

January 2014

Design Express

The graphic services newsletter for promotional products pros



Holiday Greetings

At last, 2013 has come to an end and 2014 brings new opportunity and challenges for businesses to reach customers and prospects. According to 3M Corporation, 90% of information transmitted to the brain is visual and visuals are processed 60,000 times faster in the brain than text. What a great rationale for investing in promotional products!

At Affinity Express, we are happy to begin another year of supporting you with all of the vector artwork, embroidery digitizing, image editing, graphic design and order management services you need with the highest quality delivered in consistently fast turn times.

In this month's newsletter, we give you some tips on leveraging the December holidays and the new year to support communication to your customers.

If you are in gift-giving mode, we have several marketing books you might want to share with employees, clients and friends.

Hopefully, you haven't given up on your resolutions for the year yet, but if you need suggestions in the category of marketing, I have a few to consider.

One resolution involves writing or polishing an elevator pitch for your business—an essential tool that should be shared with and consistent among all your employees.

We also get reminiscent about some of the best ad campaigns of the year. See if we have included any of your favorites.

Lastly, we welcome a new member to our team and our blog. Read about Marketing Manager Vanessa Velasco and connect with her on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Google Plus](#)! We know you'll be getting lots of helpful and interesting content from her in the weeks and months to come.

In the meantime, the month of January can pass in a blur, especially when it is cold outside. Why not grab a cup of Joe, slow down for a few moments and explore ways to enhance your marketing and your business in what is certain to be an exciting time for us all.

Happy New Year!

Kelly Glass
Vice President, Marketing

More News and Tips

[Tracking Trends is Key to Business Survival](#)

[Pantone Reveals Color of the Year](#)

[Buying Equipment on eBay—Killer Deals and Pitfalls](#)

[Tee Time Promotions, Prepare for Spring](#)

A New Face for Affinity Express

Affinity Express says goodbye to former marketing manager, Kriti Adlakha and welcomes Vanessa Velasco. Vanessa is based in the Chicago office and assists with executing marketing communication projects, research and strategies.

As the new year begins, changes are to be expected. One of these changes was taking a job opportunity as the marketing manager at Affinity Express. As Vanessa began writing her first blog post, she was reminded of Kelly Glass's blog on "Marketing Resolutions for the New Year" and thus started her own Marketing Resolutions for 2014.

These resolutions range from understanding and developing plans to be a "data activist" vs a "data analyst" to embracing her own personal writing style. [Read the complete blog post.](#)

Marketing Resolutions for the New Year

As I got ready to take a few days off, I was thinking about 2014 and what I want to do differently to continually challenge myself. Plus, I am in the process of welcoming a new team member and saying goodbye to one who has become a terrific asset and friend. So I created a list of

Small Business Holiday Greetings

According to a Constant Contact holiday survey, 31% of small businesses say winter is their busiest season, 65% expect 2013 revenues to exceed those of 2012 and 52% say holiday customers become repeat, loyal customers. With this data in mind, why wouldn't you use holiday greetings to thank customers and prospects while building relationships, increasing sales and acquiring new customers?

Your greeting should be generic to avoid offending anyone's beliefs but you do want to stand out in the pile of messages your customers and prospects receive. Ruff Haus Design has some advice on crafting holiday sentiments. [Read the complete blog post.](#)

10 Marketing Books to Add to Your Holiday Gift List

Books make fantastic gifts but it is tough to choose the right ones. To help you narrow the choice down for the marketers, customers, partners and vendors on your list or even for you, these are our favorite marketing books.

1. YouTility: Why Smart Companies are Helping, Not Selling

As Jay Baer discusses, "The difference between helping and selling is just two letters. But those letters make all the difference. Your company needs to become a YOUtility. Sell something and you make a customer. Help someone and you make a customer for life." The book advocates a marketing strategy that creates devoted customers by providing something to them which is genuinely and inherently useful.

2. Epic Content Marketing: How to Tell a Different Story, Break Through the Clutter, and Win More Customers by Marketing Less

Today, when customers are very connected and aware about the latest products, services and tools in the market, you can't interrupt them with mediocre or irrelevant content or sales pitches—they simply switch off! Joe Pulizzi is one of the world's leading experts on content marketing and he explains how to draw prospects and customers in by creating information with which they actually want to engage. [Read the complete blog post.](#)

Design Showcase

Vector Artwork

marketing resolutions to capitalize on what has changed and developed in 2013.

- Enhance and leverage the brand. We used a strategy agency to help us hone our plans for the next three to five years in terms of new markets and services. Not every company has the resources to do this and it was a first for Affinity Express as well. But that means we have an excellent opportunity to make sure we are completely integrated. We can reorient everything we do around our brand and the promise it carries. [Read the complete post.](#)

Build a Compelling Elevator Pitch for your Business

Whether you are selling your products or services, looking for investors or simply updating your Aunt Sally on what you do at a holiday party, you need an elevator pitch. It is not a tagline or description of your industry. As Chris O'Leary states, "an [effective elevator pitch](#) is designed to give the audience just enough information that they will have a sense of what you are talking about and want to know more."

The term comes from the concept that you might find yourself in an elevator with the perfect prospect, investor, etc., and only have the time of the journey to entice them about what you do. [Read the complete blog post.](#)

Our Favorite Ads of this Holiday Season

Regardless of your industry, this time of the year is all about engaging your audiences with holiday greetings that connect with them and spread the joy of the season. It is a great opportunity to show the personality of your organization to customers. With that in mind, we looked for some ads that have brilliantly captured the holiday spirit, ranging from playful to magical.

Video Ads

Harvey Nichols: Sorry, I Spent It On Myself The luxury department store, Harvey Nichols, designed a tongue-in-cheek ad. [Read the complete blog post.](#)



Input



Output

Embroidery Digitizing



Input



Output

If you have any designs created by our team that you would like to share in this newsletter, send them to us at marketing@affinityexpress.com.



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