

THE LESSON ROOM | BY PETE GAMBER

Holiday Marketing 2.0

In past holiday seasons, I could always pull out my Santa hat and revamp what I did for marketing the year before. And usually, it made for a successful promotional strategy. That changed last year. Maybe it was the economy, but I think consumers are also starting to disregard traditional forms of marketing and selling.

This year, I'm trying something new. I'm relying heavily on my Web site and social media, particularly YouTube and Facebook. It's not earth-shattering, but check out my plans.



BROADCAST THE STORE

My customers love video content. I received a lot of response at parent meetings about the rental information on my YouTube page. After I called on schools, the kids also tended to go to the page.

YouTube brings your store to life in the comfort of the customer's home. People don't want to get sold to anymore. They want to buy based on their own ideas. YouTube is a great place for such discovery.

You've figured out which items you plan to sell this holiday season. Bring the products to life by showing how they're played or used in a video. How many new guitarists would dig a capo if they knew what it could do?

Have your music teachers demo and discuss new products and print music — especially if it's a play-along book. Store

events can be broadcasted, particularly clinics and contests. YouTube is also the perfect outlet for discussing how-to videos and featured gift ideas. The more video, the better.

GET FACE TIME

Facebook is all the buzz right now, so you need to use it to your advantage. Create a Facebook page for your store, and invite customers and students to "like"

or "join" the page.

Facebook can be used to promote many different facets of a store, such as new product arrivals, weekly specials, events and new teacher announcements. Cross-promote by posting your YouTube videos on the Facebook page.

Put a link to your Web site on Facebook and vice versa. And don't forget to advertise the page in your showroom.

SYNERGIZE YOUR SITE

Your store's Web site should be synergized with social media through links to your Facebook page and YouTube videos. For example, if you have an "every guitarist wants a 12-string" YouTube video, make sure you have a related page and info on your Web site. Specific product videos can also be included with the product's specs.

REVAMP THE SHOWROOM

Your store needs to be like your Facebook presence, YouTube videos and Web site. You don't want customers to watch exciting video content and show up at a store that looks like a mortuary.

Run your YouTube videos in the showroom. Make some DVDs from the content, and let them loop. Put the guitar product videos in the guitar department and the lesson videos in every department.

Get out to the local schools and hand out fliers for your music lessons program. Hype the YouTube and Facebook pages to the kids.

Don't forget that music lessons make great gifts, so hand every customer in your store a lessons flier — with your YouTube information, of course. **MI**

Pete Gamber is the owner of Alta Loma Music in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. He welcomes questions and comments at pete@altalomamusic.com.

Synergize your showroom, Web site and social media for the holiday season