Quick Hits of Marketing Wit – Session Notes
Wednesday, May 3 @ 2:45pm

Speakers:

Kerri Fox, VP of Marketing + Communications at The New Children’s Museum (KF)
-Background in ad agencies + brand strategy. IHOP and Baskin Robbins. 15+ years of experience in marketing and brand strategy.

Randy Grimsley, Director of Marketing at Children’s Museum of South Dakota (RG)
-Background in communications and advertising. Traditional marketing at agency level. PBS radio and TV in Chicago.

Carrie Hutchcraft, Director of Marketing + Development at The Magic House, St. Louis Children’s Museum (CH)
-Communications, PR, Marketing background. Build-A-Bear Workshop. 5 years of experience at The Magic House. The Magic House has over 580,000 annual visitors.

Sarah Wacker, PR Consultant (SW)
-16 years of practice in PR. Working with Escondido Children’s Discovery Museum in San Diego. Also works with Citrus PR, work closely with SD Museum Council. Focus on earned media.

What brought you here?
- Focus on millennial+ moms- ages 25-40
- What can we stop doing? Bad practices
- How to connect to the community in different ways beyond social media. How to market a new museum to the community?

Take advantage of every opportunity you have!

How do you use LinkedIn for your museum?

CH: Have employees follow and add the museum as their employment. More focus on other platforms.
KF: Most of our marketing is for programs/events. This year we are trying to be seen as a more important part of the community. We want to use LinkedIn as a platform to market ourselves to donors and share early education based articles.
RG: We do not use LinkedIn at our museum other than on a personal level. It is on the backburner.

Do you have a social media policy for staff and board?
RG: We do not, but we should. We have one for our internal focus but do not have a concrete policy. Our board does not use or understand our social media as much as we would like them to.
CH: No posting at work. When speaking about Magic House you cannot be doing it as an employee. Have had to confront employees in the past.
RG: Everyone knows someone...you never know who is following be it a potential donor etc. We do not have a formal policy, YET.

Audience: Policy that says “if you have any content on your profile that isn't appropriate for children, you may not link/share on your personal page- you cannot be connected to us”

Having employees not post while they are working. Everything that is from the Museum’s standpoint on social it is funneling through one person.

RG: We’re trusted like teachers. This is almost an extension. We have to decide how far to proceed.

*How do you update your board between board meetings?*
KF: We do a couple things for our board. We have a web page for them with a log-in- links to important/useful information. About 6 months ago we started to do board e-newsletters every other week to update our board on happenings/news/highlights- quick read and highly visual. We have a board of young, working professionals and these visual e-newsletter is a good, quick way to touch base.
SW: We always make sure to share coverage, we want to be champions of our success in the media and sharing it socially/with potential donors.

*Does your program focus on events and programs or more generically on your museum work?*
CH: I have historically focused on using our media to help us get the word out about programs and events. This year I have taken a more strategic approach to work with the media to get the word out about our mission-focused work, showcasing what we are doing in the community AND what the community can come to.
KF: We are also trying to do both. We are also nominating staff for awards to help get ourselves out there and talk about the things we are doing and how we are experts in what we do.

*Advertising Facebook/Twitter etc. What are my best options?*
RG: Facebook mostly--only do these if we are tracking and analyzing. Don’t do Facebook ads unless you are actually tracking. Develop a connection between viewer and brand.
CH: Facebook/Twitter/Instagram. Facebook is where our investment goes. Your posts aren’t getting noticed unless you’re putting money behind your posts. Boost posts are a great spend. Use business manager and Facebook insights to define the audience you are trying to attract. Ads for Instagram/Facebook are linked so when you post an ad on Facebook it will also post on Instagram. Using Facebook to tell our story- posting about grants, purpose, mission.

*Traditional Ads: Are billboards a good investment?*
RG: Branded vs Specific? Scattered or Isolated? Outdoor advertising is probably the most expensive ways to promote. Big budget items because of costs.
Audience: Survey of where our campers are coming from, and chose to put summer camp billboards in the most heavily served areas. Also Billboards in Spanish.
Clear Channel does non-profit discounts. Only used these for branded campaigns.
CH: Remnant boards (open boards) for clear channel/other places. For us these have performed very well. Saved the art for us, we are able to re-use the board to save production costs.
RG: Digital vs Flat billboards. Digital- you are often sharing the space. For us, we are in a more rural area and we would not get enough people to warrant the cost of the outdoor campaign. “Three miles away, turn let”- that is the kind we would use.

**Do you have standing discounts for teachers/military etc.?**
RG: We do not. This does lead to conflict. We have to say that we’re a non-profit and our admission is already lower than a movie. We work to keep our admission fee as low as possible so we cannot allow the discounts. We do have “access initiatives” though. We might do a teachers appreciation day in the future but we will see.
CH: We have a bunch of discounts for military, foster families, seniors, etc.
KF: We do almost the same. Blue Star in the summer, standing discounts for military, teachers, seniors.

**Audience: ACM Reciprocity [ACM Reciprocal Network]?**
RG: Basically you get half-price admission at other ACM institutions in the network. IF you have a lot of travelers in your market it’s a good thing to have. Your museum has to be on ACM list.

**What is the best way to come up with talking points to present to staff so everyone knows how to talk about the museum?**
RG: Asking CEO/Executive Director to clarify terms/talking points and keeping everything consistent with that.
KF: We just came out with a Communication Style Guide. We have quick facts about the Museum (brief history, building facts), whole section on logos and branding, color palette, font, page on key terms, how we refer to ourselves, punctuation etc, letterhead, agenda, PowerPoints and email signatures. This is distributed to employees and also exists on our shared drive that is accessible to everyone. This will hopefully make sure that everything coming from the museum is consistent and looks like us.
RG: A style guide is always at the bottom of the list but it is SO important and useful.
SW: I really recommend media training. Making everyone a “spokesperson” for the museum.
KF: You can have your own media training. You do not have to outsource.

**How often do we need to refresh our Marketing Materials and ads?**
RG: I would say every 3 years. Just your imagery and how you present yourself.
KF: I would argue that on your social media and website that it should always be current.

**Traditionally advertising, is TV worth it?**
CH: I think you can get more for your budget by working with digital.
RG: I wouldn’t suggest buying TV unless you have the knowledge. If it is something you want to explore, I would talk to a consultant to give you some insight.
KF: We haven’t really bought TV but we do work with radio. We have a trade with KPBS for radio which has been working very well for us. COX was also one of our sponsors so they made an ad for us and are currently running it on their stations as well as travelers channel in the hotels. Take advantage of partnerships: how can you help me?

**PR: What could make a marketing budget go further to help with future opportunities?**

SW: Collaborations! These create an extension of opportunities.

KF: The Museum Council is a group of 45 museums in South Dakota who meet and collaborate. We do Museum Month, Kids Free...multiple promotions. Working with other museums is a huge asset, this will help in cross marketing and free promotion.

RG: This year we did do television and I put all our ads on one station and extend to digital. Now we have a relationship and I can ask them to come over and feature us on TV.

**How do you define which organizations to collaborate and how?**

CH: We are a little picky. We want to partner with places that have like missions and that your families would find value in. If together your message can be a bigger message. We have a checklist: are they family friendly? Are they in hot water? Etc.

**How does your marketing department support other departments?**

RG: I am the marketing department at my museum. I’ve tried to formalize things with deadlines, if I need to print something it needs to be signed off by you. I have to hold firm. I have to try and create organization to those who don’t understand deadlines.

KF: We have a marketing request form with their department, project, cost, deadlines, and “did your director sign off on this?” We are like an in-house ad agency. We have to have them fill out the form and then have a meeting with marketing to get on the same page for bigger projects.

RG: Providing input in the early phases is very important and contributing your knowledge/experience.

KF: Tell us what you are trying to get and we will tell you from a marketing perspective how to get there.

**Audience: Do you have a graphics person?**

KF: Yes, we have a multimedia coordinator who does media/photos/graphics and web. Our marketing manager also helps with web updates.

CH: We have a designer as well, which is very helpful.

RG: I have a graphic design intern. The downside of interns is that they are only present for a few months. Sometimes we outsource to local agencies which will come out of our marketing budget so that must come out of the marketing budget.

**Social Media: What are the best social media channels?**

RG: We just use Facebook/Twitter

CH: Twitter is our conversation piece, Facebook has become our comment card- now we get most of our reviews/feedback. Instagram is more behind the scenes pictures. Videos work really well on Facebook.
RG: For those without a full time social media managers I would recommend focusing on two channels.

**Audience: Policy for responding to viewers/responders?**
RG: We do not have a policy, usually we do not interact. Response once or twice. If they are swearing or there are threats then I will shut them down and report them. I try not to do anything that is prompting more response.
SH: We are learning more as it is become our comment card. We do public comments that shows that we responded and a private message to that person to resolve the issue. Avoiding public conflict. We want to give quick responses to every comment.
KF: We respond to everything within a day. Be it negative or positive, within a day.

**Audience: Response time, how many people do you put access to?**
RG: I let education take care of our blog as a separate voice. Only one person posting but one other just in case. You really need a consistent voice. I’ll take ideas for post but I’m the one who posts.
CH: We have “backup plan” people. If you send us a direct message during afterhours we have an auto response saying we will respond in a timely manner.

**Audience: Cross generational marketing? Millennial moms to grandparents?**
RG: Moms are fastest growing audience of Facebook. I will write messages that tie together to reinforce things. Program specific. There needs to be balance.
CH: We do a print ad for the older age group that targets events focused on grandparents. We don’t use social as much for trying to reach them. We also do emails for our grandparent audience. Earned media is a cross reaching platform as well.
KF: We do radio and PR but we also are thoughtful with where we are advertising – trying to target.

**Audience: How do you quantify the success of social media?**
RG: It’s very hard to quantify. Send to specific web page or call certain number postings on social media.
CH: There are social media firms that you can use to hire for a 10th of the cost of a social media person, could be an option if you want to test having a more dedicated focus without staff manpower.

**Audience: Should I combine messages for two different entities at our museum?**
CH: You may need to think about making them two separate entities.
RG: When we advertise for events we do not use our branding or logo. We keep them separate.

**Connecting with the community:**
RG: Outreach is the best way to spread the word.
KF: Is there a university near you? Learning institutions? Take advantage of reciprocity and cross promotion.
**Millennial Moms:**

RG: Social media!

SH: Tapping into mommy bloggers. Some will want free admission or a trade, some want to get paid.

**What can you stop doing?**

CH: Focus on your plan and what you are doing. The things that don’t fit should be taken out of your plan.

**What is one take away from a marketing stand point that you should keep in mind?**

SH: Don’t give every news station the same thing. Add variety to segments.

KF: Capitalize on free media. Focus on getting on TV to talk about what you’re doing. Calendar listings, mommy bloggers, refreshing website constantly—mobile optimized website. Social media. Earned media, PR.

CH: Google Adwords, AdGrant and have a good support team in your marketing committee, especially if you are a small team.

RG: Don’t fall prey to these sales reps.