



What's All The Buzz About?

By Elaine Lyerly, President



Before New Line Cinema released its low-budget, high-concept, Samuel L. Jackson horror thriller, *"Snakes On A Plane,"* they turned to the internet and created a host of online trailers, previews and chat rooms to get hopeful ticket buyers buzzing about the flick. The effort was so hyped and so successful that producers incorporated feedback from online users and added five days of reshooting before the final cut. In addition, the immense internet buzz helped create a multitude of successful ventures and spin-offs including video games and various forms of literature now considered cult-worthy. The moral of the story: Regardless of the snakes involved, buzz marketing is very much alive. And the noise can be deafening.

Whether you call it grass-roots, street level, non-traditional, out-the-box, guerilla, mobile, viral, word of mouth or word of mouse, buzz marketing creates a joyful noise for marketers. In his *"The Anatomy of Buzz,"* author Emanuel Rosen defines buzz as "the sum of all conversations that take place in person and on the web about a particular product, service or company at any given point in time." In short, buzz is word-of-mouth branding. In long, it's an imminently powerful means of marketing.

So, how does it work? Buzz travels "invisibly" through networks. These networks often include individuals who carry a lot of weight in the community, magazine and newspaper reporters, and prominent public figures like celebrities – all who serve as key influencers. As new ideas, behaviors, new products or information moves freely through the network, it passes into the general population like an epidemic. If the message is positive about your company or product, the swarm provides the credibility of a third-party endorsement and you can find yourself rolling in success. And if this information is negative? The poison of the buzz is potent and you should proactively work to defend against it.

While it may appear that "buzz just happens," savvy marketers have long since learned to fuel the power of buzz and create desired messages. In fact, buzz marketing programs have proven invaluable in helping companies better understand their audiences, communicate new value propositions, strengthen existing customer relationships, and reach out to prospects in a new and powerful way.

Looking to create a buzz for your company or new product? All it takes is a call to Lyerly Agency – and a little honey that we'll provide.

Puttin' On The Glitz



LA team members Rebecca Zickerman (left) and Kelly Peace (right) recently spent time with Joan Rivers during a major Public Relations and media initiative for one of Lyerly's clients.

ForesFloor Serves Up New Image In Ad Campaign

ForesFloor, a division of Foresbec, Inc. – the recognized leader of hardwood manufacturing in North America – wanted to clearly distinguish the beauty and quality of its products from its competitors. So Lyerly assisted, serving up a new image campaign that emphasized the company’s extensive menu.

Touting ForesFloor’s extensive line of hardwood flooring and *Beauty That Endures* brand positioning, Lyerly masterfully created the unique “Discriminating Tastes” ad series. Showcasing the flooring product in unique settings (as a candy sampler and as a plate of sushi), allows the advertising to highlight the beauty of the product and its many benefits.



“We wanted to avoid the approach of simply showing a photo of a room with hardwood flooring in it,” said Susie Penn, LA Creative Director. “The ForesFloor product is one of high quality and the company is extremely attentive to the fine details that selective buyers appreciate. They truly are discriminating. By photographing the product in such a distinctive way, we can better capture the reader’s attention and best tell the story of what goes into every ForesFloor product.”

The campaign was previewed at the 2007 Surfaces Tradeshow in February and will begin appearing in a variety of trade publications this Spring. Our mouths are watering awaiting the results.



Lights, Camera, Action!

Lyerly Agency recently partnered with UNC Charlotte and the Belk College of Business to name, design and provide artistic graphic direction for the new television series, *“SmartTalk, Conversations with Claude Lily.”* Lyerly created the name and series of graphic elements to tie with the university’s “Smart Business” brand and emphasize the show’s format that features Dean Lily conversing with area business leaders. The show began airing on January 12 at 7:30 pm on UNC Charlotte TV (Time Warner Channel 22).

LA’s MarketSmart™ Planning Process Helps Propel NACAS Brand

The National Association of College Auxiliary Services (NACAS), headquartered in Charlottesville, Virginia, wanted to evolve its brand, assess its research needs and develop a comprehensive marketing plan that would allow the organization to efficiently and effectively steer toward increased membership. Lyerly proved worthy of the challenge and successfully led the client through its proprietary *MarketSmart™* planning process, our systematic approach that helps to define goals and objectives, clarify challenges and streamline the steps necessary to move forward.



“The process was very enlightening and very well orchestrated by Lyerly,” said Dr. Bob Hassmiller, NACAS Chief Executive Officer. “Through the facilitation of the audit, we were better able to determine our true strengths and opportunities, as well as address our weaknesses and the challenges ahead of us to more accurately determine our research needs and next steps.”

Upon completion of its *MarketSmart* planning process audit, Lyerly conducted focus groups at the association’s annual conference in San Diego, California. Based on audit information, focus group findings and additional research, Lyerly developed a comprehensive, integrated marketing plan that best serves the needs of all stakeholders of the association and created a unified platform to reposition the association’s brand. Unlike its competitor associations, NACAS is the one association that specializes in *all areas* of auxiliary services; members connect to the “one-stop-shop” for valuable information and insights into the business of higher education. To emphasize this point of distinction, Lyerly created the brand, *“The Connections That Count.”* Lyerly created a new NACAS logo to express the brand and more accurately reflect the personality and goals of the association.

“It was important that we not simply put a fresh coat of paint on the same old boat,” said Hassmiller. “With Lyerly’s valued assistance in this effort, we’ve now redesigned the boat and changed the course of our communications efforts to align with our strategic goals. It’s a more refined vision of our association that allows us to clearly focus on the solutions and strategies needed to propel ourselves into a successful future. We’re very pleased with Lyerly’s partnership.”

Ready to move forward on a planning project at your company? Contact Elaine Lyerly or Kelly Peace at Lyerly Agency today. We’ll help you streamline the process – and help you to achieve marked efficiencies with *MarketSmart* planning process.

LA Scrubs In With Physicians for Peace

Physicians for Peace, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia, is an international, non-profit, medical education organization that arranges and manages medical missions around the world to better educate and train health professionals to help reverse and prevent unnecessary suffering in some of the world’s neediest regions. It is a daunting task. In November 2006, Physicians for Peace called upon Lyerly Agency to help with its Public Relations, fundraising event planning and marketing activities in the United States.

Lyerly immediately scrubbed in and got to work. LA helped plan and promote two events in Texas – one in Houston and another in Wichita Falls. Both events were a resounding success, gaining front page coverage and helping to foster relationships with key donors and media.

After the successful Texas two-step, Lyerly prescribed an aggressive PR and marketing campaign designed to gain much needed exposure for Physicians for Peace while targeting influential donors through direct marketing, fundraising events and strategic planning. Key to the campaign is defining distinct differences between Physicians for Peace and other medical or humanitarian organizations.

“We are excited and proud to have been chosen by such a noble organization,” said Elaine Lyerly, CEO of Lyerly Agency. “Physicians for Peace is bettering the lives of thousands around the world. With our help, they will become the household name they deserve.”



Andy Aldridge



Stephen Huneycutt

LA Adds Staff

Lyerly Agency is pleased to welcome aboard two new team members: Andy Aldridge and Stephen Huneycutt.

Aldridge, new Public Relations senior account executive, joins Lyerly from Market America where he served as the director of public relations. He has also served as an account executive for GCIGroup-Atlanta and worked as a marketing communications specialist with NxView Technologies and Theo Davis Sons. Aldridge graduated from N.C. State University with a B.A. in communication.

Huneycutt, formerly VP Business Development with JFMedia in Charlotte, will be serving as Account Executive and working with several of LA's marketing and advertising clients. He is a graduate of East Carolina University where he earned his B.S. in economics with a minor in business.

We happily welcome aboard Andy and Stephen to our LA Team and are looking forward to their contributions!



Kelly Peace

Peace Named Employee Of The Year

At its annual holiday party in December, Lyerly Agency announced Kelly Peace as Employee of the Year. Recognized by her agency peers for consistently rising above and beyond the call of duty, Kelly exemplifies an outstanding commitment to LA clients and is an inspiration to her coworkers. Kelly, who joined the LA Team in 2000, serves as Vice President Client Services and responsible for all client relations and new business development. It is the second time that Kelly has earned this distinction. We heartily congratulate Kelly on this honor and we thank her for her continued determination and dedication to our clients and our team.



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4819 Park Road, Charlotte, NC 28209-3274



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