

Award Winning Campaigns-Plain Talk

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SPEAKERS

Olivia Mooring, Kathie Taylor

00:02

Welcome to Plain Talk, a podcast dedicated to bringing useful marketing advertising and public relations tips and information to small and micro businesses, nonprofits and beyond, hosted by the team at In Plain Sight Marketing. We're excited you're here.

Olivia Mooring 00:18

I'm Olivia, and this is Kathie Taylor, and we're from In Plain Sight Marketing. Welcome to Plain Talk. Today we're gonna be talking about talking with Kathie about some of the award winning campaigns we've had in In Plain Sight Marketing. Anyways, Kathie, can you give me a little bit about your background?

Kathie Taylor 00:40

Yes, Olivia, thank you for having me. I am Kathie Taylor. I am the Chief Marketing and Strategy Officer officer for In Plain Sight Marketing. I am accredited in public relations through the Public Relations Society of America. I have spent a lot of my career in corporate operations and communications. And so I have kind of a big picture background that I bring to help tell big stories for small businesses.

Olivia Mooring 01:11

Awesome. Can you tell me a little bit about how you found about like getting awards for like your company and stuff like that?

Kathie Taylor 01:25

So I'm a member of the Sierra Nevada chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. And we apply or submit our campaigns to PRSA primarily because of the ability for them to give us feedback on our campaigns and how to make them better. So I learned about that part of it from PRSA. And then, several years ago, I was doing a contract for the University of Nevada, Reno. And we had this really fun campaign that we did called Vermont for 50. Because we found this random stat that came out from the register that said we had students from, you know, multiple different companies, sorry, multiple countries. And every state, except Vermont that year. And so we thought, you know, wouldn't it be fun

to take this random little factoid and make something out of it. So we created this whole grassroots campaign using students at the university, holding up chalkboards telling us where they were from. And we just, we had so much fun with it. And it went viral. I mean, it was picked up by the New York Post under Weird But True, which is kind of wow. And the Wall Street Journal reached out and did an article on it. That's off. So yeah, it was super fun. And so in thinking through that, somebody sent me an academic organization award submission. So I thought, yeah, why not? I'll submit it. So I submitted it there. And we won two bronze awards for the campaign. And so then I got hooked. I'm like, Okay, now, I know, this is fun, and I want to get better. And that's how I started submitting for awards.

Olivia Mooring 03:14

That's awesome. And what is it about, like, awards that makes like, um, you motivate it to, like, you know, submit submissions for him, like, what makes it make your company stand out?

Kathie Taylor 03:31

While there's, there's something about standing up in front of your peers. So when they do the award ceremonies, and you were there with us, this year, right. So there's, something about standing up amongst your peers and being celebrated and honored for the work that you do. That's one thing. The main difference, I think, for us is that it means we did damn good work for our clients, and we created impact and results for our clients. And to me, that's the win and the drive to continue in this way is to continue to get that feedback. So these people, especially the prsa awards, who judge them are also accredited in PR or Aprs like I am and so I know that they've gone through rigorous training and testing to become accredited. So their feedback matters to me, because I know I know how hard that was. Yeah. To become accredited. Right. And so when they come back, there's there's experience and wisdom and learning in their remarks and it makes us better for our clients. Makes you want to like stand out from the competition and stuff like that. And in and again, you know, like I because we tend to work with small companies, small businesses, and there's a lot of big business out there and there's a lot of noise. Being able to make little companies or small businesses stand out. I think is really big in today's you know, goldfish attention span. Definitely one company to the next third, just so many.

Olivia Mooring 05:07

Yeah, so what makes in plain sight, marketing's awards different?

Kathie Taylor 05:13

Well, for us, because we don't by Vanity awards I get emails all the time from companies that say, Hey, pay me four or 500 bucks, submit your award, and you'll get a pretty trophy, right? Yeah, that's great. Like, I can do that and pay for trophies and write a press release and say, aren't I great. But for us, we submit awards to these educational groups in order to become better, like I want to know, like, I'm not gonna lie, I have all of our awards up on my wall. And I'm looking at them every day, which is inspiring in its own right. But it's more about the fact that we base our work on these four tenets of public relations, which is research planning, implementation, and evaluation, and it's a cycle. So we don't launch a campaign without knowing in our minds, you know, our hypothesis is secure that this is going to work because we've done all this research to know that our audience is right, and our communications channels that we've selected are right, and that we can justify every step that we make in a campaign. And then from that, from that place of research, then we build out the plan. And in that is

a great implementation plan. Because when you build a plan, it looks great on paper, but then you start to actually try to do the things. And if you're not really well planned out, it'll fall apart in the execution of it. So making sure that we have a great implementation plan. And then that we evaluate, we measure all of the things that we've done to make sure that it's hitting results, because it's really tempting to do something really big and really splashy, because it's cool. But if it doesn't meet our objectives that our client has, then you know, we're not helping them almost pointless.

Olivia Mooring 07:03

Yeah, no, that makes sense. What are some of the awards? You won? Can you kind of give me a rundown on this?

Kathie Taylor 07:10

Oh, my gosh, so yeah, starting back in 2016, we won the case, district seven. That's the educational academic group that we won for Vermont for 50 at the University, okay. And we've won local, Northern Nevada Development Authority awards for small market and for marketing campaign. That was really cool, because the marketing students at Western Nevada college judged those awards, and we won one for one of our campaigns that we did a very small campaign for a realtor who was doing food donations at Thanksgiving time. And so we did. That campaign was built around her going to different locations at lunchtime and collecting people's money or canned goods. And we raised \$3,000, which is a lot of money for a small local food bank. Yeah. It's not like the Reno Air Races where they raise a ton of money. Yeah, it's an impactful to our community. So that one felt really good, because college students typically look for Okay, but what are you doing for the community, right. And so, when they gave us a word for that, we were really, really tickled because it meant something. Yeah, and so we've won awards for, we worked for a school with children on the autism spectrum. And we won an award for a campaign we did to help them drive people to the school to take tours, so they can up their enrollment. And we got right in on people's faces with cameras, and they talked about their lives and their stories and the impact that the school made. And it was gritty, and it was real. And it was to the point of where my videographer asked me, please don't give me a campaign where I have to cry again next time. Can you give me something, something that's not so hard. But it was a wonderful campaign, because the stories we told were real and authentic, and we helped people. Um, let's see, we did one for content marketing for a client who needed to pivot in her business. And she was going down a road and she was meeting with opposition from counties and cities, and she couldn't get her business to run. So she needed to pivot in a way that she was earning income for her business. And so we came up with a new product line for her and through content marketing, which was email marketing, social media, social media ads, and all those kinds of things. We want to work for that. And one of the ones I'm really excited about, we got a perfect score. Just in the PRSA awards, you're If you're given 100 points to work with, and the level of the award depends on the number of points you get, okay. And so we got a perfect score on one of our awards, and it was for Meals on Wheels, which is a worthy, worthy organization. And it was the culmination of a three year campaign that we've worked hard on for all of those years. And we took them from \$185,000 deficit, in their budget to breaking even in those three years. And we were able to revitalize the senior center and Meals on Wheels. And it was, it was really, really fun. It was a fun way. Yeah. Of course, these are like giving back to the community at the same time. So that's gonna be a good feeling. It is, you know, that's something that we've always said, is that we want to work with organizations, companies, and people who make make a better community, like

we want to grow community together. And well, awards are nice. Yeah, like I said, the impact is really where it counts.

Olivia Mooring 11:10

I definitely agree. What would you say has been like, or give me a list of like, three, or the biggest awards you've received?

Kathie Taylor 11:20

Oh, gosh, so it was the best of show that that perfect score be award for PRSA. Okay, and then we've received a number of what they call Silver Spikes. So out of that 100 points, you have to go like 9495 points and above how you lay out your campaign. So I think those are probably the, the biggest ones. And like I said, the one that really meant a lot was the Northern Nevada Development Authority. Best Overall campaign that was judged by the marketing students at WNC. So they're not like, they're not like the Emmys or anything like that. But they're really meaningful to us, because of what they represent.

Olivia Mooring 12:06

Oh, definitely. And can you tell me a little bit like about like the submission process and like, going to like the award ceremony, and like actually getting the award and stuff like that?

Kathie Taylor 12:17

Yeah, so the submission process is rigorous, okay. You get two pages to explain your entire campaign, the research, the planning, the implementation, the evaluation, you have to specify the goals and objectives that you want to achieve. Which could be like, I want to increase tours to the school by 50%, by the end of the school year. So it's very specific, it's measurable. And it has to be relevant to what we're trying to do. So you have to identify what you're shooting for. And then when you come to the evaluation phase, you have to say, I made it or I didn't make it, and here's why. And then what I really love to do is, here's what I would do differently if I had more time, money or knowledge, you know, because sometimes you'll learn stuff along the way, okay. And then you have to submit all of your collateral. So all of the creative that you've done, all of your ads, your press releases, your social media stats, you have to I submitted some 50 Page campaigns, you know, when you when you take a project that you've worked on for three years, and that typically the work has to be done within a one year timeframe, but you have to bring forward some of the research you've done previously. So you're really looking at your word choice and how many words you use and how you fill out all these things. So the process is rigorous. So when you win an award, you know, I earn that thing. And then it's fun, it's fun to go and you go to a like a banquet at dinner award. Our last one we went to that you went to with us was at the automobile Automobile Museum. Yeah, that was the trick. What did you say? I

Olivia Mooring 14:05

So that overwhelmed me. I like pulled up especially like, having to dress that, you know, it felt super nice. Um, but going to the automobile. It was beautiful. They had set up like beautifully, like decorations. The food was amazing. And the whole event was just so much fun. They have like a raffle and stuff. But we have won a prize we a Silver Spike Award for content marketing, the Carson Valley Meats. And that was the first award I've ever won for my work. And it's such an incredible feeling like

just being able to know that people are recognizing your work and the stuff you're doing. It's just a really great feeling. So that was really exciting for me, and I had a really fun time.

Kathie Taylor 14:58

That one was fun. It was a masquerade ball. So we all wore these masks

Olivia Mooring 15:04

And they have like, yeah, photo booth where you can like take photos. And we even all one like raffle prizes, right?

Kathie Taylor 15:12

That's right. Yeah, we were lucky table that night.

Olivia Mooring 15:14

That was such a cool experience, I'd never been to like an award ceremony like that. That was like work related. But it was just like, such a great feeling such a fun time. Definitely want to get more into submitting for more awards now. Because it's just cool to have that plaque on your desk. And to be able to remember, like, Hey, I'm doing something, you know.

Kathie Taylor 15:44

For sure. And, you know, especially for this client, who has faced so many difficulties, and just has had one door closed in her face after another after another. And so to be able to take a fledgling little business, because she had been doing some of this, she has two ranches. And so she had been doing some of this work in her California ranch. And then for Nevada to take her from, you know, let's say \$1,000 a month in sales to \$7,000 in a month in sales is tremendous. That is just absolutely tremendous. And so, averaging out over time, we have really helped this person maintain her business, as she struggles through these other troubles that she's got. And so that's really the cool part. You know, like we measured everything we measured, how much are the social media ads engaging? Like what kind of what is the cost per lead on these social media ads? How many people are opening the emails? And how many new email subscribers do we have? How many people are dropping off? Like, we looked at every single number that you're assigned? To make? Sure, yeah, yeah, to make sure what we were doing made a difference and mattered because sometimes we would go, Oh, we should totally do this. And then we're like, but it's not working. Change it right.

Olivia Mooring 17:10

Yeah, that was such a crazy experience, and it just feels good, like being able to help that business. Um, from all the awards you've received in the past? What are some things you've learned?

Kathie Taylor 17:23

Oh, my gosh. Well, this last couple of times around, that we've learned as a business is really defining your audience better. When you do, let's say a fundraiser for that was that was the other award we won this year, we did a fundraiser for a local emergency dispatcher, on behalf of the Firefighters Association wanted to help her because she had gotten a devastating cancer diagnosis notice, and they wanted to help her. And we had like, I don't know, very few weeks to pull this thing together. And we ended up, I

don't know, doubling what we wanted to raise overall for her. So when you go into a fundraiser like this, you think, Oh, well, my audience is everyone in the community. And maybe it's not, maybe we have to dial that in a little closer. So really defining our audiences was something we learned a lot. I think the setting of the goals and objectives so if you think about a goal is your big, your B hag, your big, hairy, audacious goal. Yeah, like that's what I really want to get to. And then your your objectives are smart. They're Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time Bound. So I really know what I'm going to try to get in this campaign. And this is how I'm going to get it. So I think it is sharpened our ability to hit those goals for our clients, because we're able to identify them. Like if I went in with this big ambiguous goal of yeah, I think I want to raise some money. Cool. I did that. But what was it specifically that I did to raise that money? And how can I make it better next time?

Olivia Mooring 19:11

Yeah, definitely. Um, as someone who was interested in getting an award for their marketing or their company, do you have any like recommendations or like tips or anything you would want to tell them?

Kathie Taylor 19:25

Yeah, I would say, do your research, and identify your own goals in doing so. Right? If you're trying to build a small business and you feel like paying for basically paying for bragging rights I won this trophy and now I want to talk about it. Right? That that might be a really great marketing tool for you. If you're looking to really learn from your work, because I can tell you there were campaigns that we submitted early on that, you know, out of 100 points, I got 65 points. And I was really offended by this, you know. And after I pounded for a while I started reading the feedback again and went, oh, okay, that's on me. I'm supposed to explain that better. Yes, I had a really great raffle prize or whatever the feedback was. But I didn't explain the value, right. So being able to take the feedback, submit, what happens, right? And read the feedback, because that's really where you're going to grow and learn.

Olivia Mooring 20:32

And it can help you like learn in like, feature campaigns to you know? Absolutely.

Kathie Taylor 20:39

Absolutely.

Olivia Mooring 20:40

Yeah, that's awesome. So that sounds like a great experience. Are there any, like anything else you would say to any companies like looking at where should they look for awards to submit to?

Kathie Taylor 20:56

So if you're a marketing company, there is the American Marketing Association. They have the ACE awards every year, we have submitted our little tiny campaigns, and we were actually a finalist, one year for the ACE awards. And that was really fun to be sitting there between the Ronald McDonald House Yelp, big, big community dinner, and the balloon races in Reno. And we were number two in between that was really super fun. So the ACES award through the AMA, Public Relations Society of America, Sierra Nevada Chapter every year does the Silver Spike Awards, the AAAF which the American advertising Federation, I think, yeah, they do Aces awards for advertising. So I know that

there are our professional development organizations like these three, the AF, AMA and prsa, that do industry awards, and those are very meaningful. But then there's like, national awards, the Bulldog rewards, and there's some communications academy, I can't remember the name, and I feel bad. But there's lots of there's lots of awards if you research in your industry and what you're trying to do, you'll be able to find them.

Olivia Mooring 22:14

Oh, and I also saw that Renee won an award too. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

Kathie Taylor 22:21

She did. She won a Gold Spike Award from PRSA for her community involvement, for being just basically a community Rockstar. And when they give these individual awards, they do it for merit, and names are submitted to the committee and the committee votes on them. And so then they do a photo shoot. And this particular theme was superheroes so they did this. We still have it, I have it in my garage. It is this like, I think it's probably 10, 15 feet long image of Renee as a superhero with her high heels slung behind her back. And it was super fun, because they asked me to present the award and so I wrote a speech all about her and practiced it a million times so I wouldn't cry. And I still cried but it was really because of her work in the community. And that's why, you know, it's kind of why we do what we do is to give back to the community, and it was really fun to see her recognized for being a community Rockstar like that.

Olivia Mooring 23:28

That's so cool. I need to see this picture.

Kathie Taylor 23:32

Right, I should bring it to a meeting.

Olivia Mooring 23:36

Awesome. Well, Kathy, thank you so much for talking with me. I know from like my experience of getting an award. That was such an incredible time, and it makes you feel really good to especially if it's something that's giving back to the community, just receiving like the recognition for it. Um, but thank you so much for meeting with me.

Kathie Taylor 23:59

Yeah. Thanks for having me, Olivia. And thanks for all that great work you did. Let's go get another one.

Olivia Mooring 24:04

Yes, I'm down.

Kathie Taylor 24:07

All right. Thank you.

24:11

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