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THE ZIMMERMAN GROUP, INC.

Marketing/Consulting

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COMMUNICATIONS AUDITS

DISCOVERING WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO MAKE BETTER DECISIONS

HELICOPTER VIEW

What if you could step back from your daily workload long enough to find out whether your marketing and communications programs are actually working?

Imagine the power of knowing – not just guessing – whether your division's dollars are spent effectively, whether you're truly reaching your target audiences, and whether your current and prospective customers really think what you think they do.

That's the power of an audit.

And the result is seeing the big picture clearly. Whether you want to change consumer perceptions, bring in new business, or retain customers longer, smart audits fuel smarter business decisions.

SEGMENT BY SEGMENT

When The Zimmerman Group conducts audits, we look at a host of issues, including the messages you are sending – and the ones that are being received. As part of this, we assess your communications to each audience segment. For instance, your current customers might be getting the information they need. But perhaps your prospective customers are barely getting a nod from you. Or maybe your new hires don't understand your brand or how their actions impact business success.

You can discover these critical distinctions from an audit.



We also look at all communications vehicles, from advertising to publicity to sales promotion to your website. In your advertising program, for example, are your objectives clearly stated? And do you know whether your ads are meeting those objectives?

After all, your marketing programs are – or should be – designed to present the benefits of your brand to correctly targeted audiences in a way that causes these audiences to respond.

ARMED, NOT DANGEROUS

With the results of your audit, you can:

- Alter budget allocations, so that the same pot of money works harder
- Tailor better messages for each audience
- Develop stronger advertising programs
- Train your workforce more effectively

According to some sources, an extensive audit should be conducted every five to seven years, following mergers and acquisitions, and when there is other major change.

Why after major change? Because change is hard – on employee psyches, on daily rhythms, on corporate cultures. An audit provides the foundation to create new communications programs that explain why the change occurred and how each individual can contribute to – and benefit from – the altered organization.

Between extensive audits, interim audits – of individual business segments or employee perceptions or selected communications tools, like websites – help you stay on course.

Unlike those three-letter audits with negative connotations, a communications audit is empowering. It's good for the bottom line. And the results make you look great to your boss.

To explore how a marketing and communications audit can benefit your organization, call Ellen Zimmerman at 540-722-8888 or shoot an email to ez@zimm.com.