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Consumer Generated Internet Marketing

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Abstract

Keeping consumers interested is a herculean task that even the largest of companies have trouble with. Most companies offer a tangible product and are constantly trying to find ways to engage these consumers. But there are companies that only offer services or information. One such company is [REDACTED]. This paper will examine ways [REDACTED] can engage its consumer base with Consumer Generated Internet Marketing.

## Consumer Generated Internet Marketing

██████ current marketing strategy is not helping them engage their existing clientele nor is it attracting new customers. They do not offer any content that generates a dialogue between them and their clients. The ██████ website does use some weapons of influence as spoken of in the article "Persuasion Triggers in Web Design" (Travis, 2010) such as *commitment* and *authority*. ██████ does a great job of showing commitment to its clientele as evidenced in their mission statement. They show authority by offering expert options for managing travel expenditures through whitepapers and other studies conducted with ██████ partners. But ██████ should be incorporating at least two more of the seven listed such as *reciprocation* and *social proof*. *Reciprocation* invites users to want to contribute to the conversation because they have been offered something in return. This conversation is then shared via *social proof* by comparing the user experiences with what others have done or shared via social media. ██████ would benefit from use of these concepts. According to "Understanding the Online Marketplace", the basics for incorporating these concepts "*start with the customer*". ██████ must understand the online habits and patterns of these consumers. Then analysis must be done to show to relevance to ██████'s Online Value Proposition (OVP). Egencia must also study what techniques or content their direct and in-direct competitors are using to attract new consumers and retain the existing ones (Chaffey, 2011). When this is completed, ██████ can come up with marketing tools that will engage and attract clients to use ██████ services.

*Engaging [REDACTED]'s Consumers* Based on corporate travel dynamics, [REDACTED] is hard-pressed to accurately measure their connection with this client base. [REDACTED] cannot rely on traditional analytics and must conduct their own internal research to understand what their consumer base needs. Basic research shows that corporate travel customers move at the speed of light and have been shown to be very Internet and techno-savvy using their smartphone or Blackberry's to obtain travel information and services. Why not use these avenues to generate consumer content and aid Egencia in their online marketing strategy? Combining video with blogging, [REDACTED] can incorporate *reciprocation* and *social proof* using the technology already at their fingertips.

*Video Blogging* Case studies have shown the impact of video marketing has major influence on the viewing public. CNN had more than 9.7 million people view its live stream of Michael Jackson's memorial service, video was used to get a band a record deal, and virtual conferencing increased attendance and helped defray travel cost (Tasner, 2010). New phone technology enables consumers to stream video from anywhere in the world at a moments notice. Video is a way to get the word out without having to use often-costly traditional avenues such as radio and television advertising. Blogging can be the "hub" of a websites online content. Blogs become the focal point of all the information a company wishes to convey to their consumer base as well as the general population.

Before starting a blog, a company must set parameters to follow so the blog appears well thought out and concise. The blog needs to contain relevant content that not only educates but also piques the reader's interest so they continue to follow the posting schedule. (Handley, & Chapman, 2011). Egencia can use video blogging to generate a *comment feedback loop*, which opens up a true dialogue between ██████████ and its clientele. Linking this with social media such as YouTube and Facebook turns customer testimonials into "*Brand Megaphones*". Ninety percent of consumers surveyed noted that they trust recommendations from people they know, while 70 percent trust consumer opinions posted online (Feine, 2011). Expanding on this concept, ██████████ can add *reciprocation* to the mix by offering a contest that reaches out to their current clients for them to contribute to the video blog with stories from the road (i.e. helpful travel tips based on their experiences). As incentive to contribute they would receive discounts on service fees for a set number of trips. Other users would vote on these contributions and the best would receive a full quarter cash rebate of service fees. ██████████ would benefit because they would receive feedback from other than an outsourced survey and give back to their clients, which in the end will help with client retention as well as generate buzz for future clients.

### Conclusion

Implementing the above consumer generated content techniques, ██████ will attract attention not only by word of mouth, but it will give substance to that word. Corporations will see ██████ rising from foot soldier status in the travel expense management industry to a commanding lead with all the new content being offered for corporate travel expenditures. The word will spread bringing in new clientele and increasing revenue for ██████

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