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55 YEARS

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Creative marketing & PR can drive new business - by Stanley Hurwitz

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Sometimes people are so close to their product or company, they think everyone knows how great their product is too. Imagine my surprise during an MLB playoff game when one auto commercial jumped off the screen. It featured an Acura racecar that won two endurance races at the prestigious Indianapolis Motor Speedway. An Acura!? We bought a pre-owned, low mileage Acura several years ago when we were shopping for a reliable, well-maintained, fairly priced, practical family vehicle in which to safely take trips and transport a grandchild. We hadn't been looking for a car with racing genes. Who knew?

While I had done some research – finding 4 and 5-star reviews and positive comments from a friend who drove an Acura – the company failed to promote the high-level engineering that went into this vehicle. Besides great handling and excellent fuel mileage (though it takes premium gas), over the years I often remarked how surprisingly well it handles, how fast it takes off, and how it makes 70 mph feel like 50 mph.

For many years the manufacturer, Honda (!), missed opportunities to spotlight their product that industry reviewers called “a genuine bargain” and “a high quality super reliable car.” Looking at past Acura ads, I found one with the most boring tagline ever: “Made for Mankind.” An ad agency maven at the time wrote, “This is an interesting choice for a marketing message because it’s absolutely the one thing you can say about every car ever made in the history of Earth.”

This brings us to the point of this column. Exciting, well-made auto. Boring ads! No matter what product or service you're selling and no matter how big your company, it's imperative that you develop a message that stands out from the 300+ tedious ads people see and hear every day on the internet, in print, on billboards, on TV and radio, and on their phones. Boring and stale content is like dreary wallpaper.

Developing successful marketing and PR is both an art and science. You can tell when a business takes the lazy route – and you can tell when the owners/managers take the extra, more creative step. It's like watching a short-lived TV sitcom where the funniest thing is the laugh track, versus a long-running, truly funny sitcom where you can tell that the writers spent extra time fine-tuning the script – as with winners like *That 70's Show* and *How I Met Your Mother*. Study the writing.

No matter the industry, experts recommend that businesses budget 5 – 10% of sales revenues to Marketing/PR/Advertising. No matter what you're driving – and what drives you – for great ideas and interesting content, working with a proven pro is a worthwhile investment. Let's talk: stanhurwitz@gmail.com.

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