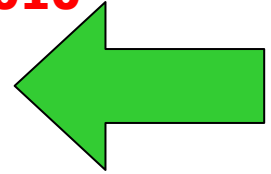




Air Conditioning Contractors of America
Greater Cleveland

Chapter News

DECEMBER 2010



Thursday, Dec. 9

Holiday Inn, Independence

7:45 a.m. Breakfast

Program: Social Media Marketing Strategies

Getting found online and capturing more sales leads

Speaker: Chris Knipper, Kuno Creative

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Chris Kuno, President of Kuno Creative, will provide an overview on Inbound marketing and how to use blog in, search engine optimization (SEO), and social media to build your brand and capture more sales.

In the past few years, it has become undisputed that many of the traditional forms of marketing such as phone book and print advertising have become too expensive and provide too small of a return on investment. There are new ways to help you get found on the internet beyond constantly paying for listings in directories or online ads. And these new "Inbound" techniques can result in greater following of fans and loyal customers who can help market your business to those they are connected with in social media.

Chris will address:

- ◆ What is Inbound Marketing?
- ◆ Inbound vs. Outbound marketing techniques
- ◆ How to develop content for Inbound Marketing
- ◆ Social Media Strategy and campaigns
- ◆ Social Media Monitoring
- ◆ Social Media Policies

To Contact Greater Cleveland ACCA

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440-543-4011

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accacleveland@aol.com

In this issue:

- 2 - A note from Heat & Plumb the County recipient
- 3 - Chapter Board & Associate Members / Meeting reservation info
- 4 - Coming events
- 5 - PUCO brings more vehicles under regulation
- 6 - Customer Service
- 7 - Goalsetters Gold List

Three Points of Growth That Can Put You Out of Business!

From a recipient of Heat & Plumb the County

Ms. A. from Cleveland-

“Everyone was very nice. I wouldn’t have known about the gas leak if you hadn’t sent them out to check my furnace. Who knows I might not be here right now if the gas leak hadn’t been fixed.”

Help others share in this experience in **2011** – mark your calendar now for **Sept. 17** ... and urge your techs to make that ½ day worthwhile for recipients as well as rewarding for themselves.

Dear Members,,

Well, this is it...the last mad dash of 2010 and the closing in on my last day as your Chapter Manager. When I was younger people would say, “The older you get, the faster the years go by!” At the time I thought they were crazy...but now, in my retirement, I see the truth in their words.

Hopefully your business has prospered over the past year, even in these tough times.

And here at Cleveland ACCA, we hope that we’re able to help you in some small way. After all, the whole purpose of this association is to provide solutions to contractors – for any and every area of your business. So if there’s something you need, don’t hesitate to let us know. We’re happy to help.

Sandy Pogan, CAE, Chapter Manager

Merry Christmas &

Happy Hanukah!



May your coming year bring health,
happiness and success.

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Thank you for your support !!

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Keith Raymond, Raymond Plumbing & Heating -
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Brian Stack, Stack Heating & Cooling,
Immed. Past President 888-850-9994

Don VanHorn, BTU Comfort Solutions,
Heat the Town 440-398-9415

Mike Scott, Famous Supply -
Associate Representative 216-529-1010

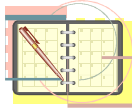
ACCA Ohio Board Trustees representing Greater Cleveland ACCA:

Enos Detweiler, Burton Sheet Metal
Brian Stack, Stack Heating & Cooling (2010-2011)

Chapter Manager: Sandy Pogan, CAE 440-543-4011

Don't believe everything you hear or read: PolitiFact Ohio is a new column in the Cleveland Plain Dealer. They research comments that are made by politicians around the country including Ohio, and determine whether or not they are true. Two statements re: the current tax plan to go into effect Jan. 1, 2010 were recently reported as FALSE: According to PolitiFact, only two tax brackets of small businesses with a net profit over \$250,000 will have a rise in the tax rate (33% to 36% and 35% to 39.6%). One statement by a politician referenced the \$250,000 taxable includes all gross sales. Keep in mind that expenses offset revenue prior to figuring the tax. According to IRS, these increases will affect only 2-3% of businesses who declare business income. They also verified that the claim in various e-mails circulating that there is to be a 1% tax on all transactions at financial institutions is FALSE. There's a lot to learn in this daily column.

COMING EVENTS



January 13 - Mike Weil, Editorial Director Contracting Business Magazine
"Looking at Your Business in 2011"

February 10 - Dan Geyer, Dash Benefits Update on Current Implementation of the Federal Healthcare Legislation.

February 15-17 ACCA National Convention



Reminder:

Registration fees go up \$100.00 on Jan. 12 (There were too few registering from Ohio by Dec. 1 - sorry that additional \$100 savings is no longer available.)

March 10 - ACCA Cleveland Membership Meeting in Kalahari Resort - Sandusky 12:00 noon. EXPO 2011 from 1-5 One hour CEU available.

March 8-11



You can learn more at www.acca.org
Upcoming webinars in December :

December 14, 2010

Five Dysfunctions of a Team Part III

Presented by Jamie Gerdson, Apollo Heating & A/C

December 16, 2010

Diversity in Service Offerings

Presented by Steve Scott, The Lee Company

December 21, 2010

Three Points of Growth That Can Put You Out of Business!

See detailed summary on pg. 8

Presented by Tom Grandy, Grandy & Associates

December 21, 2010

Maintenance Agreements: The Contractors Golden Goose!

Presented by Tom Grandy, Grandy & Associates

Don't forget - there are over 100 past webinars available for you to access. Go to www.acca.org to learn more about this low-cost education benefit for you and your employees.

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Ohio | Public Utilities Commission

New Safety Rules for Private Intrastate Non-CDL Vehicles

Revised state rules extend the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) to regulate vehicles with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 10,001 to 26,000 pounds that are operating on a not-for-hire basis within the state. However, the existing exemptions for the transportation of farm supplies and farm products haven't changed.

The agency says the new regulations were adopted so the state could continue to receive federal grant money for the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program.

Active enforcement will begin Jan. 1, 2011. Until this date, unless violations are egregious, no forfeitures or monetary penalties will be issued according to PUCO.

Vehicles and drivers found not to be in compliance can be pulled from service on the spot. Monetary fines may be issued by PUCO.

Summary of the requirements for vehicle with GVWR of 10,001 to 26,000 pounds:

- **Drivers** must be 18 years or older, have a currently valid driver's license, complete an application which includes all information required by Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations including list of all violations and/or accidents for the past 3 years, and have a medical certificate. **CDL is not required**; however, the driver must successfully complete a road test & be issued certification.
- The **truck or van** must have company marking on each door; Fire extinguisher must be accessible and secured; Annual vehicle inspection - equipment must be in proper working order; Maintenance records must be kept.
- When **hauling vehicles** - Must maintain \$1 million of insurance; there are special requirements for securing the load that must be followed
- **Files & log books:** A driver qualification file must be maintained – including the application for hire and the medical certificate; Log books must be maintained, unless the vehicle(s) is within 150 miles of the company location. **No log book needs to be maintained if:** The driver returns to the work reporting location and is released from work within 12 consecutive hours; the driver does not drive more than 11 hours; the driver has at least 10 hours off between 12 hour shifts; the company maintains and retains for a period of 6 months accurate time records.

▪ **November 3, 2010**

The full detailed explanation of the requirements is available by contacting Brian Stack – brian@stackheating.com or the ACCA Cleveland office - accacleveland@aol.com or going to www.PUCO.ohio.gov

Just announced: PUCO has delayed implementation until Jan. 1, 2012 in response to efforts by many who lobbied against this costly change to small businesses.

Customer Service

By Adams Hudson

Godfather II was on an old movie channel, running as background noise, when I heard a couple of familiar lines: “Keep your friends close and your enemies closer.” And the old standard: “This is the business we have chosen.”

Nobody’s suggesting you get your business model or life mentors from characters in the *Godfather* series, but there are a couple of things these phrases bring to mind.

First, in seasons like this, you’ve got to keep your friends (a.k.a. customers) close. And your enemies? Well, let’s call them “competitors,” shall we? Watch what they’re doing marketing-wise to lure away your friends. Don’t be blindsided by someone else’s aggressiveness when your friends are simply waiting for reminders that you care about them and their family.

Second, the business that you have chosen is one that provides valuable and many times life-saving services to improve a customer’s comfort and wellbeing in their home. How well you convey this message depends on how well you employ “customer service” in everything your company does. However times are changing, the basics are still in force:

Be responsive to customer requests – and to their concerns. Treat incoming calls and requests for service and estimates like the golden opportunity they are. Schedule a call quickly and at a convenient time for the customer.

Once you’re in the home, make it your goal to identify and solve your customer’s problem. But as you present their solutions, be sensitive that they’re as concerned about spending money on repairs and upgrades as anyone.

Make sure you impress on them the *value* of your service. Also, in times of risk, the “risk-reducers” of warranties and guarantees, testimonials from satisfied customers and anything else you can use to bring reassurance, will help the customer cross the purchasing threshold.

And then, by all means, follow-up. A customer that stays satisfied after the sale is one who refers you to friends, calls on you again and lets you know by their continued trust: you are the company they have chosen.

Adams Hudson is ACCA’s National Marketing Partner. You can request his free marketing ezine and free marketing reports by emailing FreeACCAstuff@hudsonink.com.

SmartWords

“You have to put in many, many, many tiny efforts that nobody sees or appreciates before you achieve anything worthwhile.”

Brian Tracy

The Goalsetter's Gold List

By Adams Hudson

1. **Take Action.** Your marketing plan starts with your sales goals. Then Attach a % of sales to the marketing budget. Conservative goals get 3 ½ - 5% of sales. Moderate goals get 6-8% of the sales. Aggressive marketers should go for 10% of the sales.
2. **Get it in writing.** I don't care how many times you've heard this. Do it because works. The basics to include: Sales goals, divided by seasons or months, budget during that time period, number of leads, closing ratios, and profit margins. If you'll 'plant' the seed, you'll find something may grow from it.
3. **Share the Goal.** If your staff, techs and salespeople don't know your plans, how do you expect them to follow them? Really, this critical step gets overlooked. Have a meeting. Lay it out. Get the feedback, suggestions *and the support*. You'll be amazed at what like-minded concentration will do.
4. **Get the tools.** If your ads are weak, get rid of them. Seriously. A broken hammer won't work any better than the last time you tried it. Get your ads designed or written for performance. I can do it or have it done by an expert in your town. Your most expensive ad – the Yellow Pages – is the one that needs fixing first.

Adopt a Customer Retention Campaign. This is the number 1 most disregarded area for contractors... and the most lucrative if done right. Get our newsletter or someone else's, but get a retention program going

Rule Breaking 101

"Calling customers is as simple as dialing their number."

FALSE: Preparation for the call is essential. You should have all your tools ready; key points to questions; knowledge of your company products and services, the customer with whom you're speaking, and knowledge of your company policies and procedures. Not so simple, eh?

Three Points of Growth That Can Put You Out Of Business!

ComfortU

December 21, 2010

2pm Eastern

There is a problem in the industry when we talk about growth. The problem is that most contractors believe "The more work we do the more profit we will make – right?" Maybe, and maybe not. There are three stages of growth that can literally put a contractor out of business.

This session will identify three dangerous points of growth and will provide practical tips on how to grow through those stages. We will look at potential cash flow problems by viewing a Sample Company. We will also identify the danger of not departmentalizing your company. As a company grows one department can easily be subsiding, but management never sees it...until it is too late. If your company is growing you need to attend this session!

About the Presenter: Tom Grandy has over 30 years experience in industry and small business. The vision of Grandy & Associates is to "teach contractors how to run profitable businesses".

You can learn more about this *ComfortU* seminar at www.acca.org

