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Get Charged... Keep America Strong

BACKGROUND:

the High-Tech return to Tradition

While history, fashion, and social trends do, to some extent, repeat themselves, rarely are subsequent versions identical to the first. Understanding these differences is as critical as finding similarities in the patterns. Trends tend to be high-tech returns to tradition. With email, we have returned to a writing culture. This is not the age of Victorian prose but it is an age where we are reading more – newspapers online, and writing more to friends and family as opposed to visiting and calling.

Consumer products and marketing has returned to the age of customization and personalized knowledge as opposed to mass production and mass marketing. This

trend is again a high-tech return to tradition. Customer information, CRM programs,

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database management and analysis allow corporations to better understand their customers in a way the local merchant could years ago. Successful companies will create a sense of being a local merchant, being part of the community. These companies will create a dialogue with the consumer – engage with them.

Many companies have successfully leveraged consumer's passions through sports sponsorship programs, but in the new landscape, the old models of marketing, advertising, and sponsorship have changed. Critical to success in this new environment is for companies to be meaningful to people not just providing product. In reality, few products are actual necessities and there are usually fungible substitutes available. The successful companies in the new landscape will be ones consumers care about. Ones consumers will perceive as better not simply easier or cheaper.

Easy is not necessarily better. "You get out of something

what you put into it,” regularly roles off our tongues as we encourage our kids to put effort into activities but rarely do we deeply reflect on its meaning. In Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, the key character reflects on “quality.” Quality is something that has, through its production, the care and effort of the producer. When we put effort into making a meal from scratch, building our own bookcases, or painting our walls there is meaning embedded in that object. We have an emotional commitment to that object that is different than our feelings if we had simply made a purchase or hired help.

Clearly, in leading a “better” life, some things need to be easier. We cannot devote high emotional commitment and energy into every activity in life from brushing teeth to playing with kids, to making meals, to our occupation. We make choices. These choices have tended, however, to be passive acceptance of the technologies that make our lives easier without ever asking the question about better.

Technologically-enhanced communication has made the exchange of data and information easier, but it has also minimized human interaction. Swings teach self-reliance and independence while teeter-totters embody cooperation. Backyards distance us from neighbors while sidewalks facilitate neighborhood strolls. As people have become more “connected” globally, they are also ever more isolated. Sport provides one means of connecting individuals and inciting a passion that may be dormant in our technologically-defined landscape.

Sport is at its core about effort. In sport, we create artificial inefficiencies to test our skills. While it would certainly be easier and more efficient to generate a hole-in-one with a missile-guided golf ball, we endure the test of driving distance, accuracy and putting precision because we relish the test sport provides. The thrill in working toward a goal, the challenge, and the fun of the activity drives sports passion. Easier is not better in sport. The effort creates the passion.

Passion is the key to sponsorship marketing. For the past few decades sports marketers have been capitalizing on a community’s passion for their sports teams by allying their brand with the teams that make fans cheer. This sponsorship not only provided mass exposure on television and other media but linked the corporate sponsor with the values of the team or sport and the engagement of the fan.

Get Chargedtm is a not-for-profit organization designed to help companies connect with consumers through community activities and programs. Get Chargedtm will work with companies to develop and implement marketing and sponsorship leveraging strategies that meet business and brand objectives while encouraging community activity and engagement.

We will leverage our expertise and knowledge of brand building, sponsorship strategies, and creative marketing programs to help partners enhance community and engage with consumers. We will help client companies grow through philanthropic programs.

