

6 marketing and communications lessons from 2012

1. Understand the basics (who you are and what you do) before doing anything else. I worked with one client this year who had launched a website, hired a marketing person and even commissioned a video without ever having examined what the company's main message was, defined a target audience or main competitors and certainly hadn't thought out its USP.

2. You don't have to market everywhere, just where you are likely to find your target audience. There's no need to spread your marketing message far and wide. You can have success by focusing your efforts where you are likely to find your audience.

3. There is only one content strategy (getting your target audience to read your content). Everything else is a TACTIC. I have read many articles about content marketing, all claiming to have new "strategies." In most, if not all, cases, these strategies were really tactics.



School Blackboard in Ghana by H2OAlchemist on Flickr

4. Acknowledge the reality on the ground. This year we have seen several advertisers (and a politician or two) who just did not get it. Like Pepco, who continued patting itself on its back about “reliability” when hundreds of thousands of customers were without power during extreme heat for several days.

5. Depending on Facebook (or any free, third-party service) as a marketing platform will cost you. Sure, you can have a Facebook page for free, but figuring out its ever changing policies will cost you in time and effort.

6. Stop scheduling your tweets! Tweeting about your fun weekend ahead while people are mourning 20 dead children is tacky and preventable. Twitter is about immediacy, engagement and responsiveness. Scheduled tweets are just the opposite.

What lessons did you draw from the year that was? Anything jump out at you? If so, please share in the comments.