

myweeklymarketing.

Janice Hostager: 0:04

I'm Janice Hostager. After three decades in the marketing business and many years of being an entrepreneur, I've learned a thing or two about marketing. Join me as we talk about marketing, small business and life in between. Welcome to My Weekly Marketing. These days, when we talk about doing almost anything in marketing, we're talking digital, digital ads, websites, social media. It's all on a screen.

Janice Hostager: 0:43

But one thing I always like to remind people about marketing is that doing what everybody else is doing isn't a good thing. After all, the biggest issue we have in marketing our small businesses is standing out from the crowd, right? Now don't get me wrong. I am all over digital marketing. It has some huge advantages over print. But part of my job in the early days of marketing was as a print buyer, so print has always held a special place in my heart. Not only that, but there are places where print is a clear winner. So today I have Jessica Embree on the show. Jessica is a creative director at Tulip Media Group and has a lot to say about print media. Here's Jessica. Well welcome Jessica. I'm so glad that you're here today.

Jessica Embree: 1:27

Thank you so much for having me, Janice.

Janice Hostager: 1:30

So why is... kind of a couple of questions at once here. So why is print marketing something that you think small business owners should consider and how did you get kind of involved in it, like so what's your story basically and why are you so enthusiastic about it?

Jessica Embree: 1:50

So I have a lot of people come up to me and they say print is dead. And I'm like no, no, it's still alive and well and it still has a place in your marketing mix. And I think the reason why print is still so impactful in this day and age is because it has that tangibility and that credibility that some of us are looking for. I mean, before you and I even signed on to this meeting, we were talking about how inundated we are with technology and so

many notifications that we're getting every day, and print allows us to kind of take a step back and focus in on the messaging that is right in front of us.

Jessica Embree: 2:25

It gives us that tangibility and that credibility and that trustworthiness that we might be missing in that digital age.

Janice Hostager: 2:49

I love that, I love that. I have a background in print marketing and I used to be a print buyer for a department store in the Midwest, and I would say that the thing that I really thought was really important is that it will allow you to stand out. So much right now is digital, right? So even when I think about running an ad, I don't even think about going into a printed publication or even doing postcards or something like that. So do you run into that with customers, and why do you think that, well, I kind of know why, but why do you think that customers don't think about it, or why people don't really think about print anymore?

Jessica Embree: 3:22

I think it's just, they see it as an old-fashioned nostalgic piece, which there's nothing wrong with nostalgia, especially in marketing, because it is a way to stand out. To your point. I mean, the emptiest inbox we have is the physical mailbox we have outside. So how can you cut through the noise, how can you stand out in your competition and get your message across to your core customers? And print is a great medium to do that, whether that's postcards or brochures, or Tulip Media specializes in custom magazines, so we can provide rich and valuable content to your core customer for you. So that's why we love it so much, because, to your point, it is a way to stand out from the crowd.

Janice Hostager: 4:11

And I think you're right about that tangibility portion of it too. I mean, I get a lot of newspaper subscriptions online and I'll read most of them on my phone, but every week we get one in the mail and I will just go through that whole thing and I will pay attention to the ads in there as well, and it's a local publication so we know what stores are opening and whatnot. But you're right having it written down so I can easily just circle it or clip out a coupon or whatever it is. It really is important to have that tangibility aspect to it.

Jessica Embree: 4:42

And I mean to what you just said too there's an engagement piece to it, whether it's a coupon or a quiz or a recipe. You're holding on to that where, if I'd gotten a coupon or recipe in my email, I might have just filed that away, said this is for later, but never gone back to it, so clipping out that coupon or tearing out that recipe. You're keeping that around and you're going where did I get this? You're keeping that around and you're going where did I get this? Where's this from? And you're going back to it and then making that purchasing decision or that brand awareness that you're looking for.

Janice Hostager: 5:12

Yes, yeah, what you said about filing it away, I really think about with business cards, because I go to a decent number of networking events and people don't have business cards anymore. They'll just, you know, scan your QR code or, you know, connect on LinkedIn, which is all great. Except at the end of the event I'm like, okay, what was the person's name I saw? And how do you look somebody up when you don't remember their name? Right? But you know where, if you've got a written or printed business card, you can jot on the back something about them, or I just tend to remember things better when somebody hands me something. And because the majority of people now don't carry cards, I think, I think that's a really good; what you just said. You know that you've got that tangible piece and you're not filing it away for later.

Jessica Embree: 6:06

And I mean like you, like when you go to a trade show, people are like just add me on LinkedIn. I'm like that's great, but I'm adding you to a list of 10,000 people that I have on my LinkedIn. How am I going to remember exactly what your name is at this point and where I met you? So, having those business cards, I mean Tulip still has them we send them out with every sample package we have or we'll send them out in the mail saying thank you to someone. We send those because one it has our face on it or, in Tulip's case, it has my character that looks like me and it has her name and it reminds them of where they met me and how they interacted with me. If you write a note on my business card, go ahead. That's why we have that white space on it.

Janice Hostager: 6:50

Love that. Now for small businesses, there are some real advantages that we just talked about to print media, but there's also some disadvantages. One of the big disadvantages is cost and also distribution, right?

Janice Hostager: 7:09

So how do you make a decision like when somebody should perhaps run a postcard versus run digital ads?

Jessica Embree: 7:15

I mean it all comes down to what is your end goal for the marketing campaign. Just like you do with any digital campaign, you say what's my end goal, who's my core customer and how many people am I trying to reach? So when you're taking into account your print campaign, it's pretty much the same. So if you had segmented lists in your CRM and if you don't have a CRM, that's perfectly fine for listeners. But if you have a list of people saying, these are the top 50 people I want to become my core customer, maybe that's who you're sending that magazine to or that postcard to and making sure that it has a clear call to action on it. So you can do targeted sendouts, just like you do in a Google ad campaign. You're segmenting by audiences, but in this case you can maybe do a targeted sendout to maybe 50 or maybe 100 or maybe 5,000, depending on how big your business is.

Janice Hostager: 8:05

Right, right, and one of the nice things about, if you have a local business is being able to send something out via zip code or geographic region, where, if you just want to send it out to a couple neighborhoods, for example, that you're located in, it makes it a whole lot easier to reach them, I think. I mean, you can get somewhat specific with digital ads, but you're really going to get a whole lot more, probably attention for a local business. I think and that's where I tend to recommend that people do or consider print is if they're a local business, a brick and mortar business.

Jessica Embree: 8:43

Yeah, I completely agree, and that's why, at Tulip Media, when we're working with you to create your print campaigns for your magazines or newsletters, when it comes to your distribution and mailing, we can use your list that you have or we can pull a list for you based off of your local demographics. Are they a business that has 10 to 20 employees? Do they have this much revenue on a yearly basis, or do they have these certain

household incomes? So we can pull lists from USPS for you based on those demographics. And what we really like about local campaigns is we always tell our client partners to, or in their magazine to, feature local people. So people are going oh, I know that person or I know that business, and it's creating that community, sense of community that you might be looking for.

Janice Hostager: 9:32

Oh, I love that. I also like that you're able to combine the technology of being able to segment your audience really tightly with an actual mailer, because back in the day that wasn't possible, and that is one of the reasons why people turn to digital ads is that you can segment them so tightly. So that's also a possibility now with USPS. That's great.

Janice Hostager: 9:57

That's great to know.

Jessica Embree: 9:59

And we always say give us your current clients because it's a great retention strategy, but also give us your demographics that you're looking after and we can pull that list for you, because that's a great brand awareness and maybe a foot in the door for a possible sale.

Janice Hostager: 10:15

Mm love that. So let's say I'm running a small business and I am a little intimidated by the cost. Are there some cost-effective strategies that you recommend for a business that has a tighter budget?

Jessica Embree: 10:31

Yeah, when we're working with client partners of all various sizes. We have some client partners who say listen, I want to do a four-page newsletter and that's what works for them and their budget and what the goal that they're trying to achieve. We have other clients that come to us and they're like we want to do a hundred-page magazine glossy, perfect, bound, beautiful and send it out to 10,000 people. That's what works with their brand and that's what their brand positioning is, so it works for them. So when it comes to small businesses who are listening, you really have to think about how many pages do I want, because weight matters when it comes to mailing out, and how many copies

do I want to send out. We have people who do 500 and we have people who do 10,000. So it really does depend on your needs and also the list that you might have.

Janice Hostager: 11:21

So there isn't necessarily a particular type of print that you're recommending for tighter budgets. It's just really about looking at what your goal is and kind of determining from there what will work.

Jessica Embree: 11:34

Yeah, absolutely.

Janice Hostager: 11:36

Yeah, I know. When I was, so I worked at it was a high end department store and you know some of the art directors had some really big ideas of things that they wanted to do and of course we had to fit everything into a budget. So what I love to do was start where the idea was and take a look at the cost of that and then pare down from there.

Janice Hostager: 12:04

So you can have a great idea for something. But you can either limit, you know, the stock can vary quite a bit in terms of pricing, the paper stock, what you're talking about, the types of binding, the price of that can change depending on what you're printing, whether it's four color or one color, I mean, that affects the cost, or it can maybe not as much these days with digital printing, but so there's so many elements that you can adjust in something. So what I recommend to somebody who is interested in doing something printed is not to necessarily throw the baby out with the bathwater, so to speak, but it is to just take a look at what you're imagining and let's find a way to make it possible.

Jessica Embree: 12:47

Yeah, and I think a great example of that is we have a client partner who does an eight-page newsletter with us quarterly. They're a fire truck manufacturer. So they are sending this newsletter out to all the fire chiefs in North America because those are who the core customer is. And the thing with the fire truck manufacturer is these are very niche products. They're million dollar trucks that are only needed every 10 years. So we use print because it's a great way to cut through the noise and get to those fire chiefs

and their departments, because we realize that when it comes time to go to tender for these fire trucks, they have to go to the community to get that authorization. So our content around that is all about how they can go to tender three easy ways to write an RFP. So we're creating that engaging content like we talked about and we're sending it to those fire chiefs.

Jessica Embree: 13:39

Now to your point about what meeting your needs and with your goals is. We do this eight-page newsletter but once in a while we'll send out a postcard because we want to remind them hey, we're still here or hey, I'm doing a Canadian tour to all the fire chiefs' departments, let me know if you're around, kind of postcard. So sometimes we'll mix different formats of print with our campaigns to do that.

Janice Hostager: 14:05

That's a good idea. Yeah, and that's what I love about print too, is that you really can go fairly inexpensive. Um, or you can. I mean, I've done really expensive pieces. You know, and I'm sure you have too, where you've got different stocks that are paper stocks that are being mixed together. You've got some, you know, metallic prints or you know there's a lot of things that you can throw on a printed piece to really make it look upscale, and there's a way that you can make something that's inexpensive, still look really nice on a limited budget.

Jessica Embree: 14:39

Yeah, yeah. And when it comes to content too, you want to be mindful of what interests your core customer and how can you make this engaging with a call to action to to meet your goals. So that's, that's a common question we get from client partners at Tulip is what should I put in my magazine or what should I put in my print campaigns? And we always have to sit down with them saying what is it that you're trying to sell and how does your core customer come to you in the buyer's journey to buy it? And the fire truck manufacturer was a great example. Fire chiefs are coming to the fire truck manufacturer saying I don't know how to write a tender for a fire truck. If you help me, I'll get your business. So our content's always around that.

Janice Hostager: 15:23

Love that, and I think what you said earlier too. It definitely depends on what your goal is. And also for dealing with print marketing, I still take people down what I call the trail

to the sale. We start with the awareness phase and consider and compare and evaluate, and then it's a sell and it can be like an upsell at that next, or you know. So there's ways to use print marketing throughout the entire customer journey and get them from the point where they are freshly aware of you to the point where they buy and then beyond that to where they refer you to others. So are there particular industries that you think that print marketing works especially well for, or do you feel like it's sort of industry agnostic, for example?

Jessica Embree: 16:17

I mean, Janice, we've had everything from private jets to jewelry manufacturers to insurance agencies, real estate so we've had a little bit of everything B2B, B2C and, honestly, we've found that print works for almost every industry. We just always want to make sure that it's meeting their needs and what goals they're trying to achieve.

Janice Hostager: 16:40

Gotcha. So how do you measure the ROI of print marketing?

Jessica Embree: 16:46

That's a very common question, especially with the digital realm we live in. We're always looking at analytics Google Analytics, Google Ads, SEO, organic and when it comes to print, there's a few things that you can do to make sure you're getting the ROI you're looking for. So some of the things we've seen is they have track and trace on every piece. The other things that we've seen is dynamic QR codes so we can measure how much of scans are getting every time they click it. Or we have jot URLs, special phone numbers that are just for the magazine. So there's a few things that you can do in your magazine that includes content that is value added as well. A great example...

Janice Hostager: 17:29

Oh sorry, I didn't mean to jump in there, but what is scan and trace?

Jessica Embree: 17:33

Track and trace, so it is yeah, it's just. When it goes into the mailing system, we'll get a tracking ID that we can look at and make sure that people receive them. That's all that is.

Janice Hostager: 17:46

Oh, okay go ahead, I didn't mean to interrupt you.

Jessica Embree: 17:46

No, it's okay. The other thing we like to see as well is what we call valuable content that is downloadable or transitional call to action, which is scan this QR code or hit this link and you can get a free download of how to make a magazine or do this quiz for free. So what that does is it draws them from your print campaign over to your digital campaigns, which is your website or something else, and they're putting in their email to download that free PDF. So we always like to have that type of content too, because we want to integrate print and digital. We realize that digital is very important still to your marketing strategy. So that's why we give you an online magazine. That's why we give you all the free QR codes and everything, so you can do this type of engaging content.

Janice Hostager: 18:44

I love that you mentioned creating a separate phone number or making sure that it has a QR code or something like that, because you do need to really distinguish what goes out in print versus digital, because we obviously can't measure a click with a print piece, right, and so I think a lot of businesses miss that. You know, they'll send it to their main home page or they'll put their regular phone number on it, and they're really, it really doesn't take much, especially with with, like Google what's it called? The Google phone numbers that you have now; you can create a separate phone number for a separate mailing easily enough it doesn't cost anything really and then you can track the phone numbers that come or the phone calls that come in through that number, and so I think oftentimes businesses kind of miss that part of it. So I'm glad that you brought that up. For sure, with sustainability being top of mind for many businesses, do you have like eco-friendly options for print marketing?

Jessica Embree: 19:53

Yeah, absolutely. I mean with anything that you see tangible in this day and age. There are recyclable paper that's available. There's vegan inks that are available. So there are different options we can provide to client partners for that eco-friendly program that they're looking for.

Janice Hostager: 20:13

Gotcha. So there really is no reason not to try print marketing.

Jessica Embree: 20:18

Yeah, listeners, there isn't.

Janice Hostager: 20:22

So what advice would you give to a business that's just thinking about printing? Not quite sure, like, how do you think they should make their decisions? Like what would the process be that they should go through?

Jessica Embree: 20:35

So, when it comes to thinking about a print marketing campaign, I always like to say to your point, look at your buyer's journey. Is there a point in your buyer's journey you think that would benefit from a print campaign that is very custom to them in the needs that they're looking for, going back to that firetruck manufacturer, we recognize that they made a sale nine times out of ten when they got involved with the RFP process, so they're a part of your buyer's journey that you're going, oh, my goodness, my core customers get stuck at this point. I need to create some resources around that and maybe print is where that can come in. So, look at your buyer's journey, see where people are getting stuck or where they are in that consideration stage or need more information stage, because print is a great way to give that value.

Janice Hostager: 21:24

And RFP is their request for proposals.

Jessica Embree: 21:27

Yes, yeah.

Janice Hostager: 21:28

So I just wanted to find that real quick.

Jessica Embree: 21:30

For listeners:

Jessica Embree: 21:31

That's what I call the curse of knowledge when it comes to messaging in your digital marketing, the curse of knowledge is you've been in your industry for so long you start to use jargon that no one else understands. So, when it comes to messaging for your website and even for your print campaigns, keep in mind that keeping it very simple and making sure you're speaking at your core customers level is always happening. Because I am a, I'm bad for that, Janice, you just caught me with the RFP, but sometimes I'll be on a podcast and be like SEO and they're like we don't know what that is, so you need to explain what everything is.

Janice Hostager: 22:06

I mean totally, we all do that. I certainly did it earlier, probably today, in fact. So, yeah, no big deal there at all. So I just wanted you to explain that, but I do like that, I mean that really is brilliant that they are aware of where things get stuck and that's where they start, um, giving extra support in terms of print or you know whatever they make that decision, but just having the knowledge that this is where people get stuck on the trail or fall off the trail, which what I would say you know and or leave, get lost, whatever, and so they kind of have to provide something additional at that point. So, great, all right. Well, thanks so much for joining me today, Jessica. How can somebody find out more about you or your company? Tell me more.

Jessica Embree: 22:57

So you can learn more about Tulip Media and our print offerings at tm.media/magazines and on there you can learn about our programs. But there's also free downloadable resources too on that page that you can download if you're interested in magazine or newsletter publishing and if you're interested in me, you can connect with me on LinkedIn. Love to chat if you have questions about anything and everything marketing.

Janice Hostager: 23:22

Great, and we'll put the links to those in the show notes for today as well. So alrighty, thank you so much for joining me today, Jessica.

Jessica Embree: 23:30

Thank you so much for having me.

Janice Hostager: 23:32

So I hope Jessica has given you some ideas of what you can do with print and some ideas of how to integrate it into your marketing mix. For more information about anything we talked about on the show today, visit myweeklymarketing.com/80. Thanks for joining me today. As always, I appreciate you. See you next time. Bye for now.