

EXECUTIVE UPDATE

MARKETING

KEEP YOUR MARKETING ON TRACK

BY JENNIFER BOYKIN

How do you help your marketing project stand out among all the marketplace hype?

Marketing guru David Ehrlich, president of TRACK Group, has written a terrific little book designed to help marketing professionals focus on the tasks they need to succeed. *TRACK Marketing* outlines a systematic, five-pronged process that allows marketers to fluidly adapt to changes in the marketplace. "It's easy to get distracted or lose focus. And, over time, your marketplace changes," writes Ehrlich. "Following TRACK grounds you in a comprehensive framework that organizes all of the relevant variables as you launch your marketing efforts."

TRACK Marketing is clearly organized into three sections. Section One is a guide to developing your overall marketing strategy and campaign. The TRACK methodology guides you through a structured five-stage process — Target, Reach, Action, Close, and Keep. This methodology can be successfully implemented whether you are initiating individual marketing projects or a full-scale marketing campaign.

In the "Target" stage, you determine your targeted goals as well as the audi-

ence you intend to reach. At the "Reach" stage, you devise strategic emotional and physical appeals to allow your message to cut through the morass of competitive material and lead your target to action.

Your objective at the "Action" stage is to convince your target to do something. Typically, the action stage is where marketers go for the sale. But appropriate actions could also include nonbuying activities. You may want to convince your target to participate in lobbying efforts, for example, or complete a member survey. During the action phase, you also plan for the actions the marketing team will take.

The "Close" stage is typically executed when the targeted goals have been met. Perhaps, for example, you have sold out the available space in the exhibit hall.

Retention is the name of the game during the "Keep" phase. Unfortunately, it's all too easy to overlook this key step in the rush to keep up with the dizzying demands of most association calendar cycles. Still, it's both easier and cheaper to keep a customer than get a new one. Ehrlich's methodology encourages marketers to plan for this vital step of the

marketing process.

Beyond the chapters dedicated to outlining the TRACK framework, *TRACK Marketing* has two other handy sections for association marketers. Section Two outlines the most common marketing tasks and gives you "an inside view of what's working in the real world." Section Three provides a series of worksheets to help you identify and manage all of the various components of a successful marketing project. Whether working on a single marketing task or organizing a full-scale marketing plan, you can use the worksheets to help you define and achieve your marketing objectives.

While *TRACK Marketing* was not written specifically for the association community, its sound approach and easy-to-follow format make it a real winner for the typically understaffed and overtaxed association marketing team. "No matter what type of organization you're with . . . using a big picture framework to organize your marketing efforts will almost always increase your results." For more information, visit www.TrackMktg.com/word.

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