



My Best Promotion

Firsthand tales of creativity and success

By *Brendan Menapace*

The best kinds of promotions are the ones that leave end-users feeling like they received a valuable gift. What some might write off as a little freebie, others cherish for years to come. Laura Martin, president of Red Rover Promotions, Everett, Wash., remembers one item that left end-users bonding over trading promotions amongst themselves.

Promo Marketing: Could you describe a promotion you thought was one of your best?

Laura Martin: My client organized an all-employee event to bring their entire team—nearly 2,000 people located in offices throughout the region—together for a day of learning, fun and reconnection. They identified two main challenges to making their event a success: First, because attendance was voluntary, getting employees to register early was key to generating excitement and driving participation. Second, they wanted people to leave the event feeling truly appreciated and enthused.

They knew they wanted to do a company-wide desk drop the morning of the event announcement. We came up with the idea of sunglasses. The event design was a three-color chevron pattern, so we did an assortment of three different frame colors, applying the same full-color pattern to the inner arms of all of them. Management coordinated the distribution, so that as employees arrived to work, they discovered the glasses inside dye-sublimated microfiber pouches printed with the event registration URL and hashtag.

Employees were encouraged to post photos of themselves and co-workers wearing their shades on their intranet sites, and we heard reports of complicated

bargaining as trades were negotiated for a favorite frame color. The team-building they were seeking actually began with the desk drop!

PM: What did you like best about this promotion?

LM: The social media element allowed geographically divided employees to reconnect with one another weeks prior to the event, and attendance was outstanding.

Everyone was asked to bring their glasses to the event, where photo booths were situated throughout the venue, and used during breaks throughout the day. And, at every seat, [the client left] a goody bag with a chevron-patterned power bank, enamel pen, a note of appreciation from the CEO and an acrylic photo strip frame.

There's nothing that makes me happier than my clients finding success and achieving their goals. This promotion did that—they reached the registration numbers they sought, employees felt more connection to their employer and co-workers, and my client looked good. Just like superheroes, our work here was done.

PM: Did you encounter any roadblocks in this promotion? If so, how did you overcome them?

LM: Yes, there were bumps in the road. We kitted for 2,000 attendees, which at times can feel like pushing a rope.

PM: What advice would you have for distributors looking to do a similar promotion?

LM: My advice to others is the same daily reminder I give myself: listen. Listen to what your client says and what they don't say. The desk drop was the result of really hearing our client's challenge and goal, and then being lucky enough to have a light bulb flip at the right time. [m](#)



Sunglasses like the ones used by Red Rover Promotions



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