Ashley Wright

Case 3-1

Dr. Ganahl

3/5/13

Guerilla Marketing Throws Cleveland Off Their Rocker: CMJ Rock Hall Music Fest

**SUMMARY:**

In 2005, Marcus Thomas was asked to spread the word about CMJ’s Rock Hall Music Fest in just six short weeks to help Cleveland reclaim it’s spot “as the rock and roll capital of the world” (Hendrix 62). Thomas analyzed the audience of previous CMJ concerts in New York City to help identify where the target market lived, their likes, and how to get in touch with them. Thomas and his guerilla street team then started their marketing campaign by hanging flyers and posters around clubs, coffee shops, and universities, as well as spray-chalking the sidewalks of these areas with Music Fest stencils. Thomas also sent out e-mails with the URL to the CVB’s website where fans could download music from the bands performing at the festival and play trivia games. By promoting through these tactics, Thomas and his team were able to get close to 18,000 people to attend the 3-day music fest, bringing in $3 million for Cleveland’s economy. Due to its success, the CMJ’s Rock Hall Music Fest was scheduled again for the following year.

**STRENGTHS:**

* The campaign had a slogan that called the audience to action: 3 Days, 100 Bands, 1 Great Roadtrip.
* Thomas did an exceptional job analyzing data from previous CMJ concerts in New York City to find the target audience.
* The guerilla street teams strategically placed flyers and posters in dwelling areas of the target audience while they drove around in vans covered in Music Fest paraphernalia.
* Spray-chalking the sidewalk with CMJ Music Fest stencils was very clever and unique. That’s not something that is normally done, so it caught people’s attention.
* Having Gym Class Heroes use the designed collateral during a concert helped promote the Music Fest to the target audience.
* For fans, having the ability to download songs of the artists performing at the Music Fest on the CVB website was an excellent tactic to draw people in and stay on the site.
* The campaign made an impression of 546,000 when the goal was to reach 400,000

**WEAKNESSES:**

* Sending an e-mail to the target audience to obtain information was the only form of primary research conducted.
* What did the campaign team do through word of mouth marketing? This tactic seems weak; more could have been done via word of mouth.
* Besides blogging sites, social networking sites were not used at all during the campaign.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

* Along with e-mail, Thomas should have gone to areas where the target audience resides and conduct face-to-face surveys to learn prudent information about the market.
* Street teams should have been set up to spread information about the Music Fest through word of mouth. Instead of posting all of the flyers, the team could have handed them out to people on the street.
* Team members should have designated nights to go to underground clubs/bars to promote the concert via word of mouth.
* There should have been an incentive given to get more people to attend the festival, i.e. the first 1,000 people to buy a ticket get a free Music Fest t-shirt
* Thomas should have made more connections with radio stations to promote the festival. Also, the campaign team could have looked into partnering with universities to help advertise.
* The biggest suggestion I can make is to use more social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Traditional media will only go so far.