

DM 2002 Calendar

Deadline for registration: 48 hours before the event, space permitting. Registrations received after that time will be charged the on-site rate and are subject to space availability. Cancellations must be received 48 hours in advance. No-shows will be billed. To register for upcoming events, fax the Express Registration Form with your credit card payment to 301/565-9791. Or register on-line at www.DMAW.org/events. Or mail with payment to address shown.

October

Monday, October 7: DMAW/EF Golf Tournament, Potomac Ridge Golf Club, Waldorf, Md, Registration at 10:00 a.m.; \$175 Individual Players, \$650 Foursome, \$350 Silver Sponsor, \$1000 Gold Sponsor (including foursome).

Thursday, October 10: Workshop: Crash Course & University Day. Plus! Networking Luncheon featuring Don Neal, Vice President, Director of Marketing, Rapp Collins Worldwide; Crystal Gateway Marriott, 1700 Jefferson Davis Hwy, Arlington VA; \$279 members, \$329 non-members. Details on p. 5.

Thursday, October 17: In Transition: By Choice or By Chance, Brick Room, 1925 K St, NW, 1st Floor, Washington DC; 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.; \$25 members, \$35 non-members.

November

Wednesday, November 6: DM Copy2: Two Views on Strategy, Concept, and the Art of Written Persuasion, UVA Northern VA Center, 7054 Haycock Rd, Falls Church, VA; \$279 members, \$329 non-members.

Thursday, November 7: RFM Boot Camp: Get Hands-On with your Marketing Database, UVA Northern VA Center, 7054 Haycock Rd, Falls Church, VA; \$279 members, \$329 non-members.

Upcoming Events, Watch for Details:

Thursday, January 16, 2003: Holiday Party, Odyssey Cruise
 Tuesday, January 28, 2003: Crash Course, Baltimore
 Thursday, February 13, 2003: Lists Beyond the Basics
 Tuesday, March 18, 2003: Results in Production
 Wednesday, April 2, 2003: Volunteer Recognition Reception
 Wednesday, April 16, 2003: DM Copy2
 Tuesday & Wednesday, May 6 & 7, 2003: DMAW Conference & Expo
 Thursday, June 26, 2003: Advanced Results in Production (RIP)
 Wednesday, July 16, 2003: Crash Course, Central Virginia
 Tuesday, September 16, 2003: List Bazaar
 Tuesday, September 23, 2003: New Member Reception
 Thursday, September 25, 2003: Results in Production (RIP), Central Virginia
 October 2003: University Day and Crash Course
 Wednesday, October 29, 2003: RFM Boot Camp: Get Hands-On with your Marketing Database
 Tuesday, November 18, 2003: Taking Control
 December 2003: Holiday Party

WINNING IDEAS

by Kate Petranech

MindZoo's promotion for the *Washington Post* combines apples and oranges to bake up a bronze MAXI.

In '78 or '79 (DMAW historians, help me here!) *U.S. News & World Report* copywriter and DMAW Board member, John Shilgalis, came to a Board meeting with an exciting proposal. He had concocted the idea for an awards program, spotlighting the finest work in our community. He even had a name for it. M-A-X-I — Marketing Award for Excellence In Innovation.

The Board bit, and the rest, as they say, is history. Except for one thing. When we tried to apply the criteria of "Excellence IN Innovation" to entries the following year, virtually none passed muster. There was plenty of inventiveness, superb results, and excellence. But innovation—as in, "breaking of precedent, revolutionary change, dramatic shift"—was nowhere to be found.

A small grammatical change—from "Excellence In" to "Excellence And"—kept MAXI in business. But it nagged at me. Judging the MAXIs, Echo and other competitions down through the years, I kept looking for that revolutionizing package and coming up empty. Fellow judges expressed similar sentiments: "Great results, but nothing earth-shattering, idea-wise."

APPLES WITH ORANGES

Then, while studying one of this year's MAXI entries—a circulation promotion package for the *Washington Post* targeting the "new mover" market—a light bulb went on in my head. Innovation, as defined in direct marketing, isn't doing something revolutionary. Rather, it's doing something *commonplace* ... something everyone has done before—because they've tested it and know it works—but in a *new way*; in other words, marrying apples with oranges for a better result.

BUT PLAIN VANILLA

A quick look at the *Washington Post* package created by Randy Jones and his

agency, MindZoo, and you'll see what I mean.

The challenge facing Randy was anything but plain vanilla. Saturated market. Declining response rates. Worse yet, the *Post* wasn't willing to discount price, so tinkering with the offer was out. Plus they wanted to reduce acquisition costs. So more elaborate creative was out as well.

Solution? Add something to the offer.

How about a garden variety freemium—a freebie that rides along in the package increasing involvement *and* perceived value (*Washingtonian* magazine has used its "100 Top Restaurants" freemium to great advantage for years.) Now figure

out how to get somebody *else* to pay for it. Solution. Morph a freemium apple into a co-op-mailing orange by inviting Metro—for a fee—to include one of its Pocket Guide's in your package. But don't make it an afterthought. Promote it to the max. Marry the strong *Post* brand to the strong Metro brand in your creative for a double-barrel effect. And tie it with a bow—dramatic envelope graphics of the *Post's* front page with this headline: "Free Metro Map Inside!" Not revolutionary, but brilliant, wouldn't you agree?

NEWS YOU CAN USE

So now it's your turn. Who is out there *you* can marry ... to strengthen your offer, enhance your message, reduce your costs, and improve *your* bottom line? And maybe, with a little luck, even win a MAXI next year? ☒

Kate Petranech, president of Kate Petranech Advertising, is a 31-year direct marketing veteran specializing in campaign strategy, offer development, and copywriting, serving clients ranging from the American Chemical Society to IBM. Three-time MAXI Gold winner, Ms. Petranech's work appears in Hershall Gordan Lewis's The World's Greatest Direct Mail Sales Letters, Donna Baier Stein's master reference Write On Target and was honored in the 2001 International Caples competition.

