



*Never Underestimate the Power of Chance Marketing*

About a year ago a customer was watching Monday Night Football and the camera switched to a side line conversation in front of a table full of drinking cups for about 30 seconds. Underneath that table in full view of millions of viewers was a large shipping case from his cup company with their logo proudly displayed across the side of the case. Needless to say he was thoroughly delighted with this free, unsolicited endorsement of his products by the NFL and the 30 seconds of free national brand recognition he had received.

After hearing that story, I began to pay attention to the idea that “Chance Marketing” occurs every day and how counting on this as part of a free and effective part of a diverse marketing strategy could pay dividends.

Paying attention to this concept, I noticed shipping containers from thousands of companies everywhere. Grocery stores, shopping malls, hospitals, garages, restaurants, garden centers, building supply centers, big box stores, book stores, pharmacies, schools, exhibition centers, hotels, in the garbage and even behind the counter of a movie theater. Just imagine all the places you could potentially see a new or discarded box and you begin to get the idea.



The fact is the shipping container is the best kept secret in the industry. Shipping containers represent a completely overlooked opportunity to promote your products and brand identity. Companies have millions of free opportunities twenty-four hours a day, everyday until the box is destroyed or recycled. Chance Marketing, Gorilla Marketing or what ever you want to call it, the point is shipping cases are everywhere and people see them consciously and unconsciously all the time so why not make the effort to capitalize on it.

The best way to do this is to maximize your efforts and creatively use all the space your shipper affords. All cases need varying amounts of basic information; barcodes that read, product numbers, product

name, weight and count. However, in a sea of products, plain, run-of-the-mill cases can easily become overlooked and more of an obstacle in the aisle than an attention grabbing, memory sticking objet d'art. Think of the shipper as a four sided mini bill board. This is point of purchase marketing, an extension of your corporate identity into the consumer psyche. A real measure of success is getting them to think “There’s that box again”.

The key is to rise above the norm and create cases that stop people in their tracks. I try to encourage clients to go for visual impact. If you can create something so visually compelling, mysterious or just plain fun that people want to stop to look or better yet, take one home, you have achieved the goal. And while this might not directly cause sales, they are paying attention to you. Think of the shipper as your products “first impression”.

It makes great sense to get all of your contact information on the outside. Make it easy for someone to find you. Try to get the major and minor panels to work together by incorporating wrap-around visual activity or making sure that the two panels work well together. Perhaps you might use your corporate logo or the individual product logo. It is all branding and the more impact it has the greater the chances for recognition.

