

# On the Mark

Helping you **mark** your credit union for success

[Marketing Matters](#)[Blog Updates](#)[Online Buzz](#)[Success Stories](#)[Website](#)

**T**hank you for subscribing to our e-zine. It may have been a while since you subscribed, and we apologize for making you wait. We put the e-zine on hold for almost a year so we could write a book about elevating your life and your business (we'll give you more information about that in October). Now that the book is complete and waiting for release we have completely revamped our e-zine to provide you with timely and valuable information on marketing and related topics. We will now publish the e-zine monthly.

In between issues, you can find supplemental information on Mark's [blog](#). Mark also has a [Think Huge blog](#) to coincide with the new book, and you can follow him on [Twitter](#).

The goal with everything we do is to be useful to you, and we welcome your feedback. Feel free to [e-mail Mark](#) to let us know how we're doing.

## Marketing Matters

### There's Power in Storytelling

**S**torytelling as a marketing tactic is one of the most effective ways to communicate with members. Unfortunately, it's becoming a lost art form. Fewer and fewer organizations are using personal stories to spread the message about their products and services.

"I'm sometimes surprised at the great stories I hear from companies that aren't being told in their marketing materials," writes Andrea Dunford at rocketwatcher.com. "A story can be a really powerful way of illustrating the value of your product and in my experience is often the way that your prospects and customers will explain what you do to others."

#### Technology and Storytelling

As technology continues to make new communication channels available, many marketers are abandoning "old school" marketing for tactics perceived as more hip. It doesn't have to be one or the other. In fact, when you marry effective storytelling with technology, you actually have the power to increase the intensity of your message and spread it quickly.

A colleague who uses Facebook logged on one day and read that a friend was having a problem with her bank. A teller had withdrawn \$250 from her account by mistake after transposing an account number during a transaction for another customer. When her friend noticed the money was missing, she called the bank immediately. The bank located its mistake but said it would take two days for the money to get back into her account.

Having worked closely with credit unions, the colleague made a comment about how a credit union would bend over backward to fix the mistake and get the money back into the account the same day. Following that post, at least a dozen other people agreed that credit unions are a better choice. Several others relayed their own horrible experiences with the bank that had made the mistake.

In just a few short hours, one mistake made by one bank became a testimonial for credit unions. For the bank in question, it was another reason for people to move their money elsewhere. And that wasn't even storytelling as a formal marketing tactic. It was a group of people using technology to talk about their experiences with a financial institution. Imagine how effective their stories could be as video testimonials on your credit union's website.

### Differentiating your Brand

"Storytelling is the new differentiator," writes Andrea Learned on marketingprofs.com. "Facts and figures, specifications and price all still matter, for certain. But it takes stories to connect with customers on an *emotional* level. The motivation to choose one brand over another – when the choices are endless – is triggered by emotion."

Telling the story of a member who got a home equity loan to pay for a child's education is a stronger message than simply promoting the features of the home equity loan. Your members are the lifeblood of your credit union. They are real people with real financial issues, and nobody can tell their stories the way they can. Use those stories anywhere you can – e-mails, newsletters, website, etc. Use their testimonials on social networks. Incorporate them into your brand.

Storytelling - like any other marketing method – should be consistent with your brand. In *The Ten Truths of Branded Storytelling*, Alain Thys offers this advice for creating an effective brand story.

"Great brand stories stem from the reason a brand exists. Apple wanted to free creative spirits while slaying the Microsoft dragon. Coco Chanel set out to re-invent fashion and liberate women from tradition. Pepsi wants to be a catalyst for change for every generation. Dig into the history, people and promises of your brand to uncover its Unique Story Proposition (USP). Make this the anchor for every other story you tell."

Starting in 2004, DOVE re-branded itself and launched a movement called the Campaign for Real Beauty. The campaign served as a starting point for societal change and a catalyst for widening society's definition of beauty. It supported DOVE's mission to make more women feel beautiful every day by widening stereotypical views of beauty. As part of the campaign and the new brand, DOVE committed to using real women in their ads – women who were outside the stereotypical norm for beauty, size, etc. Today, DOVE continues to use real women in its marketing efforts. It uses real stories on its website. It even uses viral videos on its website. All of these efforts are not only consistent with the DOVE brand. They reinforce the DOVE brand.

### Telling Your Story

Like all credit unions, yours was established for a purpose. Your credit union has provided financial alternatives for your members. Your credit union has helped a member, a family or maybe even a community in need. Ask those people to tell their stories. Make them short and sweet but memorable, and be sure they are specific as possible. Use those stories to illustrate the unique value of your credit union. Use them to show relevance to your target market. For tips on what makes a good story, check out Mark's most recent [blog post](#).

Storytelling as a marketing tactic is one of the most effective ways we can communicate with members. Don't let your members' stories get lost in the shuffle.

Blog Updates

**F**ollow Mark's blog for frequent and timely information on topics like marketing, branding, generations, leadership and more. New blog posts are added twice a week. Here are links and summaries for some recent posts.

### Recession Marketing: Spend More on Marketing & Not Less

In a typical recession most organizations reduce their marketing expenses. The first place to cut is usually marketing and training. While that can help in the short run the long-term effects can be devastating. Mark reveals the opportunities of marketing during a recession.

### The Hut, The Shack: What's Up with These Name Changes?

Just because a company can change their brand identity doesn't mean they should. Find out Mark's perspective on how and when a name change is a good idea and when it's a bad idea.

### Becoming a Person of Influence

You will be remembered not for what you accomplish, but rather for who you influenced. In his Think Huge blog, Mark helps you learn how you can make an impact on other people no matter where you are in life.



## Comments and ideas from readers of Mark's blog.

### Focused Meetings

"Great suggestions! Also, it may be wise to rethink the necessity of some of these meetings. I've heard the saying "measure twice, cut once," but let's not go overboard here. Seems like we are measuring way too much, and cutting way too infrequently."

- **Credit Union Warrior**

"Nice post on the essentials of conducting meetings. I think the important skill of conducting meetings is often overlooked. Similarly I think the same holds true for introducing speakers.

You don't know how many Rotary meetings I've attended where a presenter was introduced as 'this man needs no introduction'.

And to expand on your thoughts, as always, communication goes both ways.

Note taking by participants is important (and should be encouraged) as it shows that the ideas are being listened to and allows for follow up and recaps afterward."

- **Jason Duplant**

### Creating Fun in the Workplace

"When I worked in a corporate office, we would have water gun fights. You never knew when they were coming, but boy were they fun. You'd be amazed at the freedom a water gun fight invokes. People who are otherwise

**"Here is another tip - make sure everyone you meet with has read this blog post! I'm going to share this ASAP. Great post Mark"**

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**Christopher**

**on Mark's Blog About Focused Meetings**

very straight laced are the ones hiding behind plants and rolling across the office floor to avoid being hit. Sometimes we laughed so hard we cried. I highly recommend it." - **Colleen Cormier**

**training • speaking • brand consultant • planning • facilitator**

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