

# Chapter 1

## **MUCH MORE THAN JUST A WEBSITE: HOW ONLINE GAMES, CARTOONS, APPS, INFOGRAPHICS, AND MORE CAN BOOST YOUR BUSINESS**

The World Wide Web and e-mail were just the beginning of online marketing. In this chapter we show you how successful visual marketing accomplishes a variety of objectives and takes multiple forms today.

Join us as we explore how social networking sites such as Facebook and the world of mobile apps have redefined how people communicate. Explore a fabrics showroom without leaving your home or office through the intuitive navigation techniques of a great website such as [CarnegieFabrics.com](http://CarnegieFabrics.com).

Some projects are all about technology yet take a relatively low-tech approach. Expert Laser Services knows all about the latest in printing technology, but instead of pushing technology, they used a YouTube contest about destroying printers to build their marketing. And some like GoldRun use the latest technology to insert an image into a virtual reality—whereas Two Leaves and a Bud Tea Company uses stunning photography of tea farmers to distinguish its brand from its much larger competitors.

And just when you think you have all forms of marketing figured out, new marketing technology such as QR codes come along as technology evolves. We show you more than 30 examples of online visual marketing—ranging from simple to sophisticated—all to help you boost business without an exorbitant information technology (IT) budget.

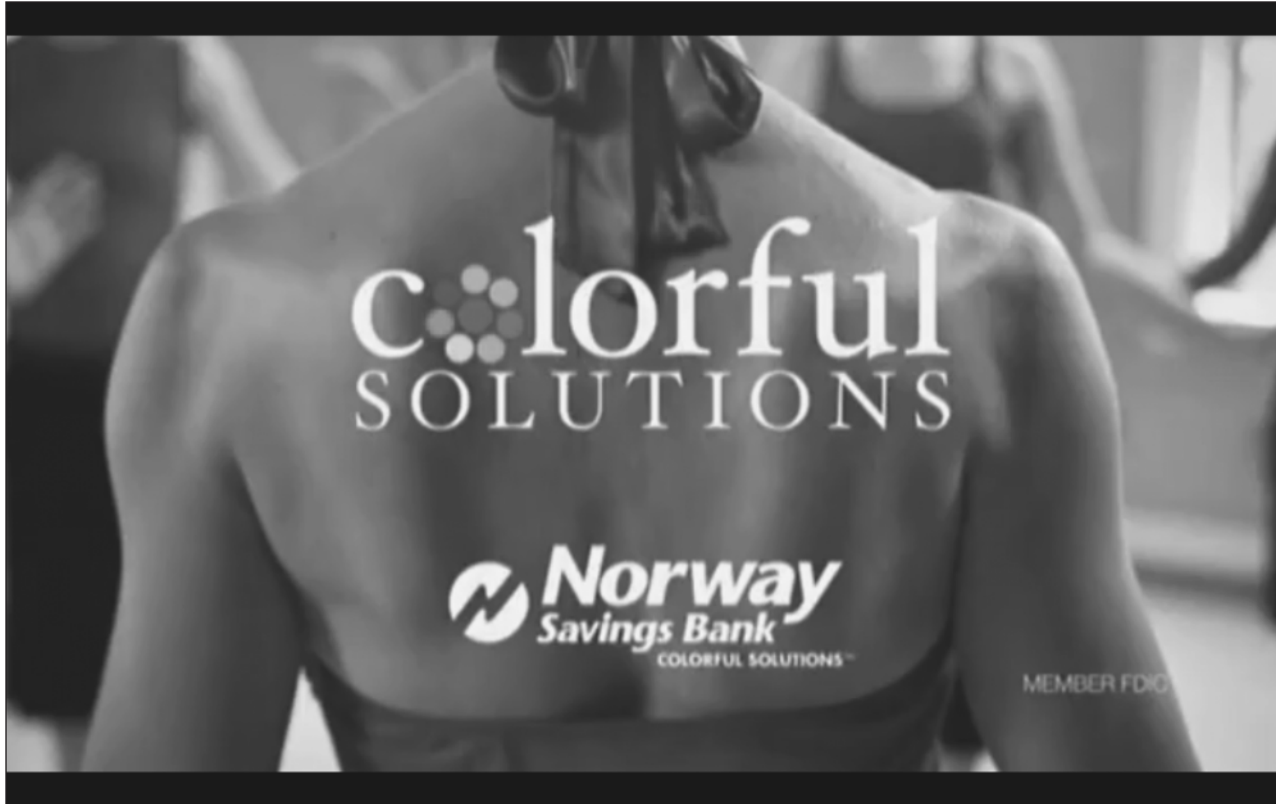
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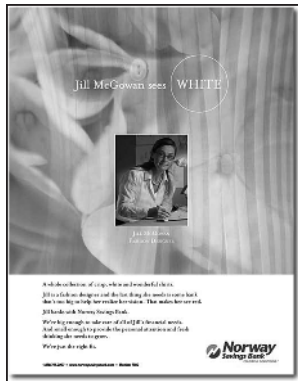
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# 1. The Color of Money: A Small Bank Makes a Large Impression with a Colorful Campaign



**C**an a small local bank take on the giant conglomerates and win? Norway Savings Bank in Maine saw an opportunity in the economic downturn. They set out to woo small business clients in a state where a majority of employment is tied to small business.



## Why It Works

The Colorful Solutions campaign with photography by David McLain of Aurora Novus showcases Norway Savings, a local bank, that proudly announces: “We’re from Maine—our roots go back to the 1800s.” They combine the familiar, friendly, and homespun wisdom of Maine with the expertise and financial acumen of full-service institutions. The campaign, created by Leslie Evans Design Associates, features profiles of six Maine business owners delivered in print advertisements, on the website, and in radio commercials, as well as in six 30-second

videos shown on local television and via YouTube. Evans says the success is really about credibility. “We didn’t want to color

things—but actually shoot real people with real items in color.”

Green is for Mike Skillin, the chief financial officer of Skillin’s Greenhouse. Brown is for Andy Charles, proprietor of Haven’s Candy, a Maine landmark. The stories show how each business owner benefits from the personal attention and wide resources of Norway Savings. Karen Hakala, the bank’s senior vice president of marketing, says that Norway Savings wanted to be the bank of choice for small business, so they created a point of differentiation with their Colorful Solutions campaign.

## Success Metrics

- Since the Colorful Solutions campaign was introduced, the business side of the bank has experienced double-digit deposit growth.
- The campaign won the Best of Show award from the American Bankers’ Association.
- The Colorful Solutions campaign really resonates with people. Norway Savings has a customer retention rate exceeding 92 percent.

## Takeaway Tip

Using customer testimonials and featuring customer stories are time-honored ways to bring to life the value of the products and services you deliver. But why not kick it up a level and use visual clues to further emphasize the range of customer needs you can serve?

## 2. A Website Showcases a Sense of Touch: Strong Navigation and Ease of Use for an Online Showroom



**H**ow do you get to Carnegie Fabrics? The usual practice of visiting the showroom is no longer the only way to see and choose fabrics. The website has become the new destination and growing sales tool for this family-owned business. The need for an effective website is essential for the future of an industry where face time is dwindling and decisions need to be made without a trip to the showroom. Carnegie needed to show an extensive col-

lection of merchandise while maintaining its highly regarded service and ease of browsing that clients are accustomed to in their physical showrooms.

## Why It Works

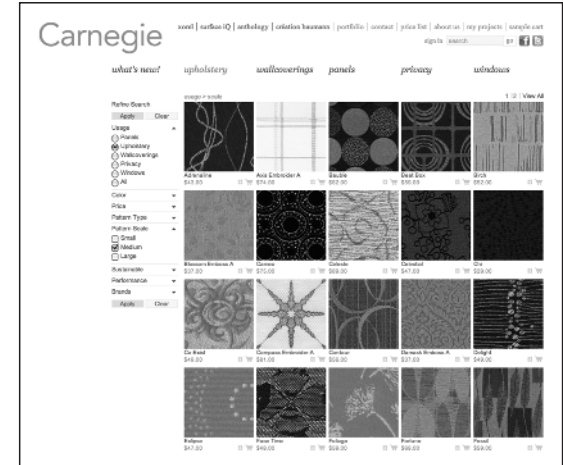
The website features a white screen with a larger rendering of the Carnegie logo. As you roll over the contents that are listed in neat columns, the patterns of different fabrics are revealed within the letters of the Carnegie logo. The primary audience consists of interior designers and architects who are looking for the highest-quality products for their clients. The Carnegie website allows the user to view the wide array of products and color/fabric swatches in a quick and straightforward manner. The details in the photography show off the textures of the materials. The previous versions of the website were more along the lines of an online brochure; with this incarnation users have the ability to order samples, search products, access product



information, and see the details of the fabrics.

## Success Metrics

- Traffic to the new Carnegie Fabrics website has increased 10 percent.
- The number of samples requested online has increased 15 percent.
- By increasing the amount of online sample order transactions, Carnegie has printed significantly fewer marketing materials and further enhanced its status as an eco-friendly company.



## Takeaway Tip

Your customers online expect the same level of service that they experience “offline.”

Examine the navigation and ease of use of your website to be sure the level of detail and functionality are there for online users. Instead of laying out your site like a static brochure, mimic the experience of being in your office as much as possible, including the experience of browsing merchandise and getting personalized help. When you are in an industry of tactile goods, it's especially important to have as close a substitute for the real thing as you can, with detailed photographs and descriptions.

### 3. Augmenting the Reality of Mobile Advertising: Sharing Brand Information Visually over Mobile Devices Through Apps



**I**n a world where sites like Foursquare, Facebook Places, and Gowalla are vying for the attention of retailers and corporations, lesser-known GoldRun is actually getting it. The company is augmenting reality to get users to engage with a brand.

Users of the GoldRun app see virtual objects superimposed over real-world places where they look with their iPhone cameras. For example, in a promotion for *Esquire* magazine, a super model “appears” near the newsstand aisle at a Barnes and Noble bookstore. The idea is that it will “drive traffic to physical and online destinations, increase product sales, enhance brand engagement and bolster viral impact,” says Lucy Swope of GoldRun.

### Why It Works

Advertisers are still struggling with the idea of going mobile in their advertising. With GoldRun, users are excited to participate and uncover secrets only they know about. It turns advertising into an experience where the advertising brand is engaged.

Because it appeals to “a wide spectrum of people from film buffs and fashion devotees, to sports fans, deal seekers and vacationers,” according to Swope, GoldRun’s app will never get old, as runs are finite and new challenges are being added constantly.

### Success Metrics

- GoldRun has seen on average 500 to 1,000 downloads/followed runs per week for runs that are being actively promoted.

- Client Airwalk sold out of the limited edition sneakers featured in their invisible pop-up stores and had the busiest weekend ever on their website following its GoldRun promotion.
- The company continues to add on high-profile clients such as Sorel, H&M, and Esquire.

### Takeaway Tip

Mobile advertising and the mobile Web are changing how people interact with the world around them. You can now communicate about your brand over consumers’ small handheld devices while they are out and about (and away from their computers). Explore the range of what mobile offers—such as offering a mobile app for your products or services. With today’s smartphones, you’re not limited to short text bursts or voice communications—today the medium lets you share information visually.

## 4. Celebrating Creativity with a Killer Smile: Creating a Viral Marketing Effect with an Online Game



Oscar Wilde said, “One should either be a work of art, or wear a work of art.” The creators of this online visual marketing promotion combined Wilde’s two options, allowing people to express their creativity by becoming a masterpiece. MasterpieceYourself.com is a game where everyone wins. Simply insert your portrait into a masterpiece by a famous artist like van Gogh or Michelangelo. And publish it. You may resize it, rotate it, name your portrait, and send it to a friend by e-mail or by posting it on Facebook. More than 100,000 people have played the game.





MasterpieceYourself.com was created to promote the services of Langton Cherubino Group. They built buzz by using social networking services, including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, and creating a viral marketing campaign by contacting bloggers, websites, and publications. Spread by word of mouth online, soon traffic to the game doubled many times over.

### Why It Works

More than half of the implementation time was spent on the interface design and navigation. "We wanted it to be fast and easy-to-use," says designer Jim Keller. From the design

standpoint, this means you have to think about how users will move around the site. You need to determine where instructions are needed and where users may simply click and act.

### Success Metrics

- MasterpieceYourself.com was featured in *Redbook* magazine.
- It has also been featured on radio stations and blogs, including as a learning tool, and has gained an audience worldwide.
- The site won the 2009 American Web Design Award from *Graphic Design USA* magazine.
- MasterpieceYourself.com has been identified by several prospective clients as the reason

they became aware of or chose the Langton Cherubino Group for their online design needs.

### Takeaway Tip

Create an interactive online game to generate a viral effect (meaning that something is spread by others) that pumps up the impact of your marketing. To be effective the game must be so visually and intellectually engaging and intriguing that people can't help but share it with others. It amplifies your marketing—word of mouth will kick in to spread the message for you. Make it (1) interesting to your target audience, (2) relevant to your business or core competencies, and (3) intuitive and simple enough for people to dive right in and "get it" without extensive instructions.



## 5. Putting the “Self” in Self-Portrait: Finding the Right Photo to Express a Personal Brand



**T**he standard head shot may be safe, but it can be boring. Michelle Villalobos found this out when she selected the right image to represent herself and her personal brand. Villalobos runs workshops and teaches marketing and business concepts to professionals. Her most popular program is *You: The (Online) Brand*. She often uses multicolored Sharpie markers to draw charts and liven up her visual presentations. She knows the value of using the right image to make a point in education and promotion.

Yet when it came to promoting herself on her blog, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter accounts, she did what many professionals do: pose for traditional portraits in business attire. The result was a beautiful professional portrait—but it didn’t really represent her. At one of her workshops on personal branding an audience member commented, “Your portrait doesn’t reflect your brand—you’re fun, young and vibrant, your headshot is sedate and boring.

It's beautiful, but it looks like it belongs on Match.com—it's not the you we met today."

### Why It Works

Villalobos decided to practice what she preaches and selected a photo of herself that emphasized her creative side. Fortunately, during the photo sessions with photographer Gio Alma she was warming up with her trade tool of choice, a handful of Sharpie markers. She initially dismissed these photos, "I thought the Sharpie pics were silly, *obviously* not something I would use professionally," says Villalobos with a chuckle. And yet, she realized that they captured the side of her that resonated with clients. Villalobos says, "I'm blown away by how much my headshot has done to boost my business online . . .



People make judgments about you *within the first 3 seconds* of meeting you." Villalobos adds, that she finds most people are much more comfortable working with a person rather than a business. "The Sharpie picture was the catalyst that has made my image the personal brand for my company." Villalobos changed her URL from MivistaConsulting.com, her business name, to MichelleVillalobos.com to reflect her personal brand, and she now receives 45 percent of her new business leads from Google searches.

### Success Metrics

- Since embracing the Michelle Villalobos personal brand and the "Sharpie Girl" portrait, Villalobos has added 15 new corporate clients, including Burger King, Everglades National Park, LexisNexis, and Constant Contact.
- Villalobos's mailing list has grown from 2,500 names to more than 9,500.
- In the past year, revenues have nearly tripled.

### Takeaway Tip

**When you are selling you (i.e., your services as a consultant or other professional), then having a standout photograph is crucial for marketing online. A little creativity can transform a plain vanilla head shot into one that people will remember based on the pose, facial expression, or props you use. Make your photograph a friendly and accessible face for your personal brand. Clients and prospects will respond and will remember you.**

## 6. Luxury Property Shown in Many Different Lights: Focusing on Stunning Imagery to Sell Luxury



**W**hat's the best time of day to see a luxury building? How do you capture the way the sun bounces off the Hudson River and illuminates the sculptural façade of a modern architectural jewel? The design team promoting 166 Perry Street, a luxury condominium project in New York City, decided to show how the building looks from daybreak to nightfall. Lilly Schonwald from Corcoran Sunshine Marketing Group says that the design is based on the light and air, how it relates back to nature and its surroundings, and how it changes during different time periods throughout the day.

The eight-story “jewel box” building with 24 residences was designed by the celebrated husband and wife team of Hani Rashid and Lise Anne Couture of Asymptote Architecture. Petter Ringbom of Flat Inc., an interactive design firm, worked in collaboration with Pentagram partner Michael Beirut to create visual marketing for the project that includes a website, property brochure, and presentation video.

### Why It Works

When you are trying to sell a property before it is built, you need to work harder to capture the character of the space. This building caters to a very sophisticated clientele who are able to spend \$1.95 million on a one-bedroom apartment or up to \$24 million on a penthouse

with a private pool. The website and the property brochure are really image-builders, not direct sales tools. People in this market are not clicking to buy online, but they are using the marketing materials as an important credibility check. Schonwald said that the content on this website is not really different from other luxury condos, “it’s the design that was different.”

### Success Metrics

- Of the 24 luxury residential units, 22 have been sold in one of the most difficult real estate markets in New York City.
- The site won the design award STEP Best of the Web Annual.

### Takeaway Tip

When selling luxury goods or property, three words describe it: “design, design, design.” Keep the copy short. Focus on beautifully rendered images. A website for luxury items won’t necessarily be different from other websites in how it’s set up. But the emphasis will be different—on stunning high-quality images, without a lot of words.

## 7. How Many Ways Can You Destroy Your Printer? Going Viral with a YouTube Video Contest That Plays upon Customer Frustrations



**E**xpert Laser Services held a contest. They received only a handful of entries, yet it propelled impressive sales in new business. The Destroy Your Printer contest invited disgruntled businesspeople to create videos showing creative ways to destroy their nonfunctioning printers, copiers, or fax machines and blow off steam at the same time. Using the company's blog, website, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, Expert Laser Services asked companies in the New England area to submit a short movie of employees destroying a piece of office equipment.

### Why It Works

"I would get so frustrated with a malfunctioning copier or printer," says Nathan Dube, Expert Laser Services social media engineer. After doing a quick Twitter search, Dube found that many people felt the same way. They received videos of printers being tossed off buildings, hunted down in the woods, or being fed into a log splinter. It's not the number of entries that matters—it's the number of viewers and the publicity that the contest generated that counts. Dube made a promotional video that has been seen by more than 5,000 visitors on YouTube. "The bottom line is we gained new sales," says Michael Carpentier, the company's president, "and a cover story in *Recycler* magazine." Carpentier says that the contest



really resonated with clients, and it properly positions Expert Laser Services as a solution provider. The video capitalizes on the anger associated with printer failures. Since Expert Laser Services fixes printers, they can actually address the pain points of their clients.

### Success Metrics

- Expert Laser Services attributes new business sales to the Destroy Your Printer contest. Website traffic boosts include more than 4,000 views of the user videos.

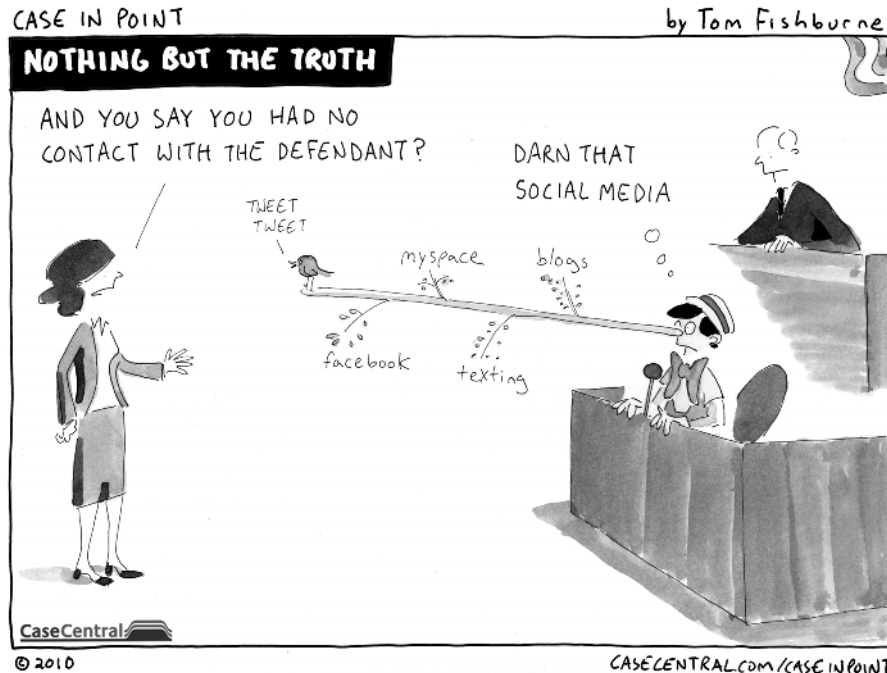
- *Recycler* magazine ran a cover story about the contest and the *New York Times* called Nathan.
- The promotional video on YouTube has had more than 5,000 viewers and continues to average 5 to 10 views per week.

### Takeaway Tip

Contests, especially ones with user-submitted videos, can go viral if the subject matter is interesting enough. It's not the number of entries—but how well the contest "speaks" to your target audience. Focusing on user-generated videos expressing frustrations that most people have experienced and that lend themselves to funny interpretation is a way to engage not only the contestants but the broader target audience of the contest's product sponsor.



## 8. Making a Legal Case for Insider Jokes: Using Cartoons to Market to Your Target Audience



**L**awyers are often the subject of jokes, so who would think that the best way to reach them might be through humor?

CaseCentral, founded in San Francisco in 1994, provides cloud-based electronic discovery software solutions to law firms and corporations that are used in preparing the pre-trial phase of a lawsuit. CaseCentral distinguishes itself from much larger competition with weekly installments of “Case in Point” cartoons. By using clever visual humor that cuts through the clutter with inside industry jokes,

the cartoons establish a unique voice and brand.

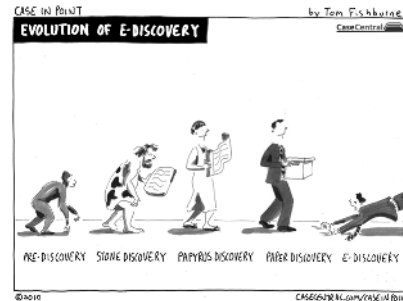
Tom Fishburne draws the witty cartoons, working with CaseCentral’s chief marketing officer, Steve d’Alencon, who often provides the spark of an idea.

Fishburne and d'Alencon e-mail riffs back and forth as they develop each cartoon. They consider themselves comedy partners.

### Why It Works

The insider jokes cultivate a social circle of those in-the-know. Jokes and references are not universal but, in fact, are very specific to the industry, with topical themes that relate to current events. By providing a platform for the industry humor, CaseCentral becomes the source for topical humor and positions itself as the knowledge center and go-to firm for industry perspective. They are vigilant about protecting the integrity of the cartoons. "We never use the cartoons to promote CaseCentral," adds d'Alencon, "or to bash the competition."

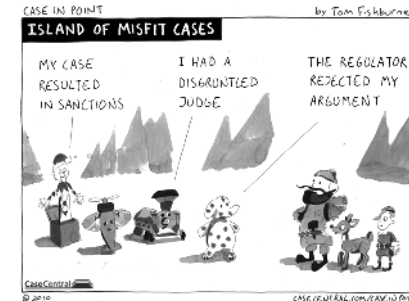
The response has been so positive that they now hold "caption



contests" to solicit entries from clients and prospects. The winner receives a framed cartoon with his or her winning quip. In its own way it serves as a marketing boon for CaseCentral. And how many companies can see their advertising tool framed on the wall of their prospects?

### Success Metrics

- The cartoon was launched at a legal conference in Seattle with a couple hundred attendees. According to d'Alencon, it now has a weekly audience of more than 40,000 viewers.
- "Case in Point" is distributed through a multichannel approach, including posts on Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr; via



blog readership with RSS feeds; and through e-mail blasts.

- Requests come in daily for reproduction rights on blogs, websites, and books and for use in professional PowerPoint presentations. In response to demand, CaseCentral opened an online store on Café Press, where fans may purchase custom prints and order cartoons on coffee mugs, T-shirts, and other merchandise.

### Takeaway Tip

**Don't be afraid to use humor and cartoons to build a distinctive brand. For business-to-business firms, especially those where it may seem hard to differentiate and stand out from competitors with larger marketing budgets, it can be just the point of difference you need.**



## 9. Changing the Script on Scriptwriting: Organizing a Virtual Community Around an Event to Maximize Participation



**S**cript Frenzy is a one-month writing blitz that takes place in April every year. The keys are the deadline—one month of writing—and the encouragement gained from the online community of writers. Volunteer chapters in 100 cities across the world organize kickoff parties, laptop meetings in coffee shops, and staged readings of completed

scripts. Founder and executive director, Chris Baty, says that combining a deadline with encouragement and an online community can create miracles. Script Frenzy started in 2004 as an outgrowth of the National Novel Writing month that was launched in 1999 and grew to more than 70,000 participants in 50 countries. After seven years a formal structure was needed, so a nonprofit organization called the Office of Letters and Light was established.

Script Frenzy is their initiative dedicated to scriptwriting. “The idea is that if you love movies, then write one,” says Baty.

### Why It Works

Many budding writers love the idea of writing for the movies or television but get bogged down because they are not familiar with what a script should look like. Script Frenzy provides the format for scriptwriting and gets writers thinking in traditional scriptwriting terms. The online forums and e-mail communication from volunteer coordinators spur on the participants. “We think of it as a grassroots nudge,” says Baty.

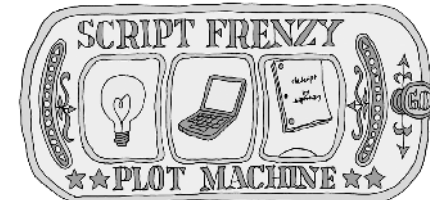
The Script Frenzy site has a Plot Machine that combats writer’s block. With each click the game reveals a random combination of plot, characters, and scenarios that are intended to

be absurd and zany. To win at Script Frenzy, writers sign up online and complete the goal of writing 100 pages in the month of April. Winners gain a Script Frenzy certificate, Web icon, and eternal bragging rights.

The Script Frenzy logo, created by Todd Blank, is the visual centerpiece for the organization. It captures old-time movie house grandeur—you can almost smell the popcorn—while using a brash and kinetic typeface that evokes the thrill of going out to the theater.

### Success Metrics

- Participation in Script Frenzy has tripled since its inception five years ago, with more than 21,000 writers participating in 2010.
- A Young Writers program grew from 50 participants to 2,850 in three years.



- A total of 373,906 words were logged in the most recent Script Frenzy competition.

### Takeaway Tip

Create a virtual community to whip up enthusiasm for an initiative. Encourage participation by making people feel like they are part of an important and exciting event, through cohesive visual elements around one central theme. Don’t just slap up a website with some information about the initiative. Instead, immerse people in the event every time they set foot on the website. Every image and every page should make them feel like they are part of the initiative. Use interactive features to captivate attention and draw people back again and again to participate. This can work for a business initiative in your company, as well as a non-profit initiative.

## 10. When Is a Cup of Tea More Than Just Another Cup? Stunning Photography on a Website Differentiates a Product



With luxurious photography as a backdrop, Two Leaves and a Bud Tea Company created a website design that conveys freshness, commitment to quality, and the uniqueness of the company's brand at a glance. They've managed to capture a sense of oneness with nature and convey social responsibility toward the environment and the small farmers who pick the tea. When you're selling

a commodity, product differentiation is crucial. Yet, how do you differentiate something as timeless and ubiquitous as tea—something that can be bought in any grocery store and all over the Web?

How do you not only justify consumers paying a higher price for your product but develop brand loyalty that causes them to remember and seek out your product over the many other options out there?

### Why It Works

The Two Leaves and a Bud Tea Company's website redesign uses a full background image that changes with each visit to the site. The images are the company's own photography and show the tea growing in lush green fields, the small farmers who tend the fields and pick the tea, tea in bowls, and other evocative images. Phil Edelstein, marketing director, says visitors to the website should experience, "a fresh journey each and every time."



- The company has received immensely positive feedback from consumers, the press, and our wholesale clients.
- Company staff has a sense of pride in the company.

"Most ecommerce experiences are so focused on selling efficiently and effectively that they forget about their brand. With our web redesign, we wanted to create an experience that didn't just sell and convert more users, but demonstrated our brand story and our immense passion for tea," says Edelstein.

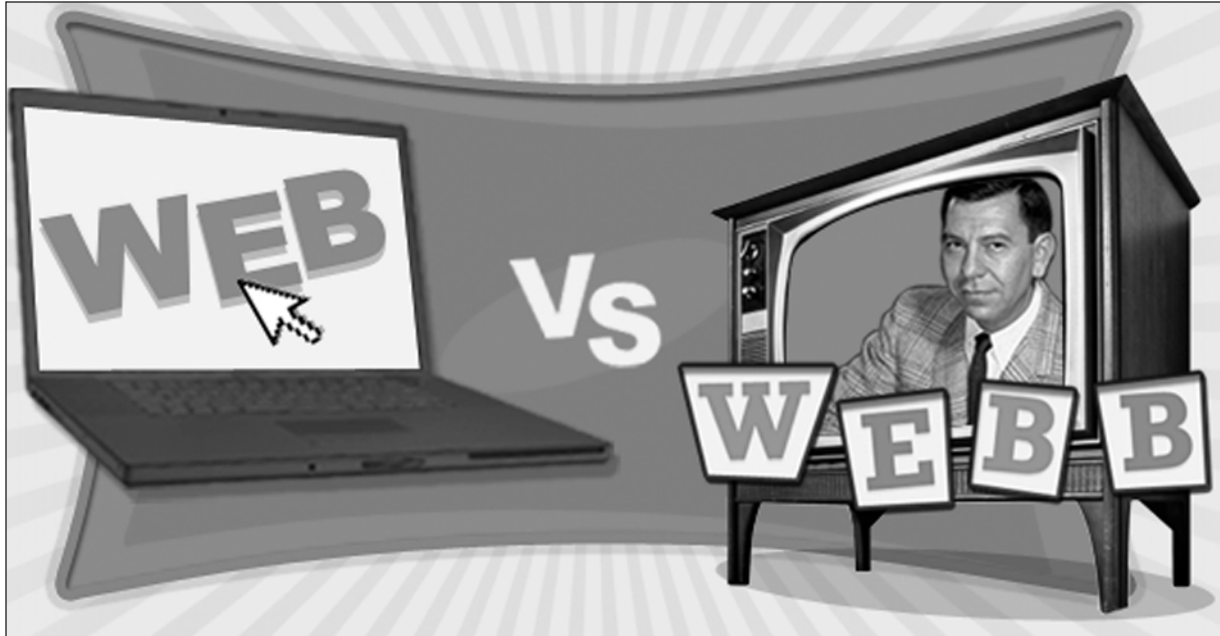
### Success Metrics

- The site conversion rate jumped 1 percent (from 3.5 percent to 4.5 percent) immediately upon launching the redesign. Growth continues.

### Takeaway Tip

Make sure your photography is top-notch if you're planning to use it to create the perception of a premium product. Clear images, evocative subject matter, and stunning compositions are key. Dare to be different. Just because a typical e-commerce site has a plain background, doesn't mean you need to be bound by it. After all, if your product is different, your website should be, too. Stylish photography can celebrate your unique brand and turn a commodity into a distinctive must-have product.

## 11. Just the Facts, Ma'am: Creating an Interactive Online Quiz Attracts a Target Audience with a Deeper Level of Engagement



**I**s a “blook” a criminal or an online book? Does a detective need a “Search clause,” or is that something Google would do? Play Web vs. Webb to find out if you can tell if a phrase is from the World Wide Web or something uttered by Jack Webb, the actor who played Sergeant

Joe Friday on the old TV show *Dragnet*. Web vs. Webb is a vintage TV quiz show–style game that may be played online. How does this promote a design firm in New York City?

Creating online games for your firm's website may not sound like a marketing stunt, but when your business does something a little offbeat and completely removed from its core business in the hopes of drumming up attention, it may be just that.

### Why It Works

Incorporating the classic design motif from the early days of television, the word game heightens the contrast of the two modes of communication and the two technologies. Web vs. Webb equals television vs. Internet. It gives perspective—what was vs. what is.

An interesting by-product of this project is that the audiences are split along generation lines, as baby boomers readily identify with the “Just the facts,

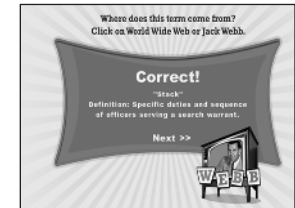
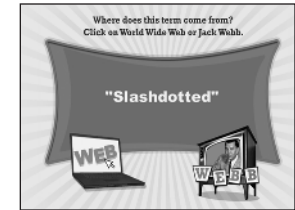
ma’am,” signature lines from *Dragnet*, while younger generations do not seem to recognize this jargon at all.

### Success Metrics

- This site won the American Design Web Award from *Graphic Design USA*.
- The real success is getting noticed by clients and establishing a connection between

creative services and online solutions.

- The site helped secure more work for the firm with interactive and video solutions projects.



### Takeaway Tip

An interactive online game draws people in and brings them to your website, and once there, it can engage their interest with more impact than traditional content, such as articles and white papers. This technique can be used by a design or IT firm wanting to showcase its Web design talent, but the same technique can be adapted to other types of businesses. When you create an online quiz, make sure the quiz relates to your business and will be of interest to your target audience. Although an unrelated quiz might be amusing and attract a lot of visitors, it won't help your business in the long run if they're not the kind of website visitors who fall into your target audience.



## 12. Getting a Leg Up on the Competition: Gaining Media Visibility for an Arcane Industry Online, Through Puns and Fun on Your Website



**R**ecycling 100,000 pounds of mannequins a year may not sound glamorous, but it's what differentiates Mannequin Madness from its competitors. The mannequin company rents and sells mannequins of all shapes and sizes to not only retailers but also trade shows, artists, students, and anyone in need of a "dummy." And what could be a very industry-based business has a surprisingly fresh and friendly face—through its website and the myriad of media coverage it has gained over the past 10-plus years.

“We use videos, blogs, and photographs (online and offline) to promote our business,” says Judi Townsend, founder of Mannequin Madness.

### Why It Works

Mannequin Madness’s website is intriguing and appealing to the eye: Each section of the site is identified by a corresponding mannequin part (including the famous leg lamp from *A Christmas Story*). Videos from the company and CNN plead to be watched on the side of the home page.

Besides the appropriate use of bright colors and solid layout, the website (and blog) offers a plethora of information about mannequins and their history, how the company recycles its mannequins (something most of us didn’t know was possible),

along with links to social media and Yelp reviews. It has all the elements of a great website.

The company really found its niche by going beyond the traditional supplying to retailers. Trade shows often need mannequins for a conference, and buying them can be too costly for budgets. Artists want mannequins for art projects, and museums and theatrical productions also have the occasional need for a mannequin. By expanding its target audience and offering rentals, Mannequin Madness found the formula for success.

### Success Metrics

- The company’s recycling efforts have landed it contracts with Gap, Bebe, Nike, and Kohl’s.
- Videos about the company have appeared on CNN, on the

in-flight entertainment on British Airways flights, on TV shows about niche businesses and green businesses, as well as on YouTube.

- Flattering or not, Mannequin Madness has been so successful that its competitors are using its trademarked company name in their Google ads.

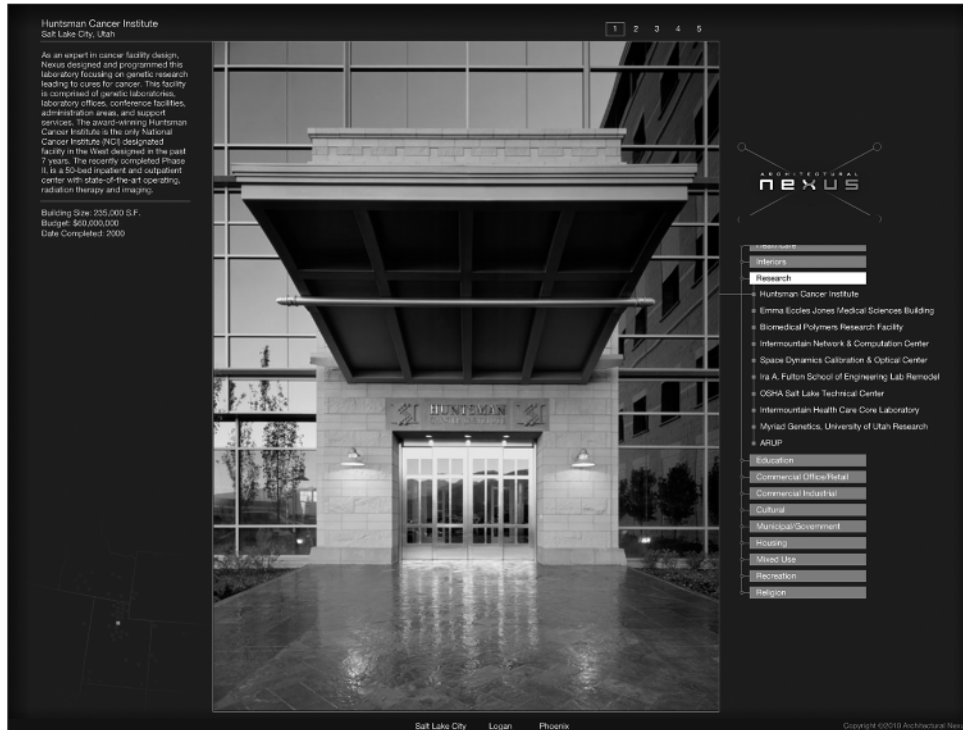


### Takeaway Tip

No matter how arcane your industry or how boring you think your niche is, a website can take you from being technical and industrial to a business interest story the world wants to know about. Have fun with it. Use a tongue-in-cheek name and logo. Include visual jokes and puns. The media will pick up on it. It will be a powerful marketing tool.



## 13. Building an Appealing Design: Presenting Your Process in Your Website Showcases a Competitive Advantage for an Architectural Firm



For architecture firms, the proof is in the building, so to speak. Nothing markets a firm's services better than the buildings it has designed. Architectural Nexus wanted to display its portfolio on its website but also wanted to share its philosophies and process.

Brand design firm modern8 helped take the Architectural Nexus website beyond just a portfolio. While the Flash-based site features attractive photographs of the firm's work, it also speaks to who the firm is as an identity—something most architectural firms don't bother to do.

## Why It Works

The firm's clients in the past, which included universities, health care groups, and religious organizations, had been spread across northern Utah, but the firm wanted to focus more tightly on regional projects.

We'd all like to pick our clients, but it can be difficult. Architectural Nexus found a way to do just that in how it presented itself through its site. Through its website redesign, Architectural Nexus was able to narrow in on the type of work it wanted more of, and it did so by illustrating its progressive, process-focused design approach.

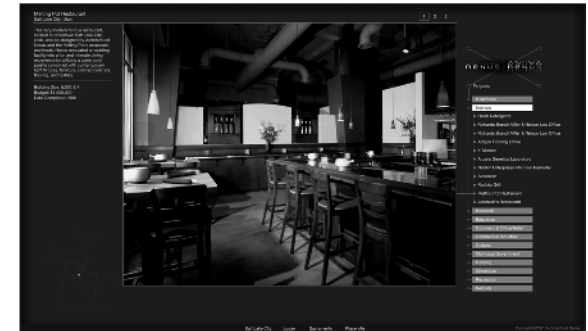
The images alone are stunning, but the site goes further than just displaying pretty pictures of buildings. It uses a



special section of the website to explain the firm's process for understanding and solving complex design problems, called "Problem Seeking." In this section, subtle clues reinforce that design is about uncovering and understanding, at a deep level, the client's vision for the project (for instance, the words "continue learning" are used instead of "read more" to advance to the next point).

## Success Metrics

- The website won several awards, including a Utah Addy Awards 2011 Silver Addy Award and the Society for Marketing Professional Services Utah's



1st Place 2010 Electronic Professional award.

- The site looks and feels progressive, and the perceived value of the firm's services are greatly improved.

## Takeaway Tip

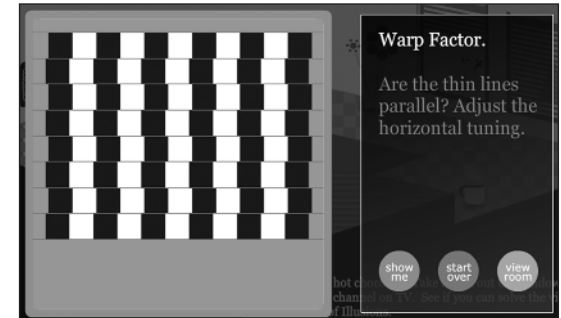
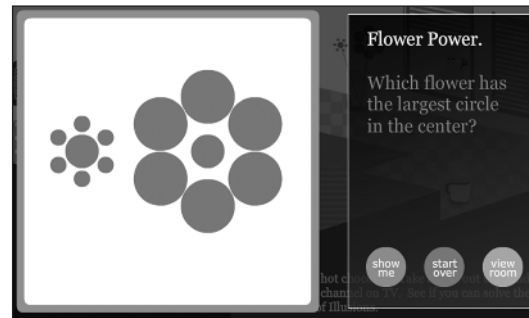
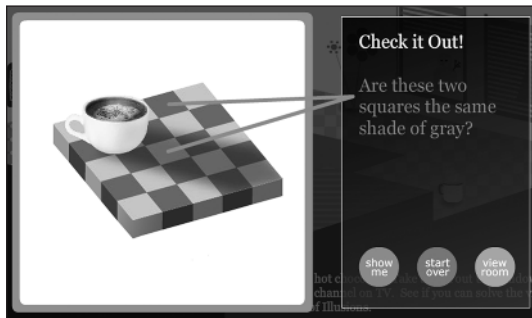
If you are in a professional services business, keep your website simple, but do go beyond just a portfolio of your work. Share a bit of your company philosophy. If the way you handle projects is a competitive advantage, then outline your process. By understanding your vision before contacting you, potential clients will get a better feel for whether your style of working and theirs are consistent. And you will attract the kind of clients you prefer to work with.

## 14. A Visual Marketing Firm Uses Optical Illusions to See Things Differently: Showing Prospects What You Are Capable of in Multimedia



**C**hico Marx once said, “Who are you going to believe, me or your own eyes?” A design firm is really about seeing things differently. Jim Keller, design director at Langton Cherubino Group, always had a fondness for optical illusions such as the zigzag patterns that look crooked but are really straight or the paintings and etchings of Escher that play with your

sense of perspective. Inspired by the visual tricks usually found on paper, the design team set off to create a Room of Illusions game that featured the classic optical puzzles online in a well-designed environment.



## Why It Works

The tricks are as old as the printed page—yet in the hands of a designer, as fresh as today. The setting for the illusions is a futuristic room with bright color patterns featuring a Warner Brothers–era cartoon soundtrack. When you click on an item in the room, a large window opens and the illusion is presented as a challenge. The viewer tries to guess what the real truth is, and after another click, the secret is revealed. Each example is engaging and addictive. It's like when Penn and Teller show you how a trick works and lure you in for more mayhem. How did this come

about? “Every year we like to send a New Year’s card to our clients and friends,” explains Jim. “This year we pushed ourselves to create something new with an old concept. We wanted to combine our visual wit with our online and interactive design capabilities.”

## Success Metrics

- The Room of Illusions game was the first of many self-promotional games that Langton Cherubino Group created. It established a method of combining design and programming that led to award-winning games such as MasterpieceYourself and Web vs. Webb.

- Clients responded and hired Langton Cherubino Group to create interactive games, including a series of “healthy games” for larger clients such as Pfizer and Publicis.

## Takeaway Tip

**Combine old-fashioned optical illusions with digital technology to create an interactive online game. For a design firm with multimedia expertise, it's an ideal way to showcase new media capabilities.**

## 15. Breaking Through the Gray Noise: Using a Flash-Based Presentation to Generate Leads While Also Serving as a Leave-Behind Piece



**I**n the public relations (PR) world, many try to put together a PowerPoint presentation to woo a potential client. But Gotham PR, a Manhattan-based PR firm specializing in fashion and design, asked itself how it could “break through the gray noise” in an industry filled with cookie-cutter pitches and presentations. The design firm The Art

Department provided the answer: a four-minute Flash-based company overview incorporating fast-paced motion graphics and strong typography based on the concept “How Do You Break Through the Gray Noise?”

Five case studies are presented within the video, showcasing client successes and services. The movie CD itself has an appealing design and works well as a leave-behind. Gotham PR now uses the presentation not only in meetings but as a link from their website and embedded into blogs, Facebook, and Twitter feeds, according to Christie Grotheim of The Art Department.

### Why It Works

Rather than making promises about what the firm will do for a potential customer, Gotham's presentation shows its experience, heavily based on event photos with celebrities and fashion designers. For those tired of PowerPoint slides, Gotham's video is a refreshing, upbeat change sure to energize any proposal meeting.

"The piece is multi-faceted, which is why it's been so successful," says Grotheim. "The challenge was that Gotham PR wanted something they could use in meetings for a dynamic presentation (beats PowerPoint!) that incorporated case studies, client lists, services and overview—a lot of information."

### Success Metrics

- Gotham says that the Flash presentation is definitely a driver when working in an increasingly "visual" marketplace and global media.
- The video has proved to be a great display and recruitment tool, both client and team side.
- Gotham is receiving three to five qualified new business leads daily.

### Takeaway Tip

Don't get stuck in the same rut as everyone else in your industry; it's boring. A bold, dynamic, and artistic Flash presentation can help you cut through the noise, showcase what you do, and get tongues wagging (in a good way) about you. More important, it can attract leads. Put it online and burn it to a disk for a leave-behind piece.



## 16. Delivering a Unique Marketing Campaign: Combining Staged Marketing Events with Video and Social Media



**W**hen's the last time you saw something that made you stop and gawk on the street? That's exactly what

New Yorkers did when Delivery.com got their attention. The food delivery service sent two delivery men (Delivery Man Stan and Delivery Man Sam) with a very *large* delivery of food boxes, bags, and drinks to make a splash. They also passed out \$5-off coupons to the onlookers. Everyone wanted to be a part of the experience: Tourists had photos taken with the two, others took their own photos and videos, and the pair even got advice from an onlooker not to spill anything. Talk about marketing interaction!

## Why It Works

The campaign was well thought out and connected with other channels, such as YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. The entire stunt was filmed to get people's reactions to the teetering pile of deliveries.

Delivery.com succeeded in moving marketing offline to real time, and then pushing it back to online. People love sharing a spectacle, and photos and videos of the street promotion were shared on social media sites. The delivery men were outgoing and played the silly role well.

The brand's social media play is strong as well: Delivery.com randomly picks a tweeter talking about the service and awards prizes and gift cards.

## Success Metrics

- The campaign got people talking about Delivery.com on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Thousands of people follow Delivery.com on the sites.
- From 5 to 6 percent of people who received gift cards on the street went online and used them. Delivery.com also held a citywide gift card handout after this campaign.
- Estimated return on investment (ROI) for the entire campaign, lasting several weeks, was a 15 to 20 percent increase of new users.



## Takeaway Tip

Don't be afraid to do the outrageous. Staged marketing events and stunts work. In fact, sometimes the crazier it is, the more buzz it will get—just consider all angles so you don't offend important constituents, cause safety issues, or otherwise lead to negative publicity. And for the biggest bang for your buck today, tie in offline stunts with video and social media campaigns. That way the public can share the offline experience with others virtually online and through social media channels, and you will extend the reach and shelf life of your marketing stunt far longer.

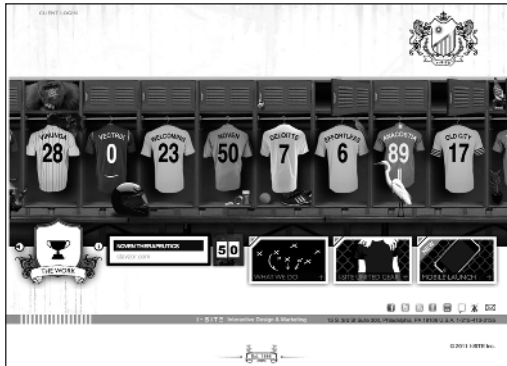


## 17. Finding Your Identity: Standing Out from the Crowd with a Website That Lets Your Personality Show Through



**I**t's a catch-22: interactive media companies want to stand out from the crowd, but all their websites are the same boring thing. How can they strut their stuff if their sites look like cookie-cutter versions of their competitors? I-SITE refused to fall into this trap. The design agency wanted a website that expressed who they were through images and interaction, rather than through words. Ian Cross, chief

executive officer of I-SITE, explains that the goal was “telling the I-SITE story—who we are, what we do, what we love in a highly visual and whimsical way.”



## Why It Works

When you first visit I-SITE's page, you think it's for a soccer team . . . until you realize the motley crew is actually the staff of the agency. The entire site is built upon the concept of soccer—something that's obviously near and dear to the hearts of the staff. I-SITE even went so far as to create a soccer charity match complete with a cup for the winner. "If you're going to position yourself, you better play the game!" said Cross.

The site even sells beer steins and bottle openers (something else close to their hearts). The



interactive and fun aspect of the site carries through to in-person marketing as well. I-SITE offers its unique beer coaster business cards—but only to those who they've invited to have a drink with them.

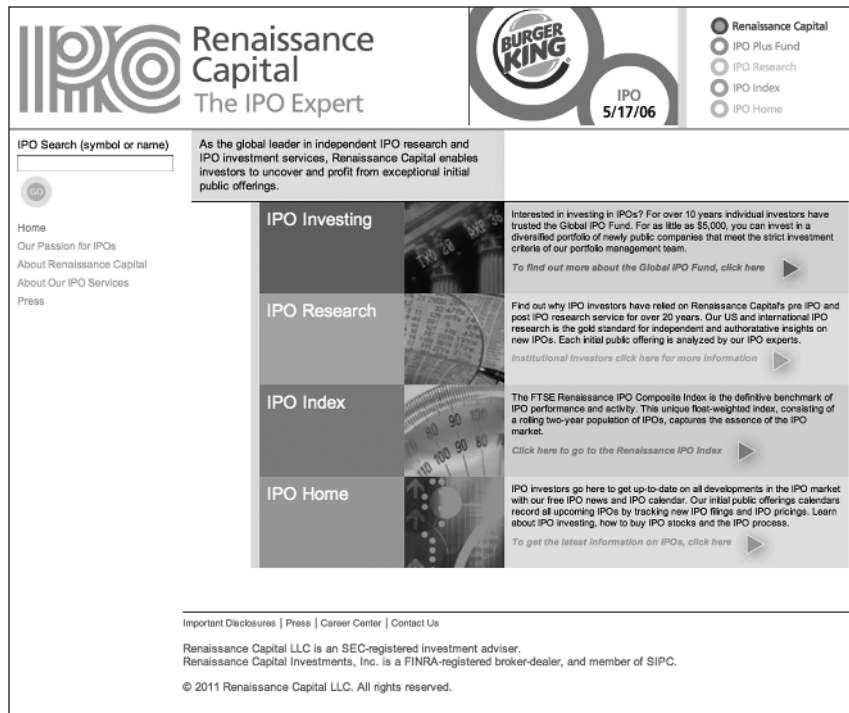
## Success Metrics

- I-SITE's design has won numerous awards, including the American Design Award for Portfolio site.
- The new interactive design has improved the leads that come through the website.
- The site has also increased inquiries from designers and developers who want to work for I-SITE.

## Takeaway Tip

Why do want your website and brand to look like every other business out there? To really stand out, represent who you are and who your company is, in all your unique glory. Letting your personality through and being yourself is what draws others to you. Although it may not resonate with everyone, remember that "everyone" is not your client base. Make it relevant to those you want to work with and who will appreciate your uniqueness.

## 18. A Renaissance for Today: Creating a Forward-Looking Logo That Reflects the Past



The original business card had “Renaissance Capital” spelled out in an Old English typeface—the kind you see on the mastheads of newspapers like the *New York Times*. It looked old, so it must be from the Renaissance, right? Turns out the design was just old. Kathleen Shelton Smith, William Smith, and Linda Killian, the founders of the Connecticut-based research firm Renaissance Capital, named their firm for the entrepreneurial spirit of innovation and invention embodied by da Vinci and Michelangelo. They believed that the founders of new companies like Google, eBay, and

Facebook were the Renaissance people of today. After 15 years in business, the timing was right for Langton Cherubino Group to create a brand that supported the mission of the founders.

## Why It Works

Shelton Smith insisted that the logo say “I-P-O,” the financial shorthand for “initial public offering.” They are IPO experts and are frequently quoted in the *Wall Street Journal* and seen on CNBC. But evoking the spirit of an IPO is an impossible task. “It’s not a universal theme or concept like stability or trustworthiness that we could build a design around,” says design director Jim Keller. So the design team sought to capture the themes of innovations and inventiveness while building upon the classical forms of Renaissance art and architecture. They explored Renaissance flags, fairs, buildings, inventions, and da Vinci drawings. “But the client insisted it read as ‘IPO,’” says Keller. So they went back and pored over the letters “IPO” repeatedly. A



combination surfaced, representing an Ionic column from Greek revivalist architecture, and a new identity emerged. The logo had genuine Renaissance roots, and it actually said “IPO.” Investing in IPOs is about discovering the future. Now Renaissance Capital has a forward-looking logo that pays tribute to the past.

## Success Metrics

- The new brand caught the attention of the Financial Times

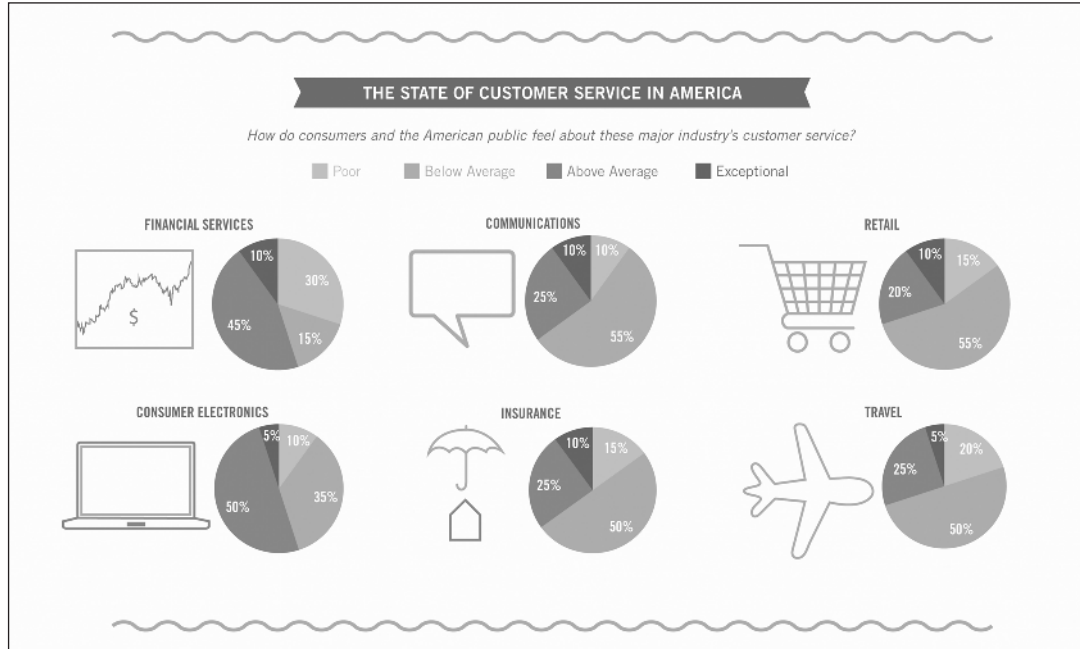
Stock Exchange (FTSE) and led to a partnership with the European company.

- The new website was redesigned and reorganized to emphasize the key sales offerings. This has increased research subscribers and attracted new investors to the IPO mutual fund.
- A new IPO app for the iPhone was launched and has gained 3,000 subscribers.

## Takeaway Tip

Over the years a logo may come to give the wrong impression about your company. If your logo conveys an impression that is contrary to your firm’s capabilities and how you want your market to think of your brand today—or if it just seems tired and old-fashioned—then it’s time for a logo overhaul. A fresh choice of colors, design, tagline, and font can make a powerful difference, without having to change your brand name.

## 19. Good Service Is Earned: Making a Brand Statement and Creating Viral Content Through Infographics



**E**verybody knows good service when they experience it. And when they think customer service is bad, they talk about it. Openly. Social media brings new opportunities and increases the challenges for businesses that strive to deliver the best customer experiences—because people today talk freely online on social media sites. Get Satisfaction taps into crowd-

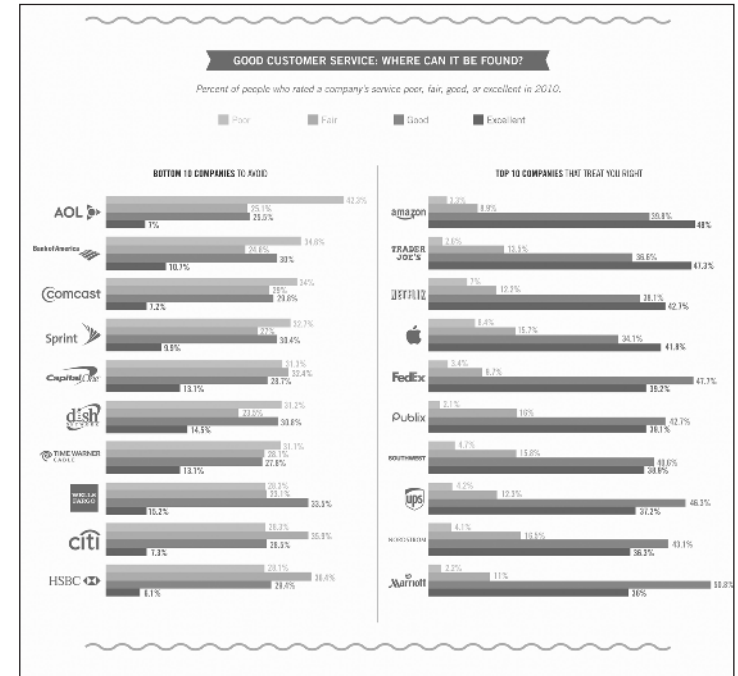
sourcing with a product that is part online forum and part social network to create a people-powered feedback that helps companies boost customer service. They spread the gospel of good customer service with striking infographics.

## Why It Works

Infographics are like online posters with charts and statistics presented in a visual layout. They are a popular form of presenting information today. For Get Satisfaction, Column Five Media created an elaborate primer beginning with “The 10 Commandments of Good Customer Service” with colorful pie charts and symbols that visually explain the “State of Customer Service in America” and display rankings of the best—and worst—customer service in America. Keith Messick, vice president of marketing at Get Satisfaction says, “Our infographics are a crucial part of our content strategy in driving traffic to our site, generating leads and communicating our brand voice to the marketplace.”

## Success Metrics

- The Get Satisfaction blog has seen an increase in traffic of 3,000 percent since it started publishing infographics.
- More than 48,000 companies use Get Satisfaction to provide a more social support experience, build better products, increase search engine optimization (SEO), and improve customer loyalty.
- The Get Satisfaction infographics are retweeted every week, providing an ongoing conversation for the company and its services.

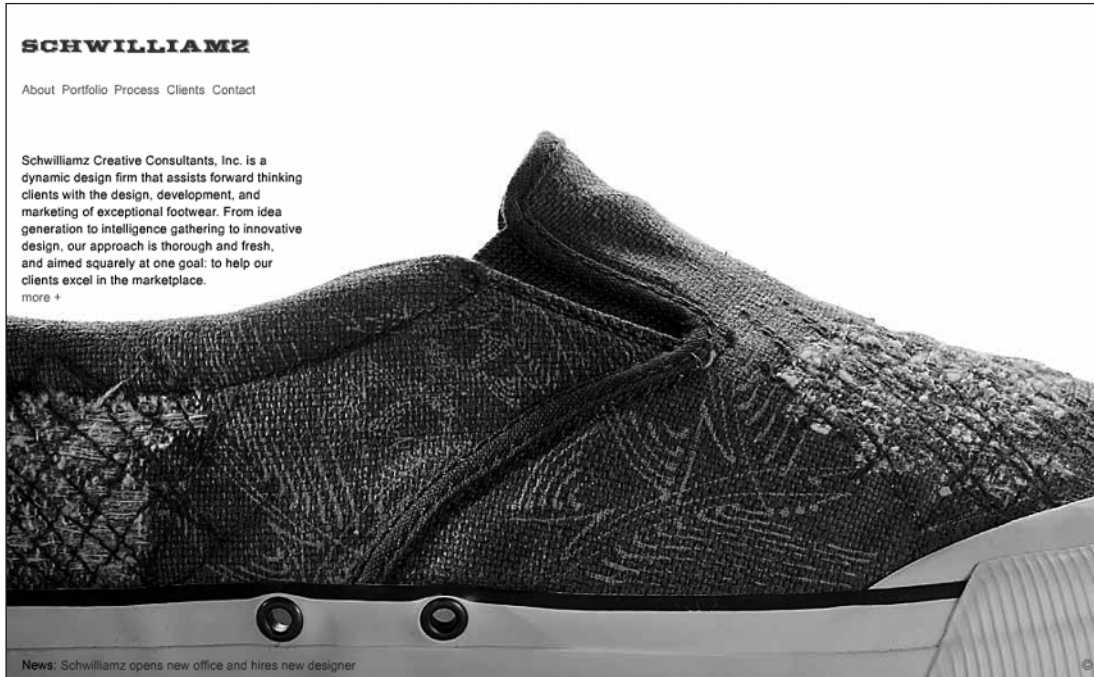


## Takeaway Tip

Create infographics as part of the online content strategy for your business. Well-done infographics allow businesses to communicate powerful brand stories through compelling graphics. The best infographics have an element of entertainment to them, and people tend to share infographics—when they might not share the same information presented as text.



## 20. Design to Put Your Best Foot Forward: Using Sharp, Detailed Close-Up Photography to Demonstrate Business Capabilities on the Web



**T**he growth of a company is a good thing, but when your brand identity doesn't match where you're headed, it's time to call in the experts. That's what Schwilliamz Creative Consultants did when it felt its footwear design firm was looked upon more as a freelancing firm than a consultancy experienced (and successful) with taking entire lines from concept

through manufacturing. "To establish and grow Schwilliamz, we initially relied on existing business contacts and cold calls," says Dean Schwartz, principal of Schwilliamz.

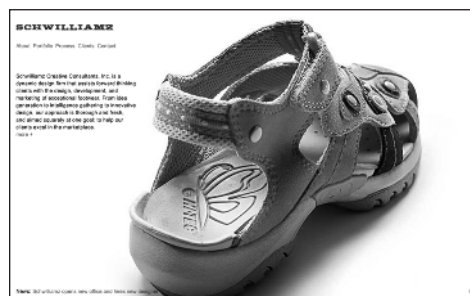


“As our business grew and matured, we recognized the need for a more focused and professional marketing plan. We determined that a website would be a vital component in our overall marketing and brand identity strategy.”

Visual Dialogue saw immediately what Schwilliamz needed to make its brand look more professional online.

### Why It Works

The resulting Web design puts Schwilliamz’ stunning results front and center: from kid’s sport shoes to high-fashion trend wear, the site displays the breadth and depth of the company’s work. Descriptive text, press coverage, and background information go beyond the



finished design to show potential clients their process and the end results in the marketplace.

A rotating series of shoe images—life-size, almost life-size, or sometimes larger than life—appear on every page of the site. Through the sharp photography, site visitors can examine every stitch and detail. It’s a visual example of the company’s portfolio—almost like a slideshow of their portfolio, only one doesn’t need to sit through a presentation to see it.

### Success Metrics

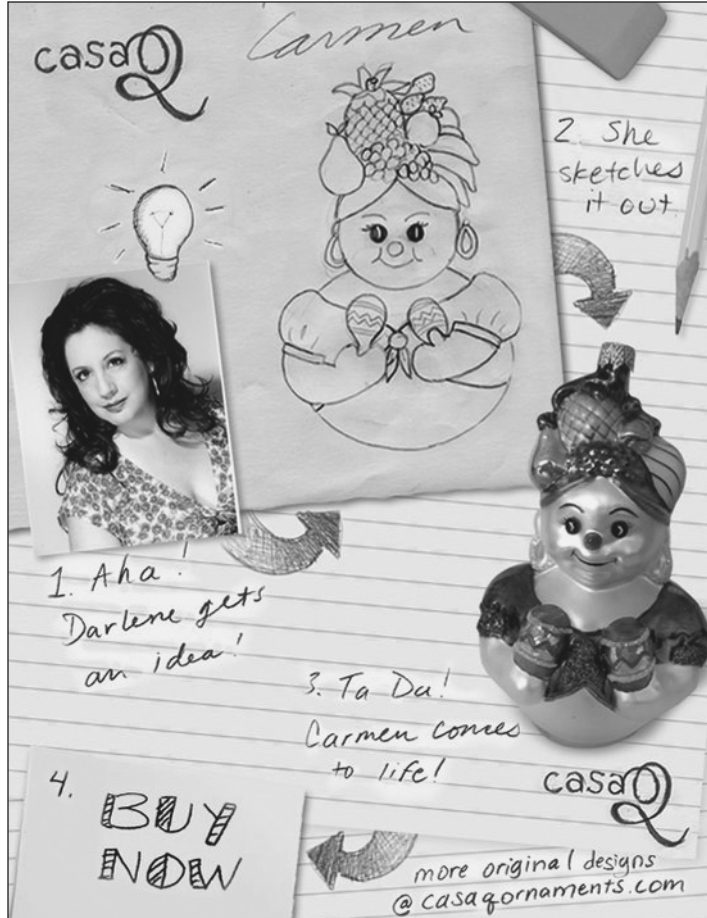
- Schwilliamz has expanded its sales in the United States and globally with clients in China.

- Schwilliamz’ designs result in more than 3 million pairs of footwear annually.
- The design has helped change the perception of the consultancy and helped distinguish it from the competition—a true consultancy/business partner versus merely freelance designers.

### Takeaway Tip

Instead of telling people what you can produce, show them! Put your output front and center on your website. Nothing says that you must limit your work product to a specific section dubbed “portfolio.” But when photographs of what you produce become the focal point on every page, the quality of the images is paramount. They must be sharp, detailed, and close-up enough to invite and withstand scrutiny.

## 21. Spicing Up the Ornament Market: Using Bright and Unique Online Ads to Build a Brand



**T**he holiday ornament market is one that most people think of for only about one month a year. That's not the case for Darlene Tenes, who, in 2007, was frustrated that she couldn't find any ornaments that reflected her Latino roots. Instead, she made her own. She now sells glassblown Sancho Snowmen, Day of the Dead skeletons, Hispanic pastries, and Frida Kahlos through her company. CasaQ essentially created the Hispanic ornament market on its own, due, in part, to Tenes's zany online marketing and direct-mail campaigns.

### Why It Works

CasaQ's online ads are well designed, and although aimed at the Latino market, they appeal to a wider audience of people looking for unique ornaments. The elements of the ads include newspaper clippings, vintage images of women, and Technicolor photos of the ornaments, along with humorous messaging.

The ads are not traditional banner ads with slick graphics. Instead, the ads sometimes look like hand-drawn documents. One ad looks like doodles on a scratch pad with a hand-drawn design of an ornament, along with the company domain name in a script font as if it's handwritten. The CasaQ ornament that resulted from



the sketch "sits" on the scratch pad like a paperweight effect—and clearly identifies what the ad is about.

### Takeaway Tip

It's possible to build a brand with online ads, without ever turning to print ads. All it takes is creativity, eye-catching color, and pizzazz.

### Success Metrics

- After distributing its first press release, CasaQ was contacted by the Latin Grammy Awards to be featured in its official celebrity gift baskets.
- CasaQ's 17 different ornaments are now sold in Macy's and 70 museum and specialty shops across the nation.

## 22. A Reflection of Style: Incorporating Your Business Style into Your Logo



There are many small businesses that reflect their owners' personalities. Take Sarah Petty's The Joy of Marketing, for example. The owner and the business are so close, it made sense to design a logo that reflected her bright and playful style. As a successful photographer, Petty wanted to tie her photography business to a boutique marketing agency that could help creative business owners create a strong brand and profitable business. She also wanted a logo that fit in with its sister photography firm.



## Why It Works

The Joy of Marketing logo feels joyful—giving extra meaning to the brand name “The Joy of Marketing.” Petty wanted her marketing logo to be as bright and playful as her photography was. For different online events, The Joy of Marketing uses a slight variation of the logo to reflect different themes, which keeps the company’s creative audience engaged. Another positive feature of the logo design is that it doesn’t try to appeal to too wide an audience.

“We knew that because of the attention to detail we preached and the type of person who cares about those details, our audience would skew female,” explained Petty. “We are large believers that as a business, you

don’t want to be all things to all people. While we do have quite a few men in our audience, we definitely skew toward a female demographic.”

## Success Metrics

- Since the company’s launch in 2005, it has grown to need a staff of five full-time employees and two part-time helpers.
- Its brand recognition within the photography industry is strong and continues to grow.



## Takeaway Tip

There are plenty of impersonal logos out there—you need only look to the vast majority of corporate logos. As a small business you can afford to let your logo reflect your unique business style—especially when the logo incorporates the business owner’s name. Think about whom your targeted audience consists of and play to them; don’t go wider. For instance, if your target audience is predominantly female, then go for a logo with feminine touches and in feminine colors. Trying to stay with a neutral look and feel may make it only more difficult to appeal to your core audience.



## 23. The Right Way to Start a Charity Today: Using Facebook and Blogs to Build a Community Around a Good Cause



**S**arah Dale doesn't consider herself to be an artist or a craftsperson, but when a friend needed financial assistance during a medical emergency, she created a series of gift cards and sold them to friends and family and raised \$2,500. It worked so well that she and her husband, Gavino, decided to set up a Facebook page and a blog to encourage other artists and crafts people to join their crusade of "change the world one craft at a time."

### Why It Works

Dale used Facebook and a blog that she created herself to spread the word about Right as Rain. She posts photos of the arts and crafts to promote sales. The organization focuses on one recipient at a time and uses the power of social networking to build a community of artisans and craftspeople to create the art and an ever-growing network of “rain-makers,” who support the beneficiary by purchasing the artwork. Dale often reaches out to her network in online conversations seeking their advice and feedback on core issues such as who should be the next recipient as well as more rudimentary ones such as previewing videos and testing promotional methods. Dale has built an impressive network by effectively using these crowdsourcing techniques that engage her

audience and improve the overall mission of Right as Rain. She tries to respond to every comment on Facebook herself.

The logo by Jim Keller at Langton Cherubino Group embraces the joie de vivre of Gene Kelly’s exuberant dance from *Singin’ in the Rain*. It captures the nonprofit’s name and perfectly illustrates the hope and creativity that is instilled in Right as Rain. Rain can be destructive, or even just cause a bad day, but with an umbrella and playful attitude, the figure dancing on the logo has turned something negative into a happy moment.

### Success Metrics

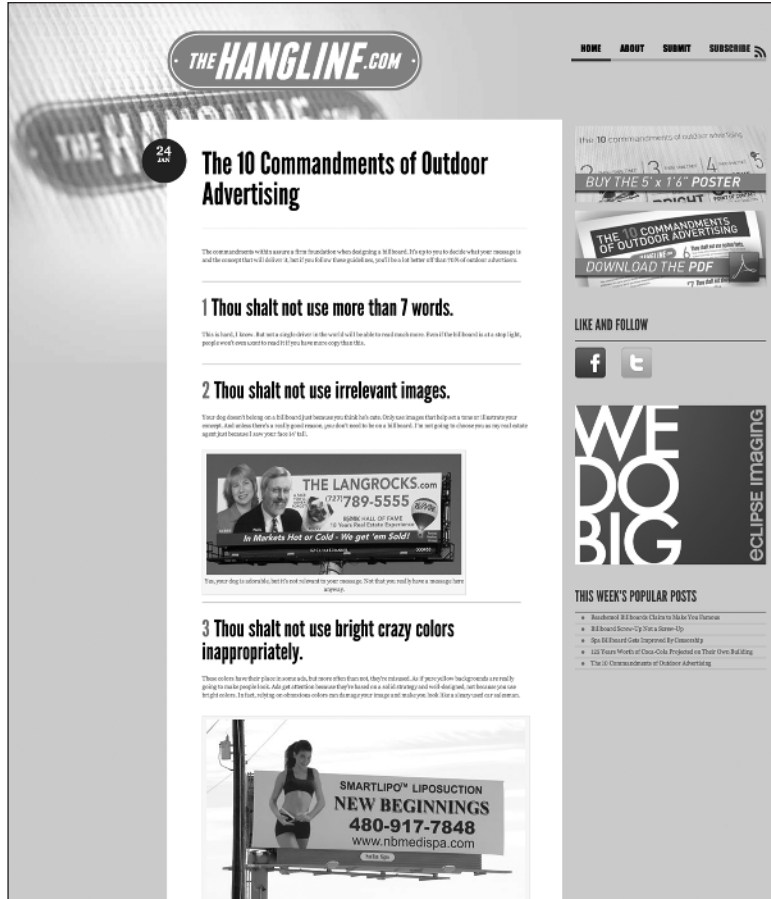
- Right as Rain built a network of more than 2,100 Facebook fans in less than two years.

- The charity has raised in excess of \$15,000 and helped people in a variety of crises: from survivors of natural disasters to people fighting personal illness and injury. More than 300 people have made crafts and donated proceeds to Right as Rain.
- Right as Rain won the 2011 Communicator Award for Excellence in design.

### Takeaway Tip

Use Facebook and blogs to engage your audience in back-and-forth dialogues about real issues and you will build a loyal base for your organization. When users contact you, be sure to give a personal response; this increases the engagement of your fans and supporters and ultimately builds up the community for your endeavor.

## 24. Education Can Be Creative: Formatting the Standard “10 Tips” Article to Convey Professionalism and Authority



The Hangline.com strives to educate people on effective billboard advertising. The new blog provided a great resource on the subject, but editors Todd Turner and Chad Hutchison wanted to go beyond the usual billboard advice (“use bright colors”). They then came up with a blog post called “The 10 Commandments of Outdoor Advertising.” “Our article is written candidly and boldly,” says art director Turner. “We call them commandments because people should not waiver from them. If you do, you fail.”

## Why It Works

First, the tips are smart, and they include examples that broke the commandments, which are good for a laugh. “Thou Shalt Not Use Irrelevant Images” states: “Your dog doesn’t belong on a billboard just because you think he’s cute.” Then it shows a billboard with not only a dog, but also two real estate agents. By using negative examples, the post gets its point across.

The post uses attractive decorative fonts and divider lines to make each tip easy to read. The post was so successful that TheHangline.com designed a poster of the commandments, available for sale on its site, as well as a free downloadable PDF.

The content was valuable enough to drive traffic and



encourage people to share the post. The tie-in to the poster sale was effective in that it wasn’t overbearing.

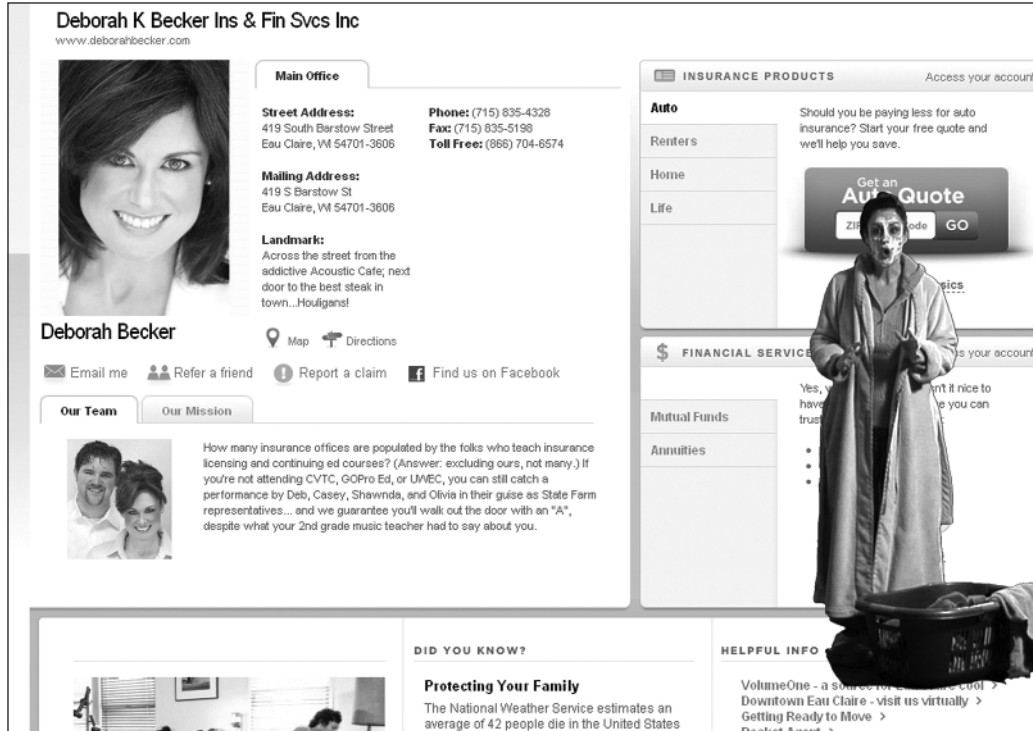
## Success Metrics

- Before this article, the site averaged about 50 hits per day. After, it has experienced a 1,000 percent increase in subscribers.
- The site has had a 500 percent increase in daily traffic.
- The “10 Commandments” put TheHangline.com first in mind for people in the outdoor industry, with hundreds of mentions in social media.

## Takeaway Tip

Love it or hate it, the “10 tips” article format is here to stay on blogs. But what sets apart a great example from a pedestrian one? Try a bold headline that establishes a theme and use attractive formatting for the article, including fonts, colors, headings, images, spacing, dividers, and more. Presentation is half the battle, and your job is not done once the article is written. You create a perception when you present an article—that perception can be authoritative or amateurish. It’s up to you.

## 25. Dressing Down for Success: Appealing to Consumers with a Personal Video Demystifies a Confusing Subject and Builds Trust



At first glance, this site looks like just another corporate, professional insurance website, but then suddenly, a video shows a woman walking across the screen. Dressed in a bathrobe, she is wearing cold cream and carrying a laundry basket. This is how we meet State Farm insurance agent Deborah Becker. The biggest impression of the video is that dealing with the agent is fun and easy—and she starts by poking fun at herself. The

video is engaging, personal, and fun—yet it manages to bring you back to the business matter at hand (i.e., dealing with your insurance needs).

### Why It Works

Traditionally, insurance agents and financial service representatives have taken a staid and serious tone in communications with consumers. After all, insuring your home, auto, business, and other assets is very important to most of us. As Deborah Becker says, “We created the freedom for a back-and-forth comfortable exchange.” Yet, the professionalism is there, and you get a sense that she as an agent still thinks the subject matter and nature of the visitor’s interest is serious and important.

It differentiates her from other competing agents in her local area. Deborah says, “Our experience has shown that the average consumer does not really differentiate between the companies offering insurance

products; they establish an emotional relationship with the icon that represents that company. We attempted to establish a “relationship history” between the consumer and Deborah Becker that would make the consumer feel as if they know, like, and therefore trust this individual to provide them with products and coverage that realistically fit their lifestyles.”

### Success Metrics

- The video has become such a viral sensation that Deborah has been able to eliminate all print, radio, and Yellow Pages advertising, and she now focuses solely on promoting the Web presence through online advertising. As a result, advertising costs were only one-fifth of the previous year’s with increased business production. She became the

most viewed State Farm agent in the country, despite being from a small market.

- The cost of the video was just \$250, yet she has received thousands of e-mails congratulating her, expressing interest, and most important, asking to form a business relationship because of the video. “This advertising campaign was like hitting the Lotto!” says Deborah.

### Takeaway Tip

**Showing off your personality can add that needed touch of personal differentiation to a serious, professional-looking website. Add a personal video (recording of you or a company executive speaking). But the real power is in the details: Make it funny, yet keep it professional. Have the speaker “walk” across the website, making it seem more intimate.**



## 26. A Legal Holiday: Using Electronic Greeting Cards to Position a Law Firm as Friendly



**M**anatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP, is a law firm with offices across the United States, many legal talents, and an expert stable of qualified lawyers. It turns out that the firm also has a sense of humor. For the holiday season, the law firm retained Wechsler Ross & Partners to design an electronic holiday card that poked fun at itself and its professional peers and that positioned the firm as friendly and contemporary—no easy feat among lawyers.

### Why It Works

This is likely one of very few amusing holiday cards from lawyers on the planet, which makes it even funnier. In the card, the lawyers go through the wording for their holiday card, but shoot down all options for fear of offending or inciting legal action. Finally the group settles on “warm wishes,” which itself requires an asterisk to specify, among other things, that “the wish, whether warm, neutral or cold, is under no obligation to come true.”

“Humor is a delicate area for a law firm, which must carefully avoid offense,” says principal Dan Ross. Ross’s objective in designing the e-card was to reinforce a warm relationship and inculcate positive feelings in an often-contentious profession.



The e-card was sent to clients, prospects, colleagues, and peers, as well as posted to its website, with resounding positive response.

### Success Metrics

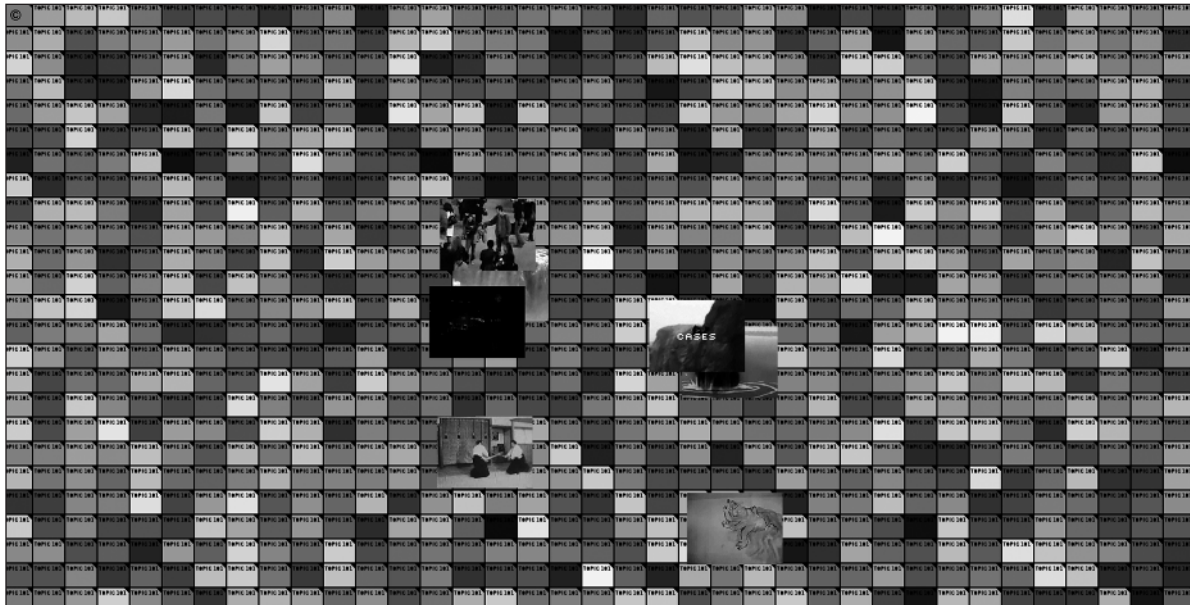
- The Manatt card was widely acclaimed in legal media and attracted extensive favorable publicity to the firm.
- An entire post was devoted to this card by the *Wall Street Journal's* Law Blog, which named it “the best law firm holiday card of 2010.”



### Takeaway Tip

Don’t take yourself or your brand too seriously, especially if everyone else does. Stepping outside your traditional role and impression of gravitas for a special occasion like a holiday can make people smile and endear you to them. If done tastefully, you will not lose credibility. On the contrary, you just may gain a closer connection and bond of loyalty with clients.

## 27. A Picture Speaks a Thousand Words: Creating a Visual Interpretation of What You Do in an Industry Known for Facts and Figures



**M**arket research firms aren't known for visual creativity: They tend to be all numbers and analysis. That's why Topic 101, a leading research firm with expertise in the college market, decided to make its site unlike any of its competitors. The company needed a

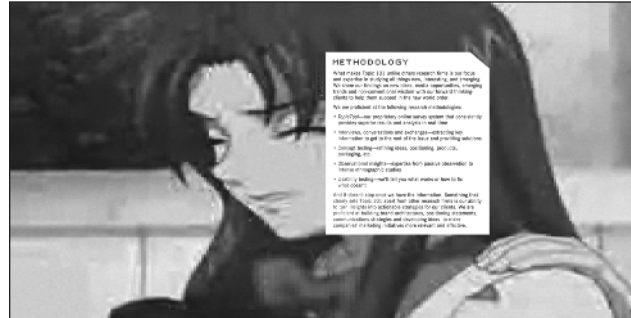
site that reflected its positioning as not just another stuffy research firm, as well as one that spoke to its target audience of marketing directors, advertising agency creative directors, and graphic designers.



## Why It Works

Topic 101 brought on Visual Dialogue for the task of visually interpreting who they were as a company. The design firm created a visual metaphor for the survey process used by Topic 101 by using evocative photos and videos that can be interpreted in different ways.

The design emphasized Topic 101's cutting-edge, relevant approach to research, which drives creative strategy (as opposed to competitors who just supply reams of data).



"Upon visiting the new site, potential clients' first reaction is 'I love your site!' This sets the tone for the whole partnership," says Susan Battista, president of Topic 101.

"The site now," Battista said, "tells Topic 101's story and conveys its point of differentiation in an interesting and thoughtful way."

## Success Metrics

- Topic 101's client list has grown since the design and includes Dragon Software, Harvard Business School, MIT, and United Way.
- In 2010, billings went up 30 percent despite the recession.

- The rebrand helped Topic 101 become the leading strategic research firm in the New England market.

## Takeaway Tip

Don't be defined by your industry. Decide what you want to be known for (even if it flies in the face of the traditionalists in your field) and use this to brand your company. Go against the grain to stand out. For example, if your industry is known for copious and detailed facts and figures, find a way to use visual elements to demonstrate your company's capabilities in simple terms.

## 28. Walking the Talk: Making a Website That Reflects the Principles Fundamental to Your Business



**W**hen your firm consists of innovation experts whose goal is to get client organizations to think differently and achieve creative breakthroughs, a dry and drab website does not aid your marketing efforts. A website should reflect the principles by which the business operates. You have to convey at a glance that you understand creativity and use it in your own business. That's why EdgeDweller turned to Citizen Studio to turn its website into something unique and

unexpected. To draw the right kind of clients, the company had to express, through word and design, what it was capable of doing.



“EdgeDweller is all about challenging the norm and finding innovation in business,” explained Linda Doherty of Citizen Studio.

The design team wanted to create imagery that was secondary and complementary to the copy on the site, which was, in Doherty’s mind, spot on to the audience of C-level executives looking for a company to help take them to a new level through creative exploration.

## Why It Works

The colors—shades of burnt reds, spring greens, and lemon yellows—are more reminiscent of a summer dress than a professional consulting website.

The typical consulting website is blue, filled with images of suited businesspeople in the top quadrant. When reviewing site after site in a row, there are only so many of those you can look at before your eyes cross. So it becomes a competitive advantage to have a website that is different, because it stands out and is memorable, compared with competitors’ websites, which all tend to look the same.

Most important, the website reflects a distinct artistic touch, reminiscent of the creativity that EdgeDweller’s work brings out in its clients, without being too “out there.”

## Success Metrics

- EdgeDweller has established itself as providing evolutionary thinking for companies such as Avon, General Electric, and Disney.
- Its team has developed a growing reputation as leadership experts worldwide.

## Takeaway Tip

When your business is based on differentiating itself from competitors through its creativity, then it’s important to reflect some of that creativity in your website. At the same time, if the prospects and clients you deal with are corporate people, then to resonate with them, the creativity has to take the form of subtle touches such as unexpected colors and images; refrain from being too over the top.



## 29. Traversing from Print to Mobile: Creating a Mobile App Version of Print for Customers with a Foot in the Mobile World



**M**eal Tickets & Unusual Ideas has been designing and marketing its “little card displays” in more than 70 hotels and wineries in Northwestern Michigan for nearly 10 years, but it recognized that it needed to have a mobile presence. The result: the Traverse Traveler iPhone app, which is a handy mobile guide to Traverse City, Michigan, and the surrounding area. Advertisers get both print and mobile media exposure for the same

rate, and Meal Tickets & Unusual Ideas has been able to expand its clientele by including lodging properties, entertainment, services, and local events on the app.

“We are a small business promoting other small businesses. And we believe it’s important to keep up with technology to meet our customers needs,” says Brandy Wheeler of Meal Tickets & Unusual Ideas.

### Why It Works

Like most travel apps, the core audience was initially visitors to Northwestern Michigan. But the app has a surprising secondary audience. Wheeler says, “We’ve found that locals love it because it’s such a handy resource for contacting the businesses they visit regularly and discovering new ones.”

By tying the app in to advertising opportunities for clients, Meal Tickets & Unusual Ideas has created increased value for customers, as well as a free,

useful application for anyone in the area with an iPhone.

### Success Metrics

- Despite launching the app just before the holidays—in freezing temperatures and during the slowest business time of the year—the app reached 1,000 downloads in the first 25 days.
- Local media picked up the story the day the press release went out, which resulted in two TV

interviews, live radio interviews, and several print stories within days.

- Businesses in the area have not only signed up for the app but also promoted it via Facebook and Twitter.

### Takeaway Tip

The state of transmitting and consuming information is changing with the explosive growth of technology. And it’s not just transitioning online—we’re already in the mobile age. Convert what you are doing today in print to mobile devices. Create a mobile app that mirrors the print version but is attuned to and takes advantage of the unique attributes of mobile media to bridge the divide between old-school print and new school mobile.

## 30. Promoting Logos with a Guess-That-Logo Contest: Tying in a Contest with E-Mail Marketing to Increase Client Engagement



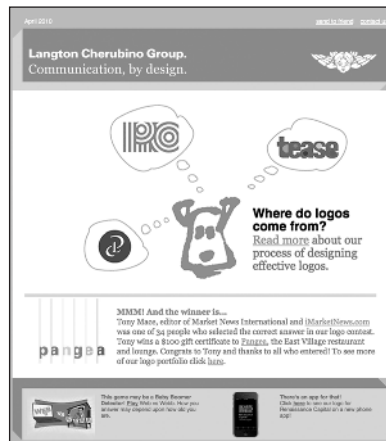
**E**-mail is a critical component for Langton Cherubino Group's monthly marketing strategy.

Each month the company sets out to inform, educate, and amuse clients and prospects with stories about design intelligence, inspiration, and interaction. To promote its new online portfolio of logos, the company created a Guess-That-Logo contest and spiked interest in the firm's branding design services.

## Why It Works

"We deplore logo contests," says cofounder Norman Cherubino.

"When designers are working for free and only the winner gets paid it sets up a terrible precedent." Langton Cherubino Group believes that the best way to design a new identity is to get to know the company and its target audience. Without access to the client, it's very hard to create an identity that captures the right personality and meets your objectives. The twist on this logo contest was that they did not seek logo submissions; they asked clients and prospects to guess which logo belonged to an East Village restaurant. To find out, participants need only go to the online Logo Portfolio and search the gallery for the answers—which is exactly what the design firm wanted people



to do. The contest promoted one of their clients (a local restaurant) and offered a \$100 gift certificate to a random winner.

## Success Metrics

- The logo contest generated 48 votes from an e-mail list of 1,042 (a 4.6 percent return).
- The contest e-mail had an open rate of 27 percent, and the following month's e-mail announcing the winner had an open rate of 31 percent.
- The campaign increased Langton Cherubino Group's branding capabilities and led

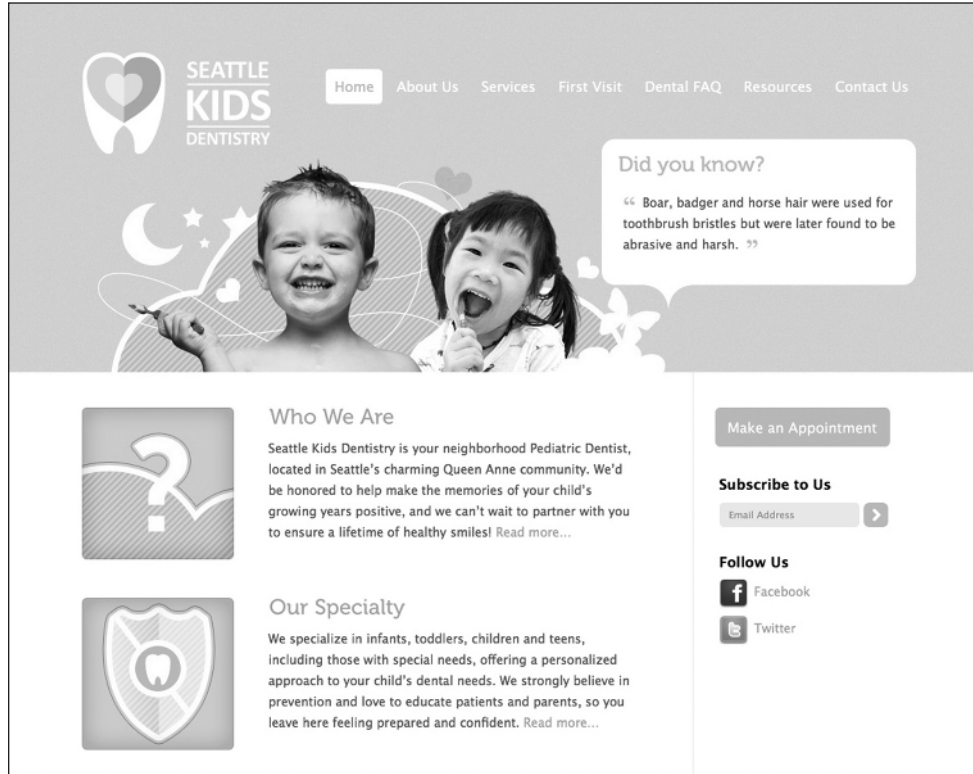


to a new client meeting and an opportunity to bid on a major website redesign.

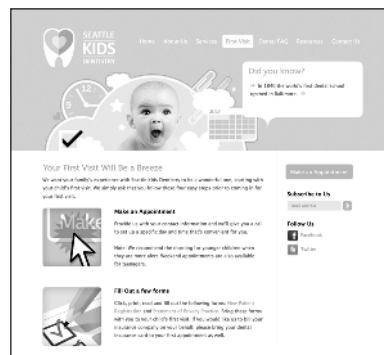
## Takeaway Tip

**Boost your e-mail marketing readership with a contest and gift certificate giveaway that generates interest in the products or services you offer. Contests can be effective ways to increase engagement with your target audience—they appeal to our sense of competitiveness and our curiosity. They can even allow you to toot your own horn graciously without appearing arrogant, as when an integral part of the contest invites people to look at your products or output.**

## 31. Marketing to Parents: Tailoring a Website's Look to Reinforce Your Target Niche



Choosing a dentist for your child can be difficult without referrals. All you've really got to go on is a list of providers from your insurance company—or the phone book. How can you be sure the dentist will be good enough for your child? Seattle Kids Dentistry recognizes the importance of marketing to parents. Its website is filled with bright colors and images that will appeal to kids (should their parents decide to go over the site with them to make them feel at ease). It also is aimed at giving parents information about its dentists, office, and practice.



## Why It Works

It's still (strangely) an oddity for any kind of doctor to have a well-designed website. Not only is this one visually appealing, it also puts parents' minds at ease with information about their child's first visit and what to expect. The element of education for parents is as important as the design.

The canary yellow theme, with accents of baby blue and white and a peppering of images of babies and kids, makes it clear that this dentist's office is intended for children. Other simple graphics make the site

appealing and easy to navigate. Its "Did You Know" tidbits delight visitors with their intriguing tooth-related facts, such as "A knocked out tooth starts to die within 15 minutes, but if you put it in milk or hold it in your mouth it will survive longer."

## Success Metrics

- Seattle Kids Dentistry's new brand and online presence has positioned the company to open two offices in the Seattle area.
- Because pediatric dentistry is a relatively new field, the firm has succeeded in branding itself in the field online.

## Takeaway Tip

You've carefully defined your niche—now make sure you tailor your website just as carefully and specifically. Make the graphical elements, such as choice of colors and images, reinforce your specialty or market, especially if you are carving out a new niche. Don't forget the educational piece, either. Present content in an interesting fashion to teach your visitors what they want to know about your business.



## 32. Leading by Example: Using Stock Images in a Downloadable Tips Sheet to Demonstrate That Marketing Can Be Easy and Inexpensive



One path to higher customer sales is through providing educational resources, as e-mail marketing provider VerticalResponse well knows. Its free marketing guides, like "50 Ways to Grow Your Email List" are attractive and useful resources that educate business owners and funnel them into the sales cycle for the company. There's nothing worse than trying to shotgun a target too wide of an audience with a single product. But VerticalResponse recognizes that its users range from newbie marketers to seasoned professionals, so the company designs different level guides and tutorials to target each level.

**19 Telemarketing**  
If you've got people on the phone, don't hang up until you ask if you can add them to your newsletter.



**20 FishBowl**  
Put a fishbowl on your counter and hold a weekly prize giveaway - then announce it in your newsletter. Add everyone who put their card in to your newsletter list. Just make sure you have a sign that tells them they will be added to your email list.



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f t 4

50 WAYS TO GROW YOUR EMAIL LIST

**26 Use a Video Contest**  
Host a contest where you have customers create a one-minute video about why they like your non-profit, your company or products. Ask your customers to send you the videos and post them on your Facebook page. Then have your visitors vote on which should win cash or prizes that you offer. Your contestants will email their lists, and post to Twitter and Facebook asking their friends to vote for them and you'll get more exposure. Count up the "likes" or comments on each video to determine the winner. Make sure you include an email opt-in form on your Facebook page to capture any email addresses.

**VIDEO CONTEST**



**27 Handheld Devices**  
If you're at a tradeshow, at your store, spa, salon or restaurant, you can use handheld devices. With an iPhone or an Android you can use Bump Technologies' free app. You simply bump your phones together and instantly swap contact information. Sterizon has a specialized handheld device and application where your customers can type in their email address and it goes right into your VerticalResponse account. There is a monthly fee for that one, but it sounds cool!



Stiglitz. Rather than having 100 percent custom graphics, VerticalResponse uses stock images to lead by example and illustrate that marketing a business doesn't have to be hard or expensive.

### Success Metrics

- VerticalResponse's guides have been downloaded 35,000 times in the past year alone.
- The "50 Ways to Grow Your Email List" guide was downloaded 2,500 times and is the third most popular guide in the past year.

### Why It Works

"We have many small business owners as clients and we know that they are challenged for time since they have to 'wear a lot of hats' running their own business," says Kim Stiglitz, director of retention and conversion marketing at VerticalResponse. "We firmly believe that by creating simple, quick, and easy-to-use free guides, we can enable our clients to be more successful with their email, direct mail and postcard marketing."

The guides get right to the point with short tips. They use stock images for visual appeal, a fact that is deliberate, according to

### Takeaway Tip

When creating downloadable content pieces, such as white papers, reports, or guides, make them visually appealing with stock images. While stock images aren't right for every situation, they can play a role to quickly and inexpensively add visual interest and break up large expanses of text, especially in "workhorse" pieces.

### 33. Blogger Outreach in the Cloud: Using a Visually Inspired Word Cloud to Start a Conversation with a Blogger

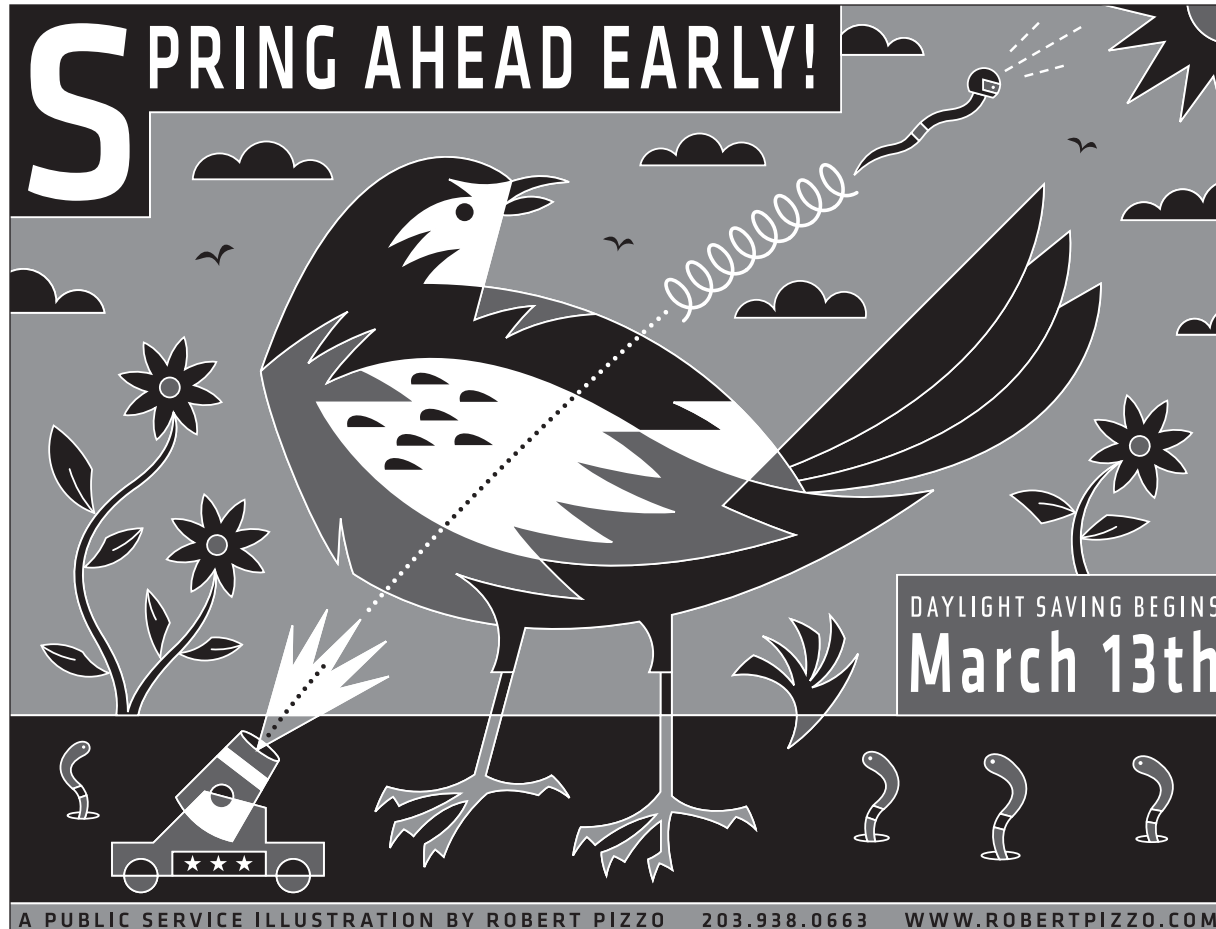


**G**etting bloggers to talk about your brand can be harder than pulling teeth: Your pitch tends to be like everyone else's, and bloggers simply aren't impressed. David de Souza, founder of TaxFix.co.uk, knew that getting the attention of money and finance bloggers would be a challenge, so he came up with an unusual idea. De Souza created a personalized word

cloud in the shape of the logo from each blog on his outreach list and sent bloggers the logo-shaped word cloud along with a personal note. (A word cloud is a visual depiction of the main words used on a website or blog. The more often a word is used, the larger the size of the word.)



## 34. An Illustrator Draws Up Timely Reminders for Prospects: Using Remarkable E-Mail Marketing to Keep Your Pipeline Full



**R**obert Pizzo captures the attention of busy art directors with his award-winning illustrations and continues to be one of the nation's busiest artists. It's not enough to be a talented artist; you must also be a good businessperson. Staying top of mind is not something you can take for granted. Pizzo uses e-mail marketing blasts with his artwork to stay visible.

## Why It Works

Pizzo doesn't just repurpose existing artwork; he renders new illustrations that were created specifically for self-promotion. By creating original art for his own marketing, he shows off his thinking and creativity with each e-mail blast. The timing is also critical. He often whips up a timely promo that relates to special events such as daylight saving time. "They feel fresh and current, like little public service announcements," says Pizzo. There are rules for e-mailing that Pizzo adheres to: Always ask for permission, do not e-mail more than once a month, and keep the content simple—one image per e-mail is usually enough. Finding the right balance of content and timing is the key to success.

## Success Metrics

- Pizzo has won awards from *Print*, *Graphis*, *How*, *Desi*, and *AR100*. His work appears in leading publications, including the *Wall Street Journal*, *BusinessWeek*, and *Newsweek*, among others.
- Pizzo measures his success by the fact that his e-mails keep him in contact with his clients, which means they'll keep thinking of him on a regular basis—even if it's six months to a year between assignments.
- Illustrators are freelancers who are used to feast or famine workloads. With e-mail marketing, Pizzo has been able to sustain long-term work sources and maintain a profitable workflow.

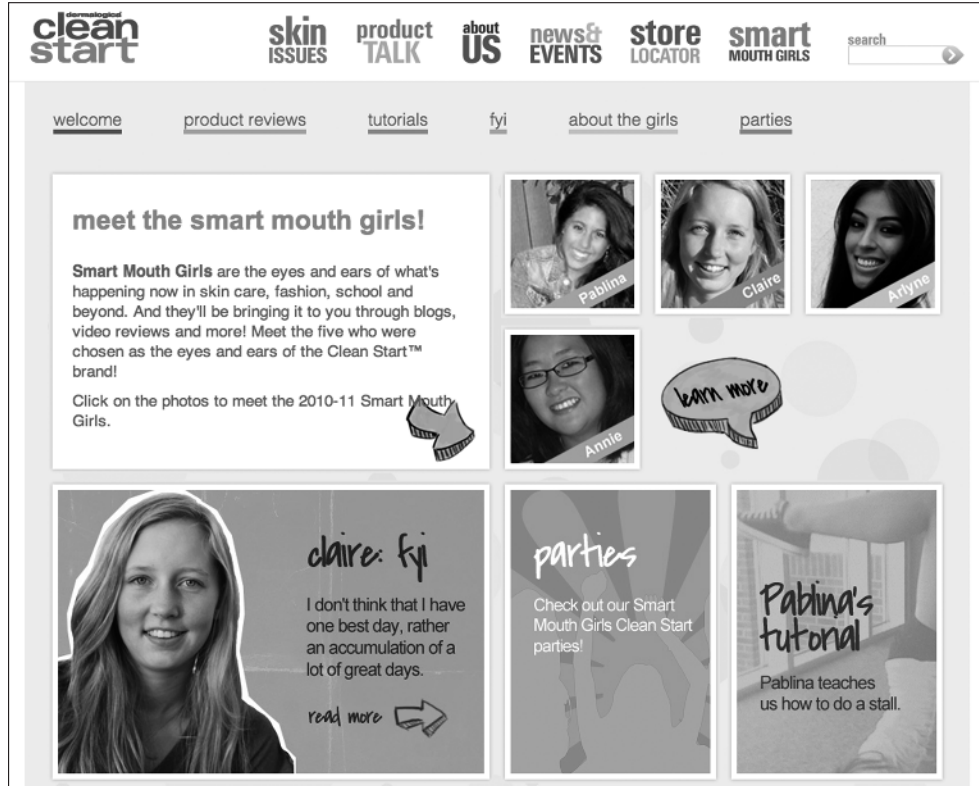


## Takeaway Tip

People in your target market get bombarded daily by e-mails from prospective vendors. You must stay visible—and be distinctive—to stick out in a very crowded marketplace. Put together a regular schedule of e-mails to stay front and center with those you have permission to market to. Include the same level of attention to detail in your e-mails as you do in your products and services. And make whatever you deliver not just blah, but visually remarkable. Do that and you will have a steady pipeline of business.



## 35. Bringing the Topic of Skin Care to a Head: Messaging to Teens with a Clean Peppy Web Design



**M**arketing skin care products to teens can be as scary as a pre-prom zit. After all, the only people they listen to are other teens. That's the strategy Clean Start took in marketing its skin care line, a sub-brand of Dermalogica. Key is a bright and peppy Web look against a clean white background, provided by Hello Design.

Clean Start brought in the experts: five teenage girls dubbed the Smart Mouth Girls. The idea is that they share their skin care stories and their personalities

through videos, social media, and blog posts and then other teens will respond and interact in Clean Start's community.

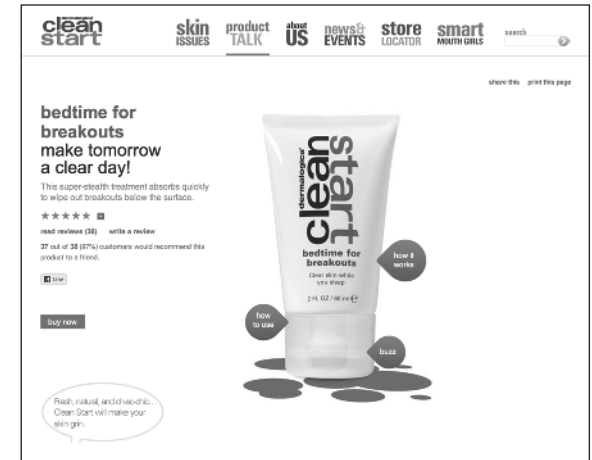
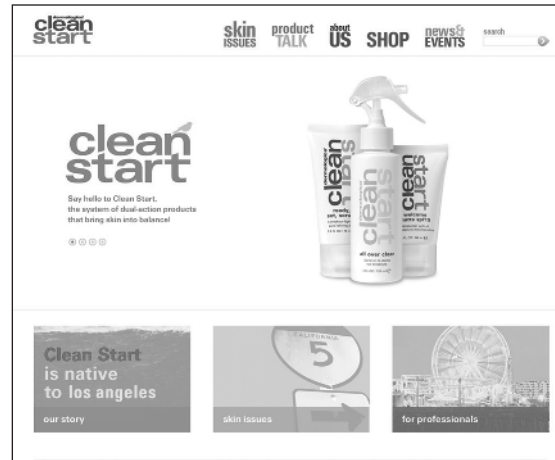
## Why It Works

Teens don't want to be sold skin care products from adults. After all, adults just don't get it! But using the genuine voices of actual teens—not actors—gives this concept real teeth.

The website also offers practical advice on skin care, so the site becomes bigger than just e-commerce; it becomes a resource of information for teens looking to improve their skin. The clean look of the site reinforces the message that keeping skin clean and caring for your skin are important.

## Success Metrics

- Since Clean Start's launch, visitor traffic increased 86 percent year over year and is steadily increasing.



- The more than 2,000 engaged fans that make up its active social media base constantly participate in conversations and share their experiences on Clean Start's Facebook page.
- The site has allowed Dermalogica to build and nurture a young audience to go beyond the hype in the skin care industry and really learn about and improve the health of their skin.

## Takeaway Tip

Use design elements to reinforce your message. If your message is about keeping skin clean, for example, then a pristine look to your website and packaging will support that message.

## 36. It's Not All Business All the Time: Adding a Personalized Blog Header Brings Human Interest to a Business Website



**E**ntrepreneurs identify with their businesses, but there's always another side to them. Tim Berry, president and founder of Palo Alto Software, wanted to connect both his business and personal side in the design of his blog header that resides on a company website. Rodrigo Garcia helped Berry realize this effort in the blog header design that sits atop his business blog.

Since the business content—entrepreneurship and business planning—is well-represented in the blog itself, Berry decided to show a more casual unbusiness-like look. Berry says, “The banner would emphasize what’s different about me.”

## Why It Works

Berry is a seasoned entrepreneur who is already well known in the business planning space, as is the company he founded and its products. By putting Berry out in front on the blog, it positions Berry as the public “face” of the company and humanizes it. His relaxed visage interjects a human element into an otherwise straightforward business site, creating greater customer intimacy.

There’s a lot at play in this header. First the words describe what the blog is about. But the appealing nature scenes, combined with Berry’s friendly face (a far cry from professional and stuffy head shots most of us have), put the reader at ease and tell us that this blog isn’t just one more dry-as-dust company blog.

The stepping stones symbolize Berry’s desire to make things easier for people by helping them through business planning, step by step. The mountains serve as a reminder that there’s more to running a business than just working all the time. After all, what’s the point of working hard if you can’t play once in a while?

## Success Metrics

- Berry shares his blog posts on Twitter and has been recommended as one of the top 20 entrepreneurs to follow on Twitter in *BusinessWeek* and one of 25 entrepreneurs to follow in *Business Insider*.
- He has been quoted and referenced in the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* as an expert, giving greater visibility to the company.



## Takeaway Tip

Take some of the pressure off always focusing on work. Add an element of play and the human side into your design in a business-to-business industry. Your target audience will better identify with your company and products because of the personal touch—you create an emotional connection. A blog, with a simple personalized header, is a perfect place to interject the human element, but that same human touch can also work elsewhere.