

CRISIS MARKETING:

Gone Fishin'?

In troubled times, you still have to eat...

"If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs..."

-- from the poem "If" by Rudyard Kipling (1895)

Sometimes old advice is the best advice. In these unstable economic times, Rudyard Kipling's poem offering his recipe for personal success may be just as relevant, if not moreso, than when it was written over a century ago.

As uncertainty continues to swirl in today's economy, there is a natural tendency to hunker down and wait until the dust settles before committing to purchases or investments that may not seem "absolutely necessary."

Ben Franklin (another purveyor of timeless wisdom) called that being "penny-wise and pound-foolish."

The fact is, if you're running a business or professional enterprise, then at a time when fewer people are buying, it's that much more important to make sure your name, brand and reputation are out there where they can be seen by those who are still in the market.

My grandfather had another way of putting it: "Sometimes the fish aren't biting, but if you want to eat, you gotta keep fishing and make sure you're using the right kind of bait."

That doesn't mean you have to break the bank doing it. Just as you don't solve a problem simply by throwing money at it, developing an effective marketing program doesn't mean automatically rushing out to buy pricey primetime TV spots or expensive print advertising.

From a strategic marketing standpoint, you need to assess your capabilities and position in the marketplace, identify and analyze your prospects' needs and objectives, and then develop a comprehensive strategy to match your strengths and capabilities to those needs and objectives through an appropriate balance of creative techniques and tactics.

In today's hyper-paced, internet-focused society, more and more organizations are leveraging their reputation, skills and experience to increase market share and win new business by applying evolving online social networking tools, targeted thought leadership initiatives and creative, focused, strategic public relations programs.

The key is to work smart. First you need to develop a clear idea of who you are, where you stand, and what you want to accomplish, and then develop a clear, comprehensive strategy for achieving those objectives.

In these challenging times, marketing your business or professional enterprise isn't something you can afford to ignore. While at first it may seem like the easiest thing would be to sit tight during these challenging times and wait for the storms to pass, the harsh reality is that you might be buried under several feet of water by the time they do.

In the meantime, you still have to eat – and making sure you've still got your lines in the water and are using the right kind of bait will help ensure that you keep you and your family well-fed.