Interview with Marcie Kelso from Kelso Communications

Marcie is a highly accomplished Marketing executive who is co-owner of Kelso communications.

Marcie graduated from college with a desire to become involved in the business side of the film industry. She moved to California and worked in many odd jobs on movie sets. Not unlike many other people involved in the film industry, Marcie worked as a full time manager at a children’s clothing store to support herself.

After a period of time Marcie moved back East to become involved in economic development for the state of Virginia. Her responsibilities included working in the marketing arm for the state to attract businesses to the region. As part of this job, Marcie found herself in a director’s role for economic development in the film industry where she worked through 1996.

In 1996 she was recruited by to move to Charlotte to develop a film office in the greater Charlotte area made up of sixteen counties. In 2002 Marcie transitioned to work with the prestigious Light Factory. Clearly Mrs. Kelso was contributing to a very worthwhile cause that found her again working with film, photography and other types of visual media. Her primary role in the marketing department was to raise funds for the support of the Light Factory’s role as an incubator ***where artists, photographers, filmmakers and enthusiasts gather to share their impressions, techniques and passion…***

* The light Factory

In 2012, Marcie and her husband, a talented copywriter and creative director, opened Kelso Communications in Charlotte. Kelso Communications is a full service marketing firm who use all forms of content delivery including film and photography to deliver a client’s message.

Marcie states that, “communication is the common theme in all marketing and advertising.” The new marketing reality, according to Mrs. Kelso, is that that the internet is becoming a major ground for marketing and that makes it imperative for companies to tell a story that is both visual and compelling at the same time.

Kelso Communications was founded by a grass roots effort to “attract clients though networking and word of mouth” says Marcie. Their reputation for high quality work has grown their company through client referrals. She further states that the days of retainers are behind us. Company’s hire marketing firms for a single project and the length of service will depend on the time a company wants to run their campaign. They do plan on employing social media, SEO’s and their own resources in the near future to aid in growing their business.

Marcie provided the following overview of how a client is brought onboard. When working with new clients, the first step is to discover what the challenge is for delivering their idea. This is done through a discovery process that supports how the client wants to articulate who they are and how they want to be presented in the world. Proposition or position statements are then created so that everyone is on the same page to make value promises and how they will represent themselves. The following steps include how the value statements will be delivered, creation of tag lines, creation of visual identity and through which media source(s) the message will be delivered.

Once a campaign has been launched, the key is to keep the message fresh by constantly updating it via Blogs and refreshed web sites to maximize search engines. Public relation firms may be hired as additional support to release statements, quotes or stories about a company in order to keep them in the public eye. Marcie states that Facebook and Twitter do not generate high activity or high notice.

One of the struggles marketing firms have is validating what their value is to a client as they deliver the services of a campaign. Marcie shared that so many people think that marketing is an easy job, they don’t see all that goes on in a campaign. Costs associated with a campaign help support the consistency and constant communication of a message through all media outlets. This delivery method includes constantly bringing in new ideas with the necessary supporting information and developing all of the visual representation necessary to communicate the message. In essence, there is always some type of action taking place in order to keep an effective marketing campaign alive.

Web based campaigns can be measured with the use of on-line social media metrics and Google analytics. Use of this information can assist in the validation process to determine if the sales cycle is working. Marcie goes on to say that, “the days of single hit ads are gone” and having an ad stand out is a challenge.

Marcie offers this advice for anyone wanting to get into the business of marketing,

“be very keenly aware of the environment in which we live. Balance the needs of what it takes to create a good product with which the clients are willing to pay. Employ technology and human resources to balance your offering at a price that demonstrates value.”