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SCHOLL & COMPANY, LLP
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
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YOUR FINANCIAL SUCCESS

MAY 2021

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How You Can Use Customer Stories To Make a Killer Marketing Campaign

Stories are one of the oldest forms of communication. For as long as there has been language, people have used words to spin yarns and convey ideas. Today, when it comes to marketing your products, stories emotionally impact your customers in a way that mere facts never could.

How do stories do this? According to behavioral economist and author Peter McGraw, memories are built on associations. When you form a habit, routine, or ritual, you're essentially creating a new set of associations. Using stories, you can show how customers who use your product or service incorporate it into their rituals. If others see that your product as a benefit, they might be compelled to do the same.

Before sharing testimonials of customers using your products willy-nilly, however, there are a few tips that might help you curate the stories your customers share and see.

Make your customers the center of the story.

Many businesses make their product or their brand the hero of the story, but this isn't the most effective way to grab your customers' attention through storytelling. Instead, focusing on your customers, their rituals, and the success they've achieved can resonate a lot more powerfully. Of course, you'll want to make it clear how your product helped them achieve success.



Meet your customers where they are.

Find a way to get customer feedback on the products and services your business provides. What do they like about your product? How have those products and services helped them the most? Incorporating this information into your storytelling campaign can also ensure that those stories resonate a lot more with your customers.

Ditch the jargon.

Always remember to keep your stories short, to the point, and accessible. No customer is going to be interested in reading an eight-page white paper or listen to a testimonial that they can't understand because it's so full of industry jargon. That's the beauty of good storytelling — it can impact anyone, transcending industries.

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TEACHING YOU

Why We Do More Than 'Fix Problems' at Scholl & Company

There's a reason why our clients hire us. We are partners with their business — or with their family — to become its financial and tax experts, so they don't have to dig into the minutiae of tax code or financial reports.

But that's not all we do.

Our job as accounting experts is to also provide our clients with the tools and information they need to understand the *why* behind our techniques. It would be very easy to provide our services with little explanation, but I don't see any benefit in practicing this way. Unfortunately, I think it's far too common for professionals, be they in IT or marketing, to simply provide great work without explaining the benefits or reasoning behind what they do.

This doesn't empower the customer. It's not a partnership; it's a transaction. That's not our goal at Scholl & Company. I want my team to provide our clients with explanations and detailed information behind the tactics we deploy. This graduation season, I can't help but think of our role at Scholl & Company as a mentorship or teacher role of sorts. (It's only fitting, too, since it's National Teacher Day on May 4!)

The goal isn't to make you the expert. In fact, it's quite the opposite. We want you to rely on us as your partner, guiding you to make the right decision for your business. You're the expert on your business. We're the experts in finance. Our partnership is powerful, but unless you understand the process — in layman's terms, of course — you're not equipped to make those decisions. That would be unfair to you.

This would be like if you go to the hardware store, looking for a particular kind of screw for your weekend project, and instead of explaining how to use the product and outlining the



various benefits of your options, the hardware store owner simply tells you which one to buy. How prepared do you really feel to complete that project?

Of course, it isn't always easy. We're working with very complex subject matter, and to explain that to others can be difficult. We have had moments when we had to re-explain something to a client — sometimes for the third time — simply because it was a very complex topic. The key to this is patience and having empathy for the other person. If a heart surgeon had to explain a stent operation, he would need patience and understanding to bring those concepts down to a level where anyone could understand.

We have to stand in your shoes frequently. We have to understand that these are big issues you're working through, and while we may know that a notice letter from the IRS isn't too difficult to manage, for you, it can be stressful. We can't dismiss those feelings, but we will actively work to ensure you understand and know you have an expert in your corner supporting you.

We're here to help you and to teach you. That's what partners do.

*BUSINESS IS GREAT AND
WE'RE LOOKING FOR MORE.*

We hope that you will keep us in mind if the opportunity arises to refer family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors. Thank you for your continued support.

P.S. We know many of you have been paying close attention to the numerous tax changes that have occurred this year. With these changes comes a greater need for tax planning. This summer, my team at Scholl & Company will be connecting with all of our clients to discuss potential changes you may need to make to your tax plan. It is more important than ever that we discuss this. We are still in the process of learning about these changes, and we will be in touch with more details. Thank you for your patience!



Carmen and Family

Over the years, Carmen's work family and her personal family have blended together. Nadia has a passion for helping others and often volunteers with Scholl & Company's philanthropic efforts, Scholl Cares, which provides assistance to our local community. Because of her passion, Nadia has 240 more hours than the 60 volunteer hours she's required to accomplish before graduation.

Furthermore, Carmen says volunteering with Scholl Cares gives Nadia and her family a new perspective. In one particular instance, she remembers Nadia realizing that some children don't get to celebrate Thanksgiving at home with a meal on the table, which Nadia saw while volunteering at a Meals on Wheels event.

"She likes the fact that Bret and everyone else allows her to come," Carmen says. "I always want my children to give back and to understand that they are in a much better position than some people. [Volunteering] helps to see that."

As the last of her children prepare to leave the nest, Carmen says she continues to love motherhood, especially when it comes to those loud family gatherings we've all come to miss during the pandemic.

(And she can't wait to become a grandma — hopefully someday soon!)

"I enjoy the crazy times, when everyone is at the house ... and it's just roaring with people. I wouldn't give that up for anything in the world! I enjoy having them there."

Likewise, Carmen says she appreciates the support she continues to receive from her work family at Scholl & Company. Whether it's technical support when having to operate remotely or an opportunity to teach her children valuable lessons, Carmen has found a home at Scholl & Company.

Thank you, Carmen, for all of your hard work and dedication to Scholl & Company and Scholl Cares. If you'd like to learn more about Scholl Cares and the organizations we sponsor, please visit SchollCompany.com/SchollCares.

“**“I ALWAYS WANT MY CHILDREN TO GIVE BACK AND TO UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE IN A MUCH BETTER POSITION THAN SOME PEOPLE. [VOLUNTEERING] HELPS TO SEE THAT.”**”

FOR THE LOVE OF FAMILY

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT CARMEN MURILLO FINDS SUPPORT AS A WORKING MOTHER

At Scholl & Company, our coworkers are like our families. We rely on each other for advice and support, especially when a pandemic, wildfires, and a flood threaten our ability to do the work we do every day! By

sticking together, we've become a stronger unit, and no one exemplifies that quite like our senior accountant — and, currently, the only mom on our team — Carmen Murillo.



Carmen

Carmen has extensive experience in accounting and has been with Scholl & Company since 2014, serving our clients with general accounting tasks like bookkeeping and tax preparation. We appreciate having Carmen on our team because of her knowledge and expertise, but for Carmen, it's Scholl & Company and her family who push her every day.

"My family is No. 1," Carmen says. "And then my coworkers. They make work enjoyable."

Carmen and her husband, Enrique, have two children. Their oldest, Adrian, is a counselor at a school and is married to another school counselor. Meanwhile, their daughter, Nadia, will graduate from high school this year and plans to study law.

The support of Scholl & Company and help at home from Enrique has provided Carmen with the opportunity to continue doing the work she loves while also continuing to support her children and family with a flexible schedule. Carmen says this has allowed her to be as involved as she needs to be in each role that she fills.

3 Habits of Successful Businesses

At Scholl & Company, we work with hundreds of small businesses every year. Each one has its strengths and areas for improvement, but no business is perfect. The myth of the “perfect” entrepreneur and a seamlessly growing business isn’t possible because there are always ways to grow. In doing so, businesses become stronger and more successful.

However, through the years, we’ve noticed a trend among our highest-performing business leaders. They may not be perfect, but they have acquired a few traits that make them successful and stimulate further growth. Harnessing those secrets could be the key to greater success in your business.



Habit No. 1: They build a business — not a job.

Entrepreneurs have the grit and determination to build something great, but why reinvent the wheel? If you started a donut shop, then you must know how to make great donuts, but that doesn’t mean you have to be an expert in content writing and photography, too. Instead, hire out to professionals who can create great content, better organize your systems, or manage your team far better than you ever could.

Remember, your business is just that — a business! It’s not a job for you to fulfill. You are building something that could extend far beyond yourself, so don’t expect that you need to “do it all.”

Where many business leaders get hung up on this concept is in the cost. It’s difficult to justify hiring someone to take professional photographs of your products when you have a great camera on your phone! But a professional photographer is going to create far superior galleries that you can use over and over again. Think of hiring out to experts as an investment in your business.

Pro Tip: Need great content that you can reuse? Look for freelancers to help! Freelance creators allow you to get the professional content you need without taking on a regular salaried employee, although these are necessary when

you start to grow. Just be considerate of the freelance compensation laws in your state. (We can help you with this!)

Habit No. 2: They never stop learning.

Just as the first habit implies, you don’t know it all. Successful business leaders not only understand this, but they are also hungry to remedy it. Part of being a successful business owner is absorbing as much information and knowledge as possible. This involves seeking assistance from coaches, attending seminars, and seeking the guidance of mentors.

But lifelong learning habits are not just for business leaders. Your employees can benefit from regular professional development training, too. Commit to offering or supporting professional development practices to boost your employees’ morale, confidence, and skill set. The results will show in the quality of the work they provide for your company.

Habit No. 3: They do regular financial and tax planning.

If you don’t have your nose in your books on a weekly and monthly basis, you’re missing a lot. Weekly reviews allow business leaders an opportunity to see an in-the-moment analysis of the financial shape of their company, while monthly reviews provide a big-picture view of the company’s projected revenue, expenses, and more. Furthermore, our most successful businesses think about their taxes from a year-round perspective. They adapt and plan for tax changes as they happen, rather than focusing on taxes once every year.

The financial wellness of your business is vital to its success. Knowing where you stand financially, allows you to make bigger decisions about personnel, product launches, and more. A weekly check-in with your budget could help you determine if you can invest in a new marketing strategy or if you need to double down. Your books are the basis of your business, so don’t ignore them.

Our team is willing to help you improve your habits for better business success. Please call Scholl & Company today if you need help with tax planning or interpreting your financial records.



Connecting Your Employees to Your Mission

Making Your Passions Their Passions

Your business might be doing well, but if your workforce doesn’t feel any sort of personal connection to your business’s mission, that could prevent lasting success. You want to boost employee morale and make them happy about their work. To reinvigorate your employees’ passion for your business’s mission, try a few of these tips.

Walk the talk.

Patagonia CEO Yvon Chouinard decided to make his products out of organic cotton after he saw how industrially grown cotton was hurting the environment. It cost more to do that, but he stuck to Patagonia’s mission of creating environmentally friendly products. If you’re not willing to sacrifice for your mission, then it’s not your mission — and your employees will know it.

Make it clear.

Make sure everyone at your company knows exactly what your mission is. Only when employees have a clear understanding of the goal can they actually abide by it. If your mission statement can be interpreted in multiple ways, clarify it throughout all levels of your business.

Speak passionately about it.

While you want the mission itself to be exciting, even the most intriguing of mission statements will be DOA if your delivery doesn’t convey your excitement. Humans are emotional



creatures, so connecting with your employees emotionally in regard to your mission is just as important as the mission itself.

Make it personal.

While you might think tying your personal story to the company’s mission seems narcissistic, the truth is that your team wants to hear your story. People like stories, and if you can convey yours with honesty and humility, no one will think you’re an egoist.

Re-work it.

If your mission doesn’t seem to be inspiring passion in your workforce, then maybe it’s time to tweak it a little bit. Whether you’re just starting in business or have had the same mission statement for 10 years, a new mission lived out, made clear, and made personal by you can spark a newfound appreciation for your business among your employees.

HAVE A Laugh



The Bet That Spawned the Filet-O-Fish Sandwich

Inside the McDonald's History Books



If you’re one of the 68 million people who dine at McDonald’s each day, you’re probably familiar with the Filet-O-Fish Sandwich. This simple dish has a contentious history. Ray Kroc, the owner of McDonald’s, hated it. But it reached his menus anyway for one reason: Kroc lost a bet.

In 1962, McDonald’s franchisee Lou Groen masterminded the Filet-O-Fish to appeal to his Catholic customers. But Kroc refused to add it to the menu. He didn’t want his stores to smell like fish!

So they made a bet. On Good Friday, select McDonald’s put both the Filet-O-Fish and the meatless Hula Burger on the menu. The entree that sold the best stuck around. As you might have guessed, Groen blew Kroc out of the water, selling 350 Filet-O-Fish sandwiches to his six Hula Burgers. Smelly or not, the filet was there to stay