Marketing old school

This past Monday, I attended the What's Next DC marketing communications conference put on by Green Buzz Agency. For a nice recap, please read Daria Steigman's post on the Independent Thinking blog and also check out slides from the conference.

Most speakers at the conference talked about social media, and how traditional marketing is dead (the press release is dead, social media shouldn't even be called that, etc.). And although I agree that social media has transformed the marketing landscape, making everyone "networked" as one speaker put it, it has not changed the fundamentals of marketing nor the viability of old school marketing channels. One speaker said marketers need to be "remarkable." To put it in old school terms, what is it to be remarkable if not to find your USP (unique selling proposition)?

In my opinion, marketing is still marketing regardless of whether the tools have changed. If you don't know what you are selling, or what sets you apart, you will not succeed, no matter how many Twitter followers you have or how much of a "digital native" you are.

Yesterday, I experienced true old school marketing. I had a leak in my refrigerator and needed to find someone to fix it ASAP (before the snow that hit us yesterday), but had no Internet access or Smart Phone. I couldn't tweet out my concern or go to Angie's List (my go-to spot for all matters home related). What did I do? First, I remembered a electrical/plumbing place I have seen advertised in the paper and online. I called 411, got the number and called them. They don't do appliances. Back to square one. Then, it dawned on me that I have PHONE BOOKS/Yellow Pages. I looked up appliance repair, called a place that said they do emergencies, and about two hours later, a technician was at my house fixing the

fridge.

The moral of this story is don’t give up on old school marketing just yet. Not everything is solved by the Internet or Twitter. In fact, today, many people in Maryland are sitting without power or Internet access due to the snow. Many don’t have Smart Phones. Some may not have Internet access, or only have it at work. This is why ads still work. The Yellow Pages still work. And yes, well written press releases still work too.

Are you still marketing old school?