



MANAGING THE

MARKETING TEAM OF TOMORROW, TODAY

Marketing is such a multi-faceted world that there is now a need more than ever to rethink the roles and responsibilities for typical non-profit arts and events marketing.

If organizations are not putting their best foot forward and producing results in ticket sales, donations, sponsorship, attendance and brand building, their efforts are going for naught and spending good money after bad in search of a holy grail that will never be achieved.

It is understood that no Executive Director or Board of Directors will ever be truly satisfied with the results of their marketing. While we pay finance departments to deal with the figures, present financials and file reports, the marketing staff always seems to have a question hanging over their heads "what exactly do you do all day?" Well, I can attest for marketing teams everywhere, they do quite a lot. Which is why there needs to be time for a change in roles, responsibilities and results.

Job One

Marketing is responsible for the day in and day out transactional elements of selling and promoting and my least favorite phrase: "getting the word out." But marketing also assumes a larger responsibility in defining, shaping and building the brand of the organization, impacting results in today's sales, and also in the weeks, months and years to come.

When marketing executes all of its plans, combined with the promised programmatic delivery, seats are filled, donations are made and organizations prosper. When anything is out of phase, results languish and it is ever more difficult to capture the momentum necessary to make progress happen.

The goal is to present precisely the right content at the right time for the right audience on the right channel.

Data assists in evaluating the outcomes (SCIENCE), but the real work in marketing is creating the content (ART), which is a several step process from art to copy to images to video to scheduling to distributing and everything in between.

Even before the content is developed, the marketing team needs to be represented in the room where the decisions are made regarding programming, fundraising and strategy. Marketing needs to have a voice in the elements that will

eventually determine success or failure. After all, if the project, program or fundraiser is ill conceived, or is promoting an idea that does not gain traction with the audience it seeks, it will fail.

Hard work is a necessary element of success and one can not give up too soon on a project or program, yet we must be aware of when it is time to edit, revise or reboot an entire campaign.

The Marketing Team of Tomorrow

The marketing team structure many organizations currently use is a top down VP/Director of Marketing with Marketing Managers, Coordinators, Social Media Managers with Photographers, Videographers and Writers populating the lower rungs of the ladder. But few of us are flush with the talent and resources to fill every position.

The answer for the Marketing Team of Tomorrow (MTT) is more people. But not in the form of FTEs. It is a great time for us to consider that people's passions and talents can be used to benefit organizations, while providing the flexibility of not having the traditional bonds of full time employees.

The MTT means more responsibility needed at the Content Manager level – but in the role of talent manager as much as anything. Determining what content is needed when and where and from whom is the key to keeping the content beast fed.

Double Rainbows

Let's face it, there will ALWAYS be double rainbows. Those once in a lifetime moments that are captured because someone is in the right place at the right time. But how many times does that actually happen?

For the majority of us, the content our audience seeks can and should be planned and scripted. While we may not have access to the actual event, artist, actor, musician until a precise date and time, the more serendipity we take out of a situation, the more possibility there can be for creativity as the campaign rolls out.

It is in the best interest of the MTT to work hard up front on securing the creative talent and thinking through the different elements of the campaign and let the execution part be handled by vendors or volunteers.

The key is having everyone know his or her exact

responsibility to the project. Who is writing? Who is filming? Who is editing? Who is curating? What are the deadlines? Once these planning and artistic elements are put in place, it's time for the scientific elements to be put to use.

The science of marketing comes from the reams of data generated page by page, email by email and social click per social click. Analyzing this data in real time is where the challenge gets real.

If our emails are not being opened, do they need to be sent? If they are being opened and nothing done with them, what does that say about the presentation, the method or the subject of the content itself?

The same can be said about social media marketing as well, which is why the metric of engagement is much more important than likes. 'Likes' allow the door to be opened, but the party going on inside only gets better once your content is being engaged, shared and acted upon.

You need someone to be analyzing this data and making tweaks and recommendations as you execute the plan. Ideally, this person can also be working on database and CRM management and should be a little more left brained than right. Be sure you are hiring for the job description and not the department.

The Flattening of the Marketing Org Chart

I've never been much of a fan of org charts – especially in the realm of arts and non-profits that are resource-challenged.

For me, marketing has always been an example of “all hands on deck.” We can never create enough content to satiate our audiences and in the world of arts and events, we are creating as fast as possible in order to make those connections and engagements possible.

With this in mind it truly takes an Army vs. An Army of One. As most organizations currently function, there is one person responsible for all elements of content creation, curation and distribution for all elements. Above this overworked, underappreciated professional, usually one person is overseeing the department who engages with other department leaders and senior management. If your organization is lucky, below these two levels are one or two folks who are writing releases, updating Twitter feeds and curating Instagram posts.

What we are looking to do is to make the most out of our teams. If our Marketing Team leader is more analytical, then our content manager can carry a little more responsibility in creation and curation. If the opposite is true, then the content manager's responsibility will be reporting on the impact of the work, while the Team Leader spends more time with the creative team. Together they should work seamlessly while bringing on as much outsourced talent as possible to create content according to the master plan.

Developing job descriptions and purposes for each function is first and foremost as we try and build our TMM.

Help Wanted: Aluminum Siding Storytellers

What if we flattened this chart and took the resources committed to the entire marketing department and distributed them evenly over for hire journalists, authors, videographers, editors, with just one person managing the marketing flow, and embracing the talents and passions of many independent content providers.

In a recent conversation on the status of tv/film graduates, a colleague lamented that our institutions of higher learning are doing a great disservice to their students and employers

by teaching 20th century techniques that are no longer needed. Rather, the current environment is ready for artist-journalist-marketers that can make aluminum siding as emotionally engaging as the next appeal for shelter animals and a \$150 million Hollywood blockbuster.

The solution must be more people to capture and catalog the content. An army of volunteers, interns and hired guns who are great at what they do – to make you look great at what you do.

The Gig Economy

New market forces and the willingness for young people to want to engage and build their exposure and portfolio allows for a great opportunity to hire folks for short stints, equal to the seasonal employees hired by retailers and logistics for the holidays and theme parks and recreation centers for the summer.

But a basic structure needs to be present in order for this plan to succeed and flourish:

- There needs to be a definition and understanding of MMC (Minimum Media Coverage). What is the agreed-upon minimum coverage for any specific event or program in real time and in post-event phases? From there you can build to what can be achieved in coverage and storytelling.
- Developing hard and fast deadlines is next. There needs to be a level of accountability at a level higher than ever before to maximize this approach.
- Agreement as to what the goals are to be. Marketing can only be responsible for the managing of the schedule and creation and execution of the content and reporting on their results. The outcomes are generally the domain of the department leaders.
- Participation by the Department leaders in a weekly meeting to discuss short term and long-range goals. Meetings are not to exceed 30 minutes and focus on elements of timeline, deliverables and previous results for the short term.
- Responsibility for creating content needs to be determined from the very beginning. A mix of creative comes from marketing as well as the department, especially in the realm of social media. Everyone must be aware of their role in capturing events as they happen.
- Content creation vs. content curation – It is marketing's responsibility to sift through content from all sources to come up with the right image, gif, meme or video to tell the story of the project or program while maintaining the brand standards.
- Interns are always an attractive proposition however, new work rules and the discussion of paid vs. course credit will need to be decided before opening up this as a viable option.

As you can see, the components of the Marketing Team of Tomorrow are already in place in many organizations. The reliance on tech and data has become one game changer. While flattening the org chart allows for us to add more individual talents to the mix in order to continue to feed the social media beast.

Good luck as you keep the seats filled, the bank accounts growing, sponsors pleased and guests delighted while supporting the marketing team to deliver the best work possible.

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