culture where companies tell you how important your call is, followed by long hold times and interactions where the customer service rep is rated by how fast they can get you off the phone.

He notes, “That’s the opposite of customer engagement. This company spent a lot of time and money to set up a phone queuing system. Then when you talk to them, they don’t care enough to talk back, or if they do talk back, they put someone in your face who has been programmed to be a cog in a machine. . . If you’re serious about engaging the customer, you realize that the most valuable moments you have are when the customer is using your product, on the phone with you, actually engaged with you.”

Bottom line, people want to be heard, not handled—and to be dealt with in a forthright and supportive way. Companies failing to do so will increasingly become prey to companies that do.

Want to investigate ways to better excite and engage prospects and present buyers alike? Let’s talk about it: 303-607-9424; shara@plumbmarketing.com

PLUMB MARKETING
STRAIGHT & SWEET

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Marketing’s spin cycle gets washed away in tide of buyer demands for truth, substance, positive reviews

In the “Mad Men” advertising era, a clever tagline, catchy copy and a never-ending emphasis on “positive spin” was largely how marketing was done. With the ability of social media to quickly reward or punish companies with reviews, reports and rumors, it’s time to ditch the spin and concentrate on presenting the best product or service possible in an honest way.

Positive feedback from the social media world is the reward for doing it right—for creating something of substance that engages and intrigues buyers. Conversely, organizations showcasing substandard offerings cleverly cloaked in a bunch of spin will likely get their butts kicked in the marketplace—if not now, then certainly down the road.

Thought leader and very popular blogger Seth Godin addresses the evolution in an interview by Marketo Chief Marketing Officer Sanjay Dholakia. Godin points out, “Most marketers have come from an environment where everyone is selling exactly the same product. The way you won was with a clever tag line. That is the world of ‘Mad Men.’ Modern marketers say, ‘Well, of course Apple people are waiting in line to hear Apple’s announcement because they’re actually doing something new. They’re not just spinning the old’ . . . Their role is coming up with an experience, an environment, a service, a product, that people can’t help talking about, and then consistently delivering on that.”

Godin continues, “Say you start a real boutique hotel. Then you make sure the right people are staying there in the first few weeks. Word gets out among their circle of friends, who talk to the next circle and the next, and the hotel is sold out.

Or you can start a fake boutique hotel, which Hyatt Hotel is trying to do. You skip all those steps and make it look like a boutique hotel. And then you’re puzzled and surprised when there isn’t a line out the door. The reason there isn’t a line out the door is that the people you were hoping to connect with can tell that it’s not a real boutique hotel.”

It’s important to note here that Actor Will Rogers, born all the way back in 1879, had his own version of this concept—so its roots are in fact long established. He said simply, “If advertisers spent the same amount of money on improving their products as they do on advertising then they wouldn’t have to advertise them.”

Bottom line, create great products/services and a stellar customer support team, and let the good times—and positive buzz—roll.

Peer-to-peer outweighs marketer claims

Increasingly, consumers want “unbiased” third-party endorsements. According to Godin, there is “more reliance by consumers on peer-to-peer connections and less on the message they hear directly from the marketer.”

The ubiquitous nature of social media makes it relatively easy for prospects to scour reviews and fo-



Will Rogers



Seth Godin

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STRAIGHT TALK by LYNNDELL EPP

Toys for Tots...the rest of the story

This holiday season, we teamed up with the Denver Fire Department to participate in a “Toys for Tots” drive benefitting kids at Children’s Hospital. In the midst of everybody’s harried and hurried quest to get ready for the season, this event reminded us of the importance of going beyond ourselves to help others.

Between our workdays, families, the daily challenges of a modern-day metropolis (seen a construction zone lately?) and a seemingly never-ending checklist of chores, it’s easy to get trapped in a self-absorbed cocoon of frustration and sadness. There’s too much to do, too little time to get it all done, and many of us wind up throwing ourselves a pity party every now and then.

Want to get out of that cocoon? Do something meaningful for people whose daily challenges focus on getting through the next chemo session without too much nausea. Find ways to support those who,

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Airbnb online service uses print to test content marketing strategy

It's the ultimate compliment...or is that complement? Airbnb, the global service that matches those seeking lodging with private residence owners, is launching a new print magazine called "Pineapple," according to Joe Pulizzi, founder of the Content Marketing Institute. He concludes, "I never thought I'd see the day where a print magazine became a test concept for an online initiative... but here you go."

Pulizzi notes, "The 128-page folio will cover the experiences of Airbnb hosts, guests, and travelers. Sure, it's print — which is still an excellent way to cut through the clutter



in the content marketing space — but there is a deeper story here: Airbnb is using this print component as a test run for a larger content marketing strategy. By launching with a planned circulation of just 1,500 sub-

scribers, it is clearly looking to this move as a way to gather valuable data and feedback. Once successful (and depending on how the company plans to measure that success), Airbnb will launch its brand content on other mobile and web platforms."

Once again, this supports our longstanding claim that it isn't about digital vs. print (and the many pronouncements of print's demise). It's about digital and print complementing one another. As the lesser-deployed avenue in this digital-dominated era, print presents a fresh, noteworthy look.

It's somewhat akin to the exercise of placing a black-and-white graphic on a full-color page. As the different look amid an array of color, the viewer's eye likely will gravitate first toward the "old-fashioned" black and white image.

Want to blend digital and print for the best results and bang for your buck? Let's tackle the topic: 303-607-9424; shara@plumbmarketing.com

STRAIGHT TALK

The Toys for Tots story

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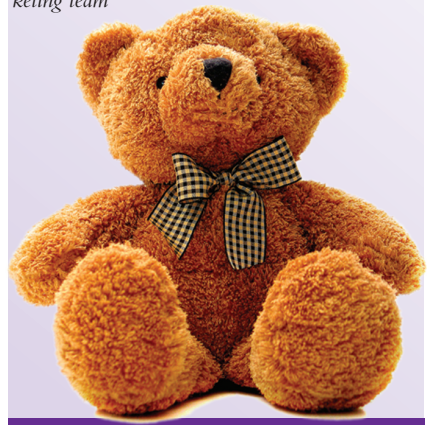
like you, have too little time...only their schedule is being dictated by a terminal illness.

In addition to the ill children at Children's Hospital, we discovered that our Toys for Tots drive brought some added joy to those participating—including firefighter and Marine reservist Danny Ly, who coordinated delivery of the toys to the kids.

For us at Plumb Marketing, it was fun, fulfilling, a bit teary, and a reminder to take joy in what we do have. It was also a poignant message about the importance of not sweating the small stuff hitting us every day. And, when you really stop and think about it, most of it is small stuff. Concentrate on what's truly important, and let go of the rest as best you can.

And, anytime you feel the cocoon closing around you once again, perform a random or not-so-random act of kindness. It doesn't have to be grandiose, just heartfelt. It will open up new perspectives for you, as well as improve your community.

Here's to a happy and healthy 2015, Lyndell, Briana and the rest of the Plumb Marketing team



TIPS and TOPICS

Costco's blockbuster business isn't just about price

Amid the incessant discussion of "customer engagement," Costco is one bigbox retailer that defies the mega-institutional malaise blanketing most of the nation. We've become accustomed to getting lousy service and, in many cases, second-rate product quality in exchange for low prices.

Now that people are increasingly demanding quality service and products in addition to favorable pricing, it's no wonder that Costco is reaping the rewards. Its longstanding policies of superior customer care, extremely liberal return policies, and extensive vetting of products hitting the shelves are paying off bigtime. People can shop Costco confidently—knowing they will be treated fairly and well, that merchandise by and large is higher quality, and that they can get a great price.

Try doing that with a cable or satellite company, or most of the other bigbox chains.

When you ask for help (via phone or on-site) at Costco, you generally get people motivated to provide support and solutions without looking at their watches to see how fast they can get rid of you. If they don't have answers, they typically will either try to get them for you or direct you toward appropriate sources.



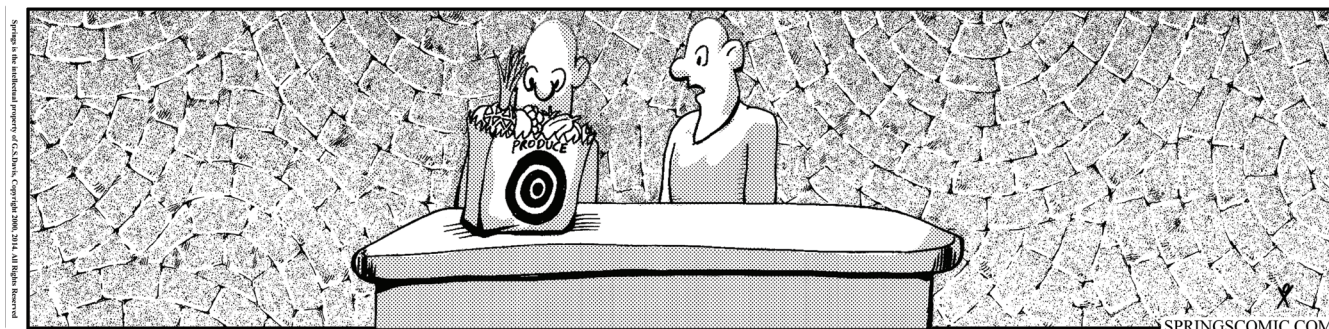
It's significant that Costco carries in the neighborhood of 4,000 items versus a WalMart with 100,000—so they are invested in selling the best performing, most reliable items from manufacturers willing to agree to Costco's return policies. With this level of selectivity, under-performing products generally go away fairly quickly. All this leaves customers in the driver's seat when it comes to customer experience—which is what much of "customer engagement" addresses.

Costco even has the temerity to turn away highly popular manufacturers unwilling to honor return protocols. Evidently, that is the reason that they only recently started selling iPads and other Apple products. Previously, Apple was unwilling to agree to Costco's 90-day computer/electronic return policy.

So, want to expand your business and profitability? Follow the Costco blueprint. They were customer engaged long before "customer engagement" buzz became deafening.

PLUMB & PLUMBER

By G.S. Davis



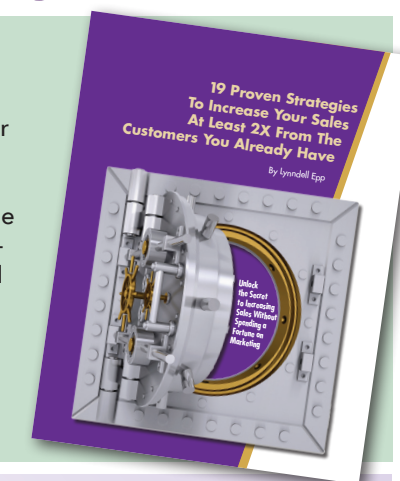
"YEAH... I JUST DON'T THINK THAT'S THE RIGHT TARGET MARKET..."

SWEET DEALS & NOTES

Who is this guy showing smart small business owners the easy, fast, simple, secret and lucrative way to more customers?

If you didn't know that Lyndell Epp could help you grow your business through smarter marketing strategies, then you've been missing out. Over the last 19 years, Lyndell has worked with hundreds of companies to implement his powerful, proven strategies in many kinds of businesses to dramatically improve their advertising results. Lyndell is the owner of Plumb Marketing in Denver, Colorado, and his passion is in helping small business owners discover the better and more effective ways to market their businesses and grow their income.

Lyndell accepts coaching clients who want to dramatically improve their marketing results and income. To hire Lyndell to advise or consult and help you increase your profits, please call the office and leave a voice mail at **303-607-9424** or just email him at Lyndell@plumbmarketing.com



FREE MARKETING EVALUATION

One hour consultation. No selling. Discover how to keep your budget under 7%; Identify four Marketing Systems. Learn how to develop a marketing message that will have prospects beating down your door. Email contact@plumbmarketing.com to set up a time for your FREE consultation.



GET BRANDED ...

Put your brand in front of your best prospects. Order 100+ of your favorite product like logo wear, pens, mugs, caps or cups, to name a few, by February 27, 2015 and save **\$50 OFF** the cost. **PLUS:** We will give you 100 custom printed full color business envelopes **FREE***

*Offer does not apply to postage or shipping expenses. #10 regular or window envelopes provided.

Plumb Marketing REFERRAL REPORT

Receive a **\$50 CREDIT** and jar of plum jam for every prospect you refer to us that turns into a customer. Just email us the information for any business that needs help with marketing, printing or fulfillment, and let us know who you referred so you get credit. Thank you for thinking of us and referring Plumb Marketing to your colleagues, business associates and friends.



We're cleaning up our data

Did we get it right? If any of your contact information—including name, email, phone, physical address and website—needs updating, please let us know.