

@HEADLINE 1 = THE LETTERHEAD NEWSLETTER

@TICKLER = Over the years, we have tried <R>a lot of new marketing techniques<R> at PAUL'S DYNAMIC DOCUMENTATION INC. <R>But this one is simply<R>the best.

@BY-LINE = BY PAUL LEMIEUX

I should explain that we are a small consulting firm, specializing in putting together computer manuals for a rather disparate group of clients. In fact, we have clients all over North America. Most of our clientele tend to be up-and-coming high tech firms, some of them just getting into the business, but others well aware of the need to get top quality documentation if their products are every going to appeal to a mass market end-user.

And that's our specialty. We put together end-user manuals, interpreting the most arcane language into good old everyday English. We have specialized in software manuals over the years, because that's what we are particularly good at. We find the work exciting, we're good at it and there's always someone with a neat software package that would look a whole lot better with some neat packaging.

Our problem has been to access a small segment of a North American market. We have discovered over the years that all our clients are known to each other; they meet at conventions, they leave messages on bulletin boards. They occasionally make phone calls and write letters to each other.

And what we are frequently finding is that Joe Blow, who started out working at ACME SOFTWARE COMPANY of Pennsylvania has decided to go it alone. He's left ACME and gone to the West Coast looking for greener pastures.

He has a software package he'd like to try on the market. He's got no idea of packaging, manuals, marketing, but he's got a product.

Now back at the old office, well, Joe used to work with ACME when they had no documentation department and so they decided to use the services of Paul Lemieux, who did a good job for them, before they decided they were big enough to start their own documentation department.

Over the years, ACME has been receiving a newsletter from PAUL'S DYNAMIC DOCUMENTATION. Our friend Joe Blow hasn't really had any contact with our firm, but he's seen our manuals and he's convinced we're top quality.

What is this newsletter? It was just a two-pager, telling old clients - hey, we're still alive and still pumping out quality documentation. The newsletter was output on a laser printer under the company letterhead.

Actually, we should explain that we devised the company newsletter so that the logo stayed at the top near the left side. This was a deliberate stratagem so that we could leave room from <169>Market News<170> at the left.

That was a good strategy. Now, every quarter we get one of our junior writers to write a little story about some desktop publishing technique or some new manual-on-disk technique. It's nothing great, just enough to pique interest and we distribute to our mailing list.

We know absolutely that the possibility of anyone at ACME using our services now that it has its own documentation team is remote, but we also know how people move through the industry.

And...sure enough, there are just enough Joe Blows out there who call our 800 number each month to keep the documentation contracts alive... We do no other advertising and yet we manage to keep three writers, a secretary and an office manager. We hire free lancers from time to time and we grow slowly each year.

The secret of our success is the letterhead newsletter, targeted specifically for our clientele, whose addresses we keep on a small database. As soon as we get a new lead, or even news of a

bankruptcy or whatever, we update the files, making sure that our mail outs are as effective as possible.

In the long run, you won't get a marketing strategy that is as effective for the dollars spent as this simple newsletter.

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