

"Nobody does a better job of showing how to use design to build relationships than Roger C. Parker!"

Jay Conrad Levinson
author, *Guerrilla Marketing*

Vol 3, # 6

Roger C. Parker's

Guerrilla Marketing & Design

Marketing with humor

Use cartoons to brand your marketing and drive home important messages

Although often surprisingly inexpensive to acquire, humor can be one of your most powerful marketing tools.

Why Humor?

Humor puts readers at ease. Readers appreciate a touch of humor in an otherwise overly-serious world.

Humor operates on an emotional level, driving home your message in a far more memorable way than words alone. Humor makes sensitive topics more approachable while summarizing and reinforcing points that would otherwise be lost.

Forms of humor

Different types of humor work best in different contexts. Many speakers begin with a joke to put the audience at ease, or a story about "a funny thing that happened on the way to the meeting."

But, jokes and stories are less appropriate for written communications. Jokes

can be misinterpreted and depend on delivery and timing for their effectiveness. Stories can take too long to tell.

Cartoons are perfect for print communications. Cartoons are appreciated by readers who typically check them out before reading the adjacent articles.

More important, *cartoons communicate at a glance*. A cartoon can attract your reader's attention and drive home an important point in a memorable way.

The editorial page of any newspaper shows how effective humor can be in simplifying complex subjects and driving home a point of view.

Humor also adds a visual dimension to your marketing, differentiating your message from your competitor's. Cartoons encourage readers to look at topics they might otherwise skip.

Where do you get cartoons?

One of the best sources is the Cartoon Bank, www.cartoonbank.com. Here, you can license reproduction rights to cartoons that originally appeared in the NEW YORKER Magazine.

You can select from tens of thousands of cartoons. You can search by topic or

*Never
reproduce a
cartoon
without first
obtaining
permission*

keyword. After choosing an appropriate cartoon, you can find out how much it will cost to license it, and then you can download it.

Licensing fees are surprisingly reasonable for most business applications. For example, you can license NEW YORKER cartoons for use in presentations for just \$19.95! For other purposes, the cost depends on *where you're going to use it* and *how many people will see it*.

There are, of course, other sources of cartoons. For example, when you see a cartoon you like, write the cartoonist in care of the newspaper or magazine, and ask about availability and pricing.

If you like a particular cartoonist's style, contact the cartoonist and find out how much they would charge for a custom cartoon cost. This has worked very well for me. Costs were reasonable, and the cartoonists created exactly what I desired from a brief description of the point I wanted to make.

In addition, I owned total rights to use the cartoon any way I wanted.

Putting cartoons to work

Cartoons are great for the home page of your web site, newsletters, training materials, and presentation visuals.

In each case, the *unexpectedness* of a cartoon immediately captures your au-

dience or reader's attention and visually reinforces your message

You can also add cartoons to incentives and premiums, like calendars, coffee mugs and T-shirts. You can even create a custom anthology of NEW YORKER cartoons to give key clients at holidays or special events.

Tips

Here are some suggestions for marketing with cartoons:

- *When in doubt, leave it out.* If the cartoon does not perfectly support your point, leave it out. Continue searching.
- *Always add the copyright information,* described in the license agreement.
- *Never run a cartoon without first obtaining a license to reproduce it.* Two days after unauthorized posting of a cartoon from USA TODAY on a *new web site* with little traffic, a friend was contacted by the cartoonist!
- *Optimization.* After downloading, re-size and sharpen the cartoon in an image-editing program like Photoshop and export it in the proper file format.

For more information

Contact Roger C. Parker at 603-742-9673 or roger@onpagenewsletters.com for more ways to add impact to newsletters, presentations, and web sites.



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