

ROLLER SKATING

Business Magazine

Annual Marketing Issue



Reviving the Great American Skate Sale

2013-2014 Digital Marketing Trends Can Mean Big Profits

The New Pioneers: Roller Derby Teams Pave Way Towards Olympic Gold

3 Keys to a Successful Content Marketing Campaign

The Power of Branding: Utilizing RSA Licensed Characters to Increase Profits

7 Steps to Financing Your New Rink or Rink Update

National Roller Skating Month



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Speaker in the

November-December

issue of Roller Skating

Business Magazine!



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<http://tinyurl.com/RSANewsletters>

Fall Section Meetings Abound

Upon receiving this issue of the RSB the summer of 2013 will have officially come to an end and the new school year will be on the horizon.

This time of the year is such an exciting time for all of us rink operators. The opportunities of touching the lives of the youth in our communities coupled with financial growth makes for a promising 2013-2014 school season.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend your fall section meeting and the trade shows that will be offered. These are great opportunities to learn more about the latest trends and products.

I personally want to thank all our RSM members who step up and provide these trade shows for the skating industry. Your continued dedication never goes unnoticed nor unappreciated.

I am looking forward to attending as many section meetings and trade shows as possible over the course of the next three months and look forward to your input. This is a great opportunity for me to hear from each of you. Remember, the RSA Board of Directors, Vice President and President serves each of you – we can serve you better if we know your dreams. Make sure to take a moment to share with us your thoughts and ideas on how the association can help you succeed.

Thank you so much for your continued support of the association and your valuable input. I look forward to seeing each and every one of you soon!

Sincerely,



Tina Robertson
President, Roller Skating Association



How can we help you succeed?

As a member of the RSA, your voice matters! We would love to hear your input and suggestions on how the association can continue to help your business succeed.

Please email Tina Robertson, RSA President, at tina@sk8away.net with your suggestions!

“When you enchant people, your goal is not to make money from them or to get them to do what you want, but to fill them with great delight.”

Guy Kawasaki

Former Chief Evangelist, Apple
Co-Founder, Alltop.com

Make Marketing Work for You

Marketing is a passion that I've had for more than 15 years. Through various positions, I've seen marketing through the eyes of a business owner and that of a media professional. This unique position has given me a perspective that I love to share with others.

We can all agree that marketing takes a great deal of time and commitment: It takes advertising dollars and strategy, research and trial and error, passion and partnerships, humility and perseverance. It might get overwhelming at times, but with a detailed plan and goal, marketing isn't an impossible feat. Done properly, marketing can allow you to harness a new set of customers and invigorate your regulars.

With that being said, this month's issue of Roller Skating Business Magazine is all about marketing - from beginning to end. Keep this issue, refer to it often and look for upcoming issues with marketing tips from the RSA marketing department.

In "21 Money-Making Marketing Tips" we explain dozens of easy-to-use ideas to employ that are sure to bring in more customers. Everything from the importance of utilizing press releases and joining forces with the American Camp Association to develop a summer program, to attending summer camp fairs and partnering with your local parenting magazine—our goal is to help you think outside the box and put

more effort into working on your business marketing model.

In keeping with the marketing theme, we're covering "Digital Trends: Why Embracing Digital Marketing Can Mean Big Profits For Your Rink" that will have you both excited and intrigued about how to make the most of new digital technology opportunities.

In "Reviving the Great American Skate Sale" we discuss the origins of the "G.A.S.S." marketing initiative and how some rink owners are bringing it back - with incredible success - to increase profits with skate sales during the months leading up to the holidays.

We're also discussing "Seven Steps to Financing Your Next Rink Project" that will show you how you can obtain financing to make any additions or changes throughout the school season to your existing rink, or to even expand with a new rink.

We'll be discussing "The Power of Branding: Utilizing RSA Licensed Characters to Increase Profits" (Roo, Kooky and Wally) and how to incorporate them into your marketing plan. We interviewed several rink owners who use the characters and just how much the visual recognition and association of these characters mean for their businesses.

Of course, this issue wouldn't be

complete without information on the upcoming "National Roller Skating Month" program that will be in your mailboxes by the time you receive this publication. We'll show you a few suggestions on how other rink operators are utilizing their National Roller Skating Month kits. And while many of you may be old pros, we encourage each and every one of you to take a moment to reach out to your local news media and share with them how you're celebrating National Roller Skating Month.

Whether you're looking to stick with classic advertising marketing, or stepping up the game and trying some new techniques that appeal to technologically savvy teens and tweens, we have a number of marketing tips and tricks available for you to try.

I hope that you can take something from this issue and apply it to your business - and I'd love to hear about your results! Thank you for reading Roller Skating Business Magazine and Happy National Roller Skating Month!

Best Regards,



Lynette Rowland
Editor-in-Chief / Publisher
editor@rollerskating.com

RSA TODAY NEWSLETTER UPDATE

As most of you already know, the RSA Today Newsletter is now a digital publication only. This will not only allow us to better utilize funds, but it also means more frequent news and tips, updates, interviews, content, etc.

If you're an RSA Member and you do not currently receive our newsletters, simply text the word "Rollerskating" to 22828 and then follow the instructions.

You can also download the QRReader app from your smartphone's app store and use it to scan in the QR Code below to go directly to our sign-up page or just email editor@rollerskating.com to request to be added. If you'd prefer that we print the email and mail it to you, simply call the office and let us know.

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ACHIEVEMENT TEST CENTER AWARD

FOOTHILL SKATE INN (CA098) AWARDED WITH 2012-13 TEST CENTER AWARD

The RSA would like to congratulate Foothill Skate Inn (CA098) of Sacramento, CA, where 349 Achievement Program Tests were conducted during the 2012-2013 season. Joyce Roberts and Jannel Voss, rink operators, attribute this top honor to the efforts of SRSTA coach Marlayna Harney.

Roberts applauds Marlayna's commitment to be involved and to actively support skaters and coaches as they meet the challenge each achievement test level presents. She also notes that Foothill Skate Inn started conducting Achievement Test Centers four (4) years ago.

Coach Harney accepted the award for Foothill Skate Inn during a presentation at the USARS 2013 National Figure Championships being held in Albuquerque, NM. Annelle Anderson, RSA Honors Committee Chair, made the presentation.

The RSA deeply appreciates the dedication of the 95 rinks and 79 SRSTA/SCA coaches in conducting 3,624 achievement tests this season. Test totals by discipline are:

• Super Skater I	608
• Super Skater II	337
• Solo Dance	561
• American Dance	297
• International Dance	86
• International Solo Dance	78
• Freestyle	466
• Inline Freestyle	8
• Circle Figures	883
• Loop Figures	232
• Quad Speed	8
• Inline Speed	60

Together, the rink operators, coaches and skaters make the Achievement Program a success. As we launch the 2013-2014 season once again you can give your students an edge to achieve goals, build confidence and continue the challenge.



Annelle Anderson presenting Marlayna Harney with the Achievement Test Skating Center Award for Foothill Skate Inn.

GIVE YOUR STUDENTS AN **EDGE**

The RSA Achievement Awards Program helps students...

- + Achieve Goals**
- + Build Confidence**
- + Continue the Challenge**

The RSA Achievement Awards Program was created to provide incentives for skaters to increase their skating skills without the pressure of competition. These tests offer attainable goals and encourage skaters to advance in developing their roller skating skills.

Achievement Test Centers are conducted by SRSTA and SCA coaches. Many skaters start with the Super Skater program then advance through the bronze, silver and gold medal tests in succeeding order. Test categories are:

(SAMPLE PINS)		Artistic	Speed
		American Dance	66.6 meter
		International Dance	80.0 meter
		Figures	90.0 meter
		Freestyle (quad & inline)	100.0 meter
		Quad & Inline	
		Tests run by age and sex	

Give your skaters the edge through active participation in the RSA Achievement Program!



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PRO SERIES



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EURO DESIGN



Make Promotional Flyers Work

Use these promotional flyers found on www.rollerskating.com in the members-only section to increase profits and fun!

November: Hunger Games Movie Release

FOOD

- Name food after hunger games foods
- Survivor bags with Swedish Fish and Gold Fish

GAMES

- Hunger Games Trivia
- Suction cup bow and arrow
- Race for the cornucopia
- Play games with two teams and name the teams Team Peta and Team Gale

PRIZES

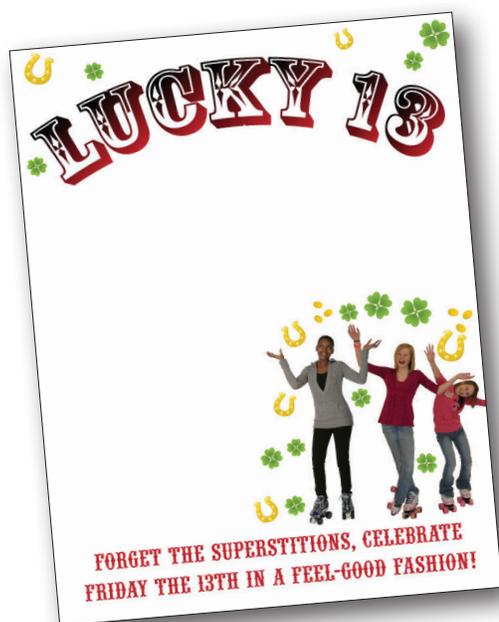
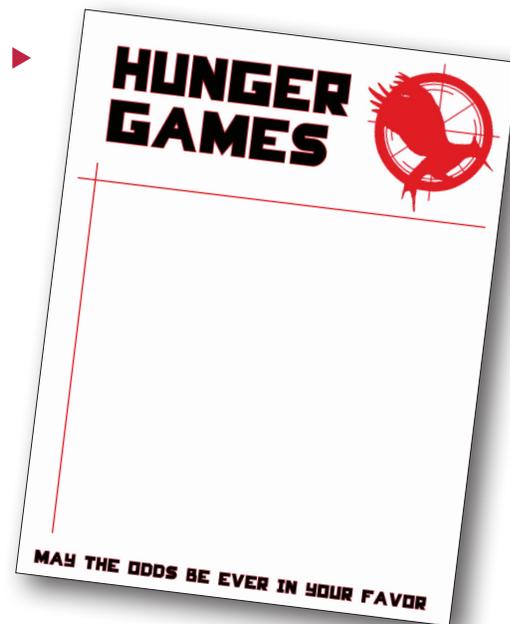
- Mockingjay pins
- Hunger games merch
- Movie tickets
- Drop parachutes with prizes attached

MUSIC

- Hunger Games soundtrack/Taylor Swift – Safe and Sound

BONUS IDEAS

- Use the session as a food drive.
- Buy several pairs of tickets to the movie in advance. For every food donation, participants are entered to win two tickets.
- Refer to floorguards as peacekeepers for the night



December: Celebrate Friday the 13th

Celebrate Friday the 13th in a feel-good fashion instead of making it scary!

FOOD

- Lucky Charms
- Baker's dozen special on food

GAMES

- Break superstitions by having participants walk under a ladder, spill salt without throwing it over their shoulder, break a mirror, and throw a stuffed black cat in front of people.
- Do a minute-to-win-it game where participants have to separate Lucky Charms marshmallows into separate cups within a short time period.
- Who can think of 13 superstitions?
- Number 13 trivia: www.funtrivia.com/playquiz/quiz7135182dad0.html

PRIZES

- Free admission for 13 year olds
- Free admission to 13th person through the door
- Rabbit's feet
- Dream catchers
- Horseshoe necklaces
- Gold coins
- Wooden nickels

MUSIC

- Britney Spears – Lucky
- Jason Mraz – Lucky
- Stevie Wonder – Superstition
- Alison Krauss – Lucky One
- Madonna – Lucky Star
- Kiss – Hard Luck Woman
- Lover Boy – Lucky Ones
- Mick Jagger – Lucky in Love
- Radiohead – Luck
- Bruce Springsteen – Lucky Town

Did You Know...

You can download each of these flyers and instructions on our website under your members only account. Just login to your account and go to www.rollerskating.org/members/benefits/mont.asp to download each of the flyers and instructions!



Letter from the Foundation President



The Roller Skating Foundation is working hard to become a valuable tool for rink operators. We want to progressively promote fitness through roller skating. Our goal is to promote safe skating programs and help rinks get into schools to promote their facilities as a wholesome family activity that is healthy and fun. The Foundation

wants to help schools fight obesity and encourage them to promote physical activity. Roller skating provides excellent health benefits and it is recognized by the American Heart Association and The President's Council on Physical Fitness. The Foundation is here to help any rink operator with material and information to help introduce the benefits of skating to their local schools, libraries, and youth organizations.

The scholarship program is being restructured and a four-year scholarship will be awarded to an applicant who is an employee or any child whose parents are involved in the roller skating industry. This includes all RSM and RSA members. Please read and share future information sent to you and encourage your children and employees to apply.

It is important however, for everyone to know that the Foundation works solely on donations and fundraising activities. Please support the Foundation with your donation today. Monthly or yearly donations will be very beneficial. If you would like to set up a regular monthly or yearly donation please contact Stacy Thomas at the RSA national office at 317-347-2626 Ext. 108, or by email at foundation@rollerskating.com.

Roller Skating – It's Fitness and Fun Rolled Into One

Frank Torries

Frank Torries
Roller Skating Foundation President

ROLLERSkating
FOUNDATION
Giving Together...For a Better Tomorrow

2013 RSF Scholarship Winner Spotlight

Full Name: Sarah Hope Eaton Dennis

Age: 17

Hometown: Torrington, Connecticut

High School: Torrington High School

College: Keene State College in Keene, New Hampshire

Rink: Ron-A-Roll Indoor Skating Center in Vernon, Connecticut

Years of Experience: 13

Skates: Vanilla Freestyles

Regional Jamskating Competitions Attended: 2

WSA National Jamskating Competitions Attended: 2

Placement in both Regional Competitions: 2nd

Type(s) Of Skating Practiced: Speed, Jam, Shuffle, Artistic

Idols: Lonna Kissling, Patrick Ballentine, and Tony Zane.

"Roller skating means the world to me. I remember my first time on skates rather than my first steps. I am extremely thankful to be the recipient of this incredible scholarship, and I'd like to thank everyone at the Roller Skating Foundation. I will be putting it to good use by doing what I love in college this fall!"



Top: Sarah Hope Eaton Dennis, 2013 Roller Skating Foundation Scholarship Winner.

Bottom: The necklace she wears with pride every day.



Celebrating National Roller Skating Month

The RSA and the marketing committee hopes that you can utilize National Roller Skating Month (NRSM) to build your business and drive more traffic to your rink. We have expanded this year's NRSM program to include bracelets and punch cards. The kits will all be mailed out before the last week of August so that everyone will receive their kits on or before September 2, 2013.

To help you publicize NRSM, your toolkit will include a sample press release that you can utilize by filling in the blanks and distributing to your local media outlets. This press release can also be found in the member's only section of the website.

Most roller skating rink owner/operators personalize all of the promotions that they run in their rink, and NRSM is no different. Promote it your way by adding your own little twists and ideas to make the program work for you. Included in this guide you will find ideas that fellow owner/operators have successfully used to drive business in their own rinks.

MATERIALS INCLUDED

- 4 Posters (We recommend hanging in your rink right away. You can also ask other venues throughout the city to display the poster throughout the month of October.)
- 100 Punch Cards (great for driving business to your rink and increasing Pepsi sales).
- 100 "How Do YOU Roll?" silicone bracelets to be given away however best fits your needs.
- Press release to send to local media outlets.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MATERIALS

Posters: We are including four posters directed towards all ages that encourages patrons to "Skate a Million Miles." You can place these posters in your rink, at your local library, grocery bulletin boards, schools, restaurants, etc. The more exposure you receive throughout the community, the more people you'll see coming through your doors.

Punch Cards: Punch cards are not only a great way to get return customers, they're also a free form of marketing. They create a bond between the customer and the facility and help to enhance your business's image. We've included 100 punch cards

to get you started. For some rinks, that might be plenty, for those rinks that need more, here are some options:

- Order additional bundles from the RSA for \$5 per 100, plus shipping and handling. (Limited quantities are available. Orders will be filled on a first come, first served basis while supplies last.)
- Download the punch card template in the members only section of the website under forms and either print yourself or send the file to your local printer.

Silicone wristbands: We've included 100 "How Do YOU Roll?" bracelets. Limited quantities of additional bracelets with the slogan "Skate A Million Miles" are available from the RSA for \$25 per 100, plus shipping and handling. Orders will be filled on a first come, first served basis while supplies last. You can use these in conjunction with the punch cards, or you can hand them out at the beginning of the month to remind kids to "Skate a Million Miles" throughout the month.

IDEAS ON HOW TO USE THE NRSM MATERIALS IN YOUR TOOLKIT

Here are a few ways some of your fellow members have increased traffic and built repeat business using the punch cards in the past:

- Run a special. Use the punch cards to create a contest with a prize. Come up with a promotion that works well for your patrons and you will see results – people come more often when they know they're being rewarded for their patronage. HINT: Number each card so it is easy to keep track of the cards, along with their name.
- Give away a free pair of roller skates to the person who had the most punch cards filled at the end of the month. If there is a tie, put all names in a hat and pull a winner.
- Give a pass to the winner for one free skate every month for one year.
- Give a Summer Pass that runs from June



1st– September 1st (This applies more to Spring Promos using the punch cards).

- Incorporate "extra" punches for customers. Give the cards out for full price admission the first week, then give punches for extra admissions. Also, have special items on hand, products that you can't sell or are slow movers. If the customer purchases during the week they get a punch, or if they buy skates, or if they win a pre-determined number of tickets, etc. The ideas are endless! Once they receive all of their punches on a card, offer a free admission on the last week of the month, perhaps a Friday night because that night is slow due to high school football games. Pre-print a note and attach it to the punch cards. As the customers arrive the first week, pass out the cards and note so they know what they need to do to receive punches on their cards.

WANT OTHER IDEAS?

If you have additional ideas, we encourage you to share them with your fellow RSA members on the RSA's Facebook group page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/16235807289/>

To order more silicone wristbands or punch cards, call Angela Tanner, Director of Marketing and Pepsi Programming at 317-347-2626 Ext. 102 or email marketing@rollerskating.com.



R3

- R3 Limited Edition boot in black satin PU with red outsole and red cinch strap
- PowerDyne Thrust black nylon plate with black adjustable toe stop
- Kwik ABEC-5 bearings
- Red/black swirl Limited Edition wheels – 62mm/95A with speed groove
- Sizes 1–14 Full Only – Medium

for a limited time only

Limited Edition



800-555-1212. I would appreciate it if you would contact me directly as I welcome the opportunity to learn how we can better serve our patrons. Your insight and opinions are very valuable to us here at our establishment. I look forward to hearing from you soon.” Now, how many people do you think that will impact?

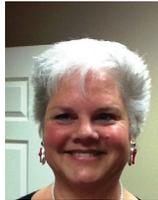
You see, the choice to be proactive is still yours. I should also state that, in most cases, these unhappy customers often become some of the strongest advocates for the business that reaches out and makes contact. Oftentimes, they also add an amendment to their original bad review, and the public sees this.

Taking control of your reputation management is like many things before it that you’ve decided to embrace. It will take time and energy and you’ll have to get involved to get past the minimal learning curve of navigating the review sites. There are profiles to claim and/or create, information and bios need to be created, and you’ll need to monitor the most important of these sites that are the most relevant to your business. In the online world today, this is the price we pay to stay ahead.

Reputation management is the understanding or influencing of an individual’s or business’s reputation. It was originally coined as a public relations term, but advancement in computing, the internet and social media made it primarily an issue of search results.

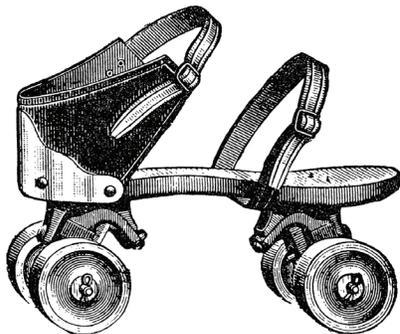
- Wikipedia

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Susan Wright, Digital Marketing Consultant for TrustWorkz, specializes in Web Presence Management that includes your entire footprint on the internet. She has a marketing and business development background and brings a clear understanding of the daily challenges of running a business. TrustWorkz services several skating rink clients and has been able to help them take their website and turn it into a Web Presence that becomes a dynamic

traffic building machine. Susan offers webinars and generic education about what has changed in the internet world and what a business must do to stay relevant today. For more information on TrustWorkz visit their website at www.trustworkz.com.



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- Mobile Responsive Website Development
- Powerful And Targeted SEO
- Custom Written Weekly Blog Posts
- Daily Posting To Your Social Media
- Management Of Your Entire Web Presence

21 MONEY-MAKING MARKETING TIPS

When you've been in an industry for so long, it's hard to come up with new ideas. As the editor in the parenting magazine industry for over a dozen years and more than 600 magazines, it was easy to wonder how to possibly come up with another topic that the family market hasn't yet seen...then the next big idea comes along and the rest is history. The same situation rings true for just about every industry. Rest assured, there are dozens of tricks to market your business and reach out to new people – here are 21 marketing tips that I've learned over the years that you can apply to your business model and are sure to bring in more skaters.

1. Write a press release and submit it to your local newspaper.

Discuss special events, fundraisers, new programs, etc. that you're offering. If you don't know how to write one, just google sample press releases and you'll find a ton of them. Or just email marketing@rollerskating.com and we'll send you a sample press release. Seek out organizations that will submit your press release for you (marketing companies or companies like PR Newswire or check out <http://press-release-distribution.topseorankings.com/best-press-release-distribution-services> for companies that specialize in press release distribution). You can also buy a copy of a media directory that lists every form of media in your state.

Check out <http://gebbieinc.com/> or www.cision.com to access their media databases. For people in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana, visit www.mymediadirectory.com.

Whether you do it yourself or have someone do it for you, the more you send, the more you'll be heard. Make sure your

grammar is impeccable and have someone proofread it for you – the biggest mistake you can make is sending out a professional document with glaring grammatical errors. Check out ereleases.com/prfuel/8-grammar-mistakes-to-avoid-in-press-release-writing/ for 8 grammar mistakes to avoid in press releases. You can also download a free book called "The Big Press Release Samples Book" to get ideas.

2. Find your local parenting magazine and forge a partnership.

Being in the parenting publications industry for so long, I can tell you that they're one of the best ways to reach your target market—parents and children. Many of these publications reach 100,000 families or more on a monthly basis and offer advertising rates that are incredibly affordable.

In addition, they're usually small business owners themselves and are always looking to develop new partnerships with businesses. Schedule a meeting and find out what kind

of events you can come up with that will let the magazine reach out to new readers and vice versa.

Hold an ice cream social in the rink, have a fitness fair for kids, or maybe even host a small camp fair or education fair at the rink and have the magazine be the official partner! To find a list of parenting magazines in your area, visit <http://www.parentmedia.org/Advertisers/> and then click on "Members" under "Directory of Parenting Magazines."

3. Join a local camp fair.

If you're anywhere near a city that has a parenting magazine, there's likely also a summer camp fair that's going on, too. If you're looking to boost summer attendance, you can do it through local camp fairs. And if there isn't one in your area - host one!

Parents want to put a name with a face, they want to be able to ask you questions and find out more about what you're offering during the summer. Summer camps come in all shapes and sizes. You don't have to be an

When considering marketing...consider this:

- Teens in the US spend around \$160 billion a year
- Children (up to 11) spend around \$18 billion a year
- “Tweens” (8-12 year olds) “heavily influence” more than \$30 billion in other spending by parents, and “80 percent of all global brands now deploy a ‘tween strategy.’”
- Children (under 12) and teens influence parental purchases totaling over \$130-670 billion a year.

overnight summer camp to have a booth at a summer camp fair, you just have to hold a summer program.

The cost to have a booth, if someone else is hosting the event, is usually relatively affordable and you can sometimes swing a deal if it's put on by a local parenting magazine to include advertising and a discount on the booth space. Make sure to bring flyers and little trinkets to pique the kids' interest. You might also be able to offer an in-kind ticket trade for the magazine to use in contests in exchange for booth space or ads. To find a local summer camp near you, check out <http://www.acacamps.org/camp-fairs>. (Summer camp fairs usually start in January and are hosted through early spring to book for the summer.)

4. List your summer programs on the American Camp Association website for free. The ACA will be partnering with the Roller Skating Association for 2013-2014, which will mean that not only will you be able to reach out to thousands of summer camps to potentially host their outings, but also to let parents know about your own summer programs.

The ACA allows organizations with summer programs to list their events FREE on their website. They have listed a brand new category for roller skating for you to take advantage of, so once you have your summer schedule mapped out, take advantage of this offer. If you want more tips on what to expect with our partnership, keep an eye out for upcoming issues of RSB magazine where we'll be working with the American Camp Association on how to start a summer camp program and how you can become an ACA accredited summer program. Post your listing here: www.acacamps.org/newcamp

5. Create a calendar to give away to your customers. Create a monthly or yearly calendar with all of your events and promotions on it to give your customers something to look forward to within the next year. Likewise, Roller Skating Business Magazine develops the two pages of promotional calendars in the back of the publication for you to pull out and use

to your liking or you can download it each month from the RSA Today newsletter. Affix your rink's information to the bottom, add a special coupon or manipulate it however you like. Keeping your name in front of customers is marketing 101.

6. Help out a local reporter. Believe it or not, offering up your name to be the go-to person on roller skating can be a significant boon for business. While this isn't exactly a form of marketing, name recognition can be key to increasing your profits. Visit www.helpareporter.com to offer up your services or check out #1 in this list to find your local media outlets.

7. Hone your speaking skills. Offer to be a speaker at a career day at a school near you. Make it fun and interesting, interact with the crowd, bring in a skater to show them a few tricks and explain how fun your job really is. You'll educate and be able to market your business at the same time.

8. Develop a customer loyalty program. You don't have to give away the whole hog to get customers coming back. In fact, a study in the Journal of Consumer Research analyzed what is called the “freebie devaluation effect.” When you give something away for free on a continual basis, customers tend to make inferences as to why they're getting such a good deal. This process actually detracts from the perception of the product quality. They make the inference that the company couldn't actually operate unless they used this method. So rather than giving everything away for free, develop a program that encourages people to keep returning and provides a “thank you” for frequenting your business. Reward them for their patronage and you'll see the return.

9. Create a monthly newsletter marketing campaign. The key to marketing is staying in front of your audience. You don't have to make the newsletter long, but just informative enough to let them know what's going on. Explain what promotional events you're running, host themed parties and use this as a way to

try new techniques to see what works best.

10. Partner with a local non-competing business. Perhaps you want to bring in a local entertainer, an animal rescue group, a crafting business (i.e. paint your own pottery, wine and canvas for adults), a farmer's market, a food truck or just anything new. Rather than seeing it as competition, look at these partnerships as a way to entice people through your doors. You might be surprised just how well it works for you both!

11. Join your local Chamber of Commerce or Rainmakers. Network, network, network. We've seen it time and time again: An ambitious small business owner saturates the market with their name as the resource for a specific topic on local television stations, radio or in print media and then ends up so successful they're often booked out a year in advance.

So maybe you've been around for a while...use that to your advantage! If you're just as energetic at networking as your desire to make money and keep kids skating, the payoff and the ideas you'll get from local professionals will be proof enough of the power of networking. There's something to be said for “It's not what you know, it's who you know.”

12. Create an awards program. Not to be confused with rewards, why not try to create a new award and host a celebration at your rink? Citizen of the Year award? Skater of the Year? Host a party at your rink for the winner and use these opportunities as a way to showcase your facility.

13. Hone your writing skills. Believe it or not, you can increase your exposure just by writing blogs, letters in your local newspaper, other websites, etc. about what you know. Maybe you've developed something fantastic for your business that you really want to share, but you're not sure if you should keep it close to your chest. Share, share, share! Being known as the go-to or originator of the next greatest thing will only improve your bottom line.

14. Loan your facility out for meetings and events. Offer to host a Chamber or Rainmakers event, or any other community event, to help gain your rink the free exposure. It might seem like an odd thing to do, but if you're reminding adults how much fun it is to roller skate, the ripple effect of word of mouth is guaranteed to increase profits.

15. Partner with local non-profits or annual celebrations. Indianapolis has a considerable amount of annual celebrations and festivals throughout the year and many hold week long events around the city. Host a Hispanic Heritage Skate, a Black History Month Skate, a Pride Skate, hold a "Strawberry Festival" in your rink or any other number of events. Partner with local organizations that host these festivals and then work with them to host a skating event as a part of the celebration. You'll increase your profits and get free advertising, too!

16. Host a free clinic or seminar. You've heard of the local blood bank mobiles and breast cancer mobile screening units - why not host one? Many of these non-profit organizations get free publicity on television and radio, so it stands to reason that if they're telling people where to find the clinic you'll receive free publicity just for being the location. Base the events around the fact that, as a rink owner, you're focused on encouraging fitness and health.

17. Put together a marketing video. If you don't have a video camera you can even use your smartphone or ask one of your older kids in the rink if they'd like to help you with a project. They'll know how to market to their age group and they likely have the know-how to help you create it. When you're done, post online. Google loves to include videos in search results, so make sure that you're including all of the right taglines and cross promoting the video on other sites for extra exposure. Share it with your local news media outlets and give your student videographer a little credit in your interviews!

18. Send brochures and business cards to those operating under a fictitious business name. So maybe you're wondering what "fictitious business name" even means, right? Every person who is doing business for profit under a fictitious business name is required by law to file a statement within 40 days of commencement of business. When these are filed with the county clerk, the businesses are required to advertise it in your local paper once a week for four weeks. This is the perfect opportunity to introduce yourself to these new companies, so grab a business card and a brochure and pop it in the mail. You might be able to forge a few new relationships for just a few cents and minutes of your time.

19. Become an infopreneur. You've likely been in the business for a while now, so why not take what you know and exchange that knowledge for a fee? You'll be able to add a new revenue stream, talk about your business, and encourage others. Let's face it, more attention to roller skating means more business for you—so put your knowledge to work! Check out www.clickbank.com, for example. You can also reach out to local media to offer to write articles or offer to be an expert in your area.

20. Write a book or an e-book that you can give away for free. People absolutely love free stuff, so if you can write a book on a topic that deals with small business ownership or roller skating - even better! You're getting your name out there and that's what

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Camp is fun and so much more. At day or overnight camps, children and youth find a community that encourages achievement and builds self-esteem; promotes healthy lifestyles, fitness, and activity; and inspires the confidence and courage to become the leaders of tomorrow.
(The counts below (x) are based on sessions.)

Number of Matches		
	Total	Accredited
Camps	3,038	2,436
Programs	7,824	6,431
Sessions	23,644	20,433

Do you want a Day, Overnight, or Family Camp?
Help Me Decide

- Day (camper will travel to and from camp each day) (10,488)
- Overnight (camper will sleep at the camp) (14,109)
- Show both Day and Overnight Camps (24,597)
- Camp or Camps for Adults (727)

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matters when you're seeking out new forms of marketing.

21. Start a blog. A great way to get your name in the community is to start a blog. Check out the article in the July/August issue of Roller Skating Business Magazine from Trustworkz® on why you should start a blog. Everything from developing headlines to paying attention to grammar and punctuation, you'll learn why creating a blog can help garner attention for your business and identify you as a leader in various topics. Plus, if you don't have the time to do it, Trustworkz® specializes in creating original content for small businesses and roller skating rinks to engage your market and improve your web presence.

There you have it, 21 tips to increase your market penetration for little to nothing out of pocket. If you haven't tried these tips before, make it a point to try at least one new method a month. We'd love to share your marketing tricks and hear about the results. Email editor@rollerskating.com and we'll share with readers your marketing gold!

Above all, don't be afraid to try something new.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Lynette Rowland is the Editor-in-Chief/Publisher for RSB Magazine and the Director of Communications for the RSA. She has a background of more than 15 years in the publications industry, event planning, and business management. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Indiana State University.

Honors & Awards of the RSA International

The Roller Skating Association International recognizes and honors individuals in the roller skating industry for their various efforts and dedication by presenting these prestigious awards. If you would like to nominate a friend or colleague for one of the awards listed below, fill out the enclosed form and submit that along with proper supportive documentation to the Roller Skating Association International.

Roller Skating Hall of Fame (1955)

This honor is instituted to recognize those individuals who, through the selfless dedication of their skills and talents throughout their lives, have made contributions of a lasting nature to the roller skating industry. This is the highest form of recognition bestowed by the RSA and is not done on an annual basis. Personal accomplishments are not to be considered, nor are contributions of material value enough reason for appointment to the Hall of Fame. Only individual contributions of one's talents & efforts, of lasting nature, through personal sacrifices and endeavor, which continue over a long period of years, are to be considered in awarding this honor. Only and individual who has voluntarily made such outstanding contributions to roller skating, without any intentions of personal reward should be favorably considered.

RSA Life Membership (1951)

It is extended to a living RSA member and not directly to the facility or facilities with which the individual is associated. As with the Hall of Fame, Life Membership is not an annual award. This honor is conferred upon individuals for outstanding contribution to the advancement of the Association. The main reason for awarding an individual this honor is not for the length of his membership, but for the quality of his contributions over a period of time.

RSM Lifetime Achievement Award (1997)

This award is to honor RSM members who have contributed to that organization over many years. It is extended to an RSM member and not directly to the facility of facilities with which the individual is associated. This is not an annual award. Only those individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the improvement of roller skating and/or roller skating equipment and to the advancement of the goals of the RSM, shall be awarded this honor through the Honors Committee of the RSA and with final approval of the RSA Board of Directors.

The Bob Bollinger Lifetime Achievement Award (1997)

This honor shall be awarded to those individuals who have been nominated by their sections and/or individuals. Lifetime achievement awards will be presented to individuals who have been in the roller skating business for a period of 35 or more years and who have contributed significantly over the years to both roller skating in general and their fellow operators in particular and through those contributions have made

a marked difference in the roller skating industry. This award recognizes sectional and area prominence, not national prominence and is for a state and local level. They do not necessarily require that the recipient be a member of the RSA for the full 35 years, only that they have been in business that long or longer.

The Vernon Fowlkes Memorial Award (1974)

This is not an annual award. The award is only conferred when, in the opinion of the Board of Directors of the RSA, someone within the roller skating industry has distinguished themselves as an outstanding contributor to the advancement of roller skating as a sport, a business or as an industry, through their work, involving personal sacrifice without intention of reward during a lifetime of service.

The Victor J. Brown Operator of the Year Award (1961)

This is awarded annually and is a symbol of respect and business excellence, bestowed upon individuals whose activities within the roller skating industry go beyond personal business contribution. The honor of Operator of the Year recognizes the individual or individuals who, in the past year, have made an important contribution toward strengthening the position of commercial roller skating, the betterment of the industry and the advancement of the goals of the RSA on a national level.

Heart of the Industry Award (1985)

This award is to be given annually to one of more individuals making an outstanding contribution at the chapter, regional and section level. These working members of the Association will have earned the respect of their community and fellow rink operators by their tireless efforts in serving in whatever area they are needed with time, talent and encouragement at the local level—the Heart of the Industry.

Charlotte Groves Board Citation Award (1988)

This award carries a great deal of esteem and gives the industry a chance to honor an individual or individuals for their special service and contributions to the roller skating industry. It is not necessary for the recipient of the award to be a member of the RSA; rather, it is given on the merit of their contribution. In 2000, this award was changed from the Board of Directors Citation Award to the Charlotte Groves Citation Award.

The Al Kish Attaway Special Service Award (1988)

This award is to be given to individual RSA members or non-members deemed worthy by the Honors Committee, and approved by the RSA Board of Directors, in recognition of the contributions that they have made toward improvements in the roller skating industry, and to encourage increased participation in the Association programs. This award is presented for specific projects to the industry, over and above the call of duty and for contributions that are exemplary and innovative. The Al Kish Attaway Awards are awarded to those people whose contributions have been of their time, energy and creativity to the RSA and for their long-term support of Association programs.

Innovative Rink Operator of the Year Award (2007)

Given to a rink operator who generates outstanding and innovative ideas throughout the year. This is not necessarily an annual RSA award.

SRSTA Life Membership (1964)

This award is to honor teachers who have contributed to that organization over many years. Only those individuals who have contributed to the improvement of roller skating skills and techniques, research in skating methods and to the advancement of the goals of the SRSTA, without thought of reward over a period of time, shall be awarded this honor.

SCA Life Membership

This award is to honor SCA members who have contributed to that organization over many years. Only those individuals who have contributed to the improvement of roller skating skills and techniques, research in skating methods, and to the advancement of the goals of the SCA, without thought of reward over a period of time, shall be awarded this honor.

SRSTA Teacher of the Year Award (1961)

This award is given annually to the individual member of the SRSTA who has contributed the most during the past year to the advancement of the principles of that organization and to the furthering of teaching skills of roller skating. It is awarded for an individual's non-competitive contributions to the SRSTA.

Seeking Honors Nominations

All nominations for any awards to be presented by the association must be made in writing and submitted to the RSA Honors Committee on or before September 30, 2013.

Submitted by: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Name of nominee: _____ Section Chapter: _____

Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Award recommendation*: _____

* From the detailed listing of awards and qualifications provided.

On a separate sheet, write a supporting statement as to why the nominee should be selected as an award recipient. You should also include any supportive documentation to help the committee make their recommendation for the nominee to become an award recipient.

Thank you for participating in this esteemed tradition!



**PLEASE SUBMIT
NOMINATIONS TO:**

Roller Skating Association International

Attn: Tonya Crenshaw

6905 Corporate Drive · Indianapolis, IN 46278

E-mail: honors@rollerskating.com · Fax: 317-347-2636

Questions: Call 317-347-2626 Ext. 111

VICTOR J. BROWN OPERATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD (1961)

This award is given annually and is a symbol of respect and business excellence, bestowed upon individuals whose activities with the roller skating industry go beyond personal business contribution.

The honor of Operator of the Year recognizes the individual or individuals who, in the past year, have made an important contribution toward strengthening the position of commercial roller skating, the betterment of the industry and the advancement of the goals of the RSA on a national level.

Douglas Warren of Murfreesboro, Tennessee is deserving of the "Operator of the Year" Award because of his outstanding commitment to the Roller Skating Association and its members.

Douglas Warren joined the RSA in 1994. Doug was born into the business and is a proud second generation operator of Skate Center West in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. First becoming involved with volunteering for the RSA on the Section level, Doug went on to serve Section 8 in many capacities, including Section 8 President.

Doug was elected to the Board of Directors in 2000 and served for nine consecutive years. Doug was an outstanding director for the RSA with his wisdom and honesty. During this time, Doug served on various committees, including Executive, Finance, Insurance, Convention Planning, Publications and the Nominating Committee. Doug can always be found at all RSA functions volunteering in a variety of roles. Whether it be helping with the General Assembly, leading roundtables or just lending a hand wherever needed, he does it with the utmost respect and dignity for his fellow RSA members.

During the President's Dinner at the Convention, you can always find Doug helping to organize and execute the annual fund-raising raffle for the National Museum of Roller Skating. That is just the type of person Doug is—giving and always doing without the thought of personal gain.

Holding true to the ideals of the Victor J. Brown for whom the Rink Operator of the Year award is named, Doug is constantly working to better the roller skating industry. He takes the time to talk to members and find out how he can help to serve them. He is always the first to encourage new members to get involved and make a difference.

Any day of the week, you can find Doug at his rink doing what he does best as a hands-on rink operator handling the day-to-day operations. Skate Center West is a wonderful example of what a great purpose roller skating can serve within a community. He meets the criteria for the Victor J. Brown Award and was honored this award at the 2013 RSA Convention.



President, Tina Robertson and Honors Committee Chair, Annelle Anderson, present the Victor J. Brown Operator of the Year Award to Douglas Warren of Murfreesboro, TN during the 2013 RSA Convention General Assembly.



Douglas Warren of Murfreesboro, TN accepting the award for Rink Operator of the Year.

RSA Fall Section Meetings



SECTION/EVENT	DATES	CONTACT INFORMATION	LOCATION
Section 1	October 13	Section President, Gary Englund Phone: 360-755-2200 Email: gkenglund@msn.com	Seahawks Game on Oct 13 Meeting on Oct 14, Location TBD
Section 2	October 14	Section President, Sonny Grenier Phone: 805-644-2121 Email: sonny@skatingplus.com	Meeting Location TBD Los Angeles, California
Section 3	October 13 - 14	Section President, Mary A. Dollar Phone: 920-494-6152 Email: mary16d@aol.com	Richland Center Rink 411 East Richland Center, WI 53581
Section 4 <i>(In conjunction with RC Sports)</i>	September 28-30	Section President, Darrin Johnson Phone: 918-633-4483 Email: Darrin@brokenarrowrollersports.com	RC Sports 9910 Lakeview Avenue Lenexa, KS 66219
Section 5 <i>(In conjunction with Rebecca's)</i>	October 28 - 29	Section Secretary/Treasurer, Dianne Braun Phone: 210-415-3464 Email: Skatelandwest74@aol.com	Meeting Location TBD Euleuss, TX
Section 6	Fall meeting completed	Section President, Erika Wymer Phone: 231-773-5538 Email: wymerj1@msn.com	Fall meeting completed
Section 7 <i>(In conjunction with Funtastic Trade Show)</i>	October 1 - 2	Section President, Luke Boston Phone: 317-898-1817 Email: luke@rollercave.com	Funtastic 4515 Industrial Road Fort Wayne, Indiana
Section 8 <i>(In conjunction with Southeastern Skate GA Trade Show)</i>	October 21 - 22	Section President, Ronald Parmley Phone: 256-489-7655 Email: parmley@knology.net	462 Veteran's Highway Mableton, Georgia
Section 9 <i>(In conjunction with Funtastic Open House)</i>	October 1 - 2	Section President, Keith Brainard Phone: 330-307-3660 Email: Kbrain1971@aol.com	Funtastic 4515 Industrial Road Fort Wayne, Indiana
Section 10	October 27 - 28	Section President, Kevin Baker Phone: 413-543-4664 ext. 0 Email: wheelyfunn@aol.com	5 rink bus tour Sheraton Hotel Downtown Springfield, MA
Section 11	September 24	Section President, Gary Miller Phone: 717-632-1888 Email: gary@magicelmskateland.com	Rink tour starting at The Deptford Skating Center in Deptford, N.J.
Section 12 <i>(In conjunction with Southeastern Skate VA Trade Show)</i>	October 7 - 8	Section President, Shane Locklear Phone: 804-726-2841 Email: shanelocklear@rollerdomeskating.com	Southeastern Skate Supply 2917 Nichols Avenue NE Roanoke, Virginia
Section 13 <i>(In conjunction with Southeastern Skate GA Trade Show)</i>	October 21 - 22	Section President, Justin Byars Phone: 864-337-6045 Email: justin@skateawayusa.com	462 Veteran's Highway Mableton, Georgia

Trade Shows in Conjunction with Section Meetings

RC Sports (KS): September 28-30 • **Rebecca's (TX):** October 28 - 29
Funtastic (IN): October 1 - 2 • **Southeastern Skate Supply (GA):** October 21 - 22
Southeastern Skate Supply (VA): October 7 - 8

Do you have questions about this information or do you need to make updates to your section meeting listing? Please contact Stacy Thomas, Director of Membership Services at 317-347-2626 Ext. 108 or email membership@rollerskating.com.

ROLLER Skating FOUNDATION

Giving Together...For a Better Tomorrow

Support the Roller Skating Foundation and help grow the sport of roller skating!
Promote healthy lifestyles through roller skating!
Support college scholarships for roller skating industry students!

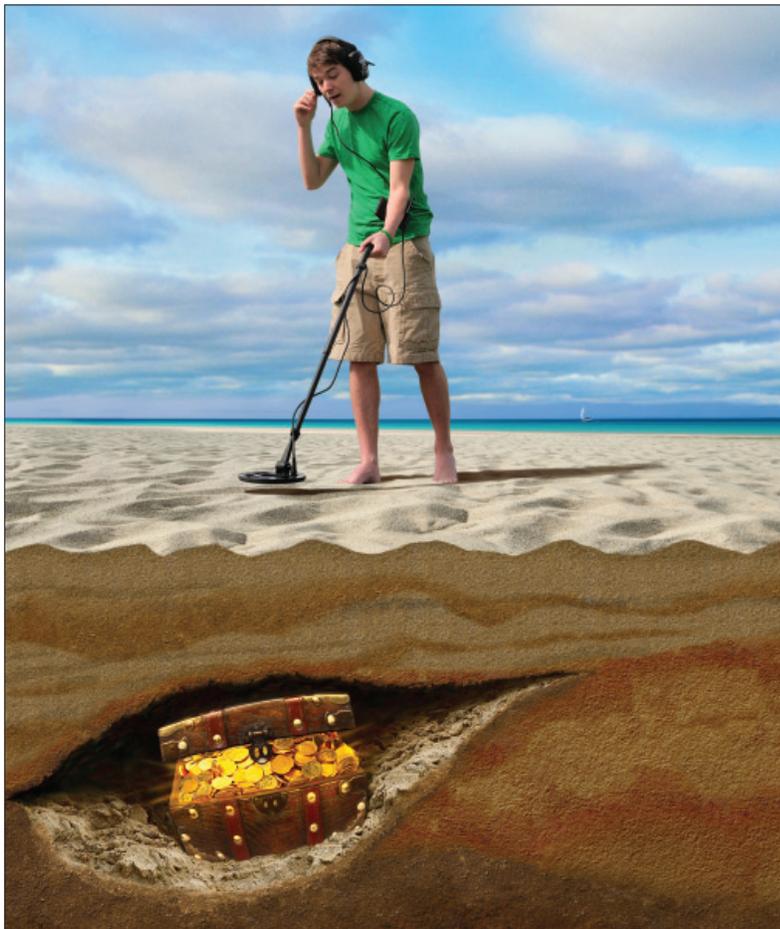
When you make a tax-deductible donation to the Roller Skating Foundation you are helping educate the public on skating safety and fitness, as well as providing college scholarships for roller skating industry students. The Foundation is a 501(c) 3 non profit organization.

You may complete the form at www.rollerskating.org/about/dona.html to send a donation online by using a credit card or you may mail your donation to Roller Skating Foundation, 6905 Corporate Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46278. Please include the name of donor, mailing address, phone number and email address.

Your unrestricted tax-deductible gift will help the Roller Skating Foundation meet our national objectives of educational programs, self-esteem and safety programs, and general promotion of fitness through roller skating.

If you would like more information on donating to the Foundation, please contact the Foundation Liaison at (317) 347-2626 or by email at foundation@rollerskating.com.

To learn more about your dollars at work, visit
www.rollerskating.org/about/dona.html



Until this happens, start a savings plan.

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The Power of **BRAND**ing

UTILIZING RSA LICENSED CHARACTERS TO INCREASE PROFITS

It may seem like a relatively small change or addition to a business's marketing plan, but utilizing licensed characters to advertise and promote a business can create a big change in revenue, clientele and community involvement. With the right materials, ideas and communication savvy, increased profitability and exposure may just be one branding tactic away.

THE PERKS OF MEMBERSHIP

According to a recent study done for the Licensing Industry Merchandiser's Association (LIMA), entertainment and character licensing generated over \$2.5 billion in retail sales in 2012. Although it may seem like an overwhelming marketing project to many small business owners; the fact is that it isn't with the right accessibility. As a member of the Roller Skating Association International (RSA), membership as a rink owner/operator includes the rights to use the

RSA's roller skating mascot friends; Roller Roo, Kooky Bird and Cool Wally. They are easy-to-use, cost-effective and an exclusive benefit to RSA members.

"There are many perks associated with an RSA membership, but one of the best parts about belonging to the Association is that it allows members to use these licensed characters and to reap the benefits of our promotional marketing materials," RSA Executive Director Jim McMahon points out.

McMahon also noted, "As our own licensed characters, we've made it simple for our members to use Roo and Kooky in their marketing plan without the legal issues and cost that are attached to external characters. But most importantly, the materials provide a very professional, appealing and economic partner to help promote their business."

LICENSED CHARACTERS. BIG HITS

Bobby Bentley, owner of Dreamland Skating Center in Pensacola, Florida and three other skating centers in Alabama, Georgia and an additional Florida location, has effectively used the RSA's licensed character, Roo, for nearly two decades.

"We use Roo in almost every event we host or are a part of," Bobby explains, "The visual association in the community is an extremely important part of our identity. Roo is an annual tradition in Mardi Gras activities, the Christmas parade, community events and with our roller derby team, The Roller Girls. I cannot imagine Roo not being part of our marketing and promotions plan. The mascot is that effective."

Bentley also points out that a national marketing program with supported materials and information is an effective way to create

"We use Roo in almost every event we host or are a part of. I cannot imagine Roo not being part of our marketing and promotions plan. The mascot is that effective."

Bobby Bentley

Owner, Dreamland Skating Center & three other rinks in the southern U.S.



brand identification that will identify any promotional activity to a business. He parks his brightly colored Hummer in shopping centers with his Roo mascot at his side to hand out stickers, tattoos, Mardi Gras beads with Roo decals and free passes to parents and their children to promote upcoming events at the rink or in the community.



“Everyone knows Roo and they know the Hummer, too,” he states. “I’m glad to have the connection and promotional value of Roo. He’s that important to my business.”

A common thread amongst rink owners is using a mascot to even get a foot in the door with groups or associations that might not otherwise be aware of the positive promotion a mascot brings.

“Kids love the mascots,” Lori Heyberd, owner of The Fun Factory in Milledgeville, Georgia, emphasizes. “No matter where we go, the mascot goes with us. Kids come to expect that whether we are attending a school-sponsored event, a Stranger Danger presentation with McGruff the Crime Dog and the local police, a community parade or are hosting a birthday party at The Fun Factory. It’s that simple and that effective.”

Heyberd points out that her decision to use a mascot was primarily to get noticed.

“We live about 55 miles from a major city,” Lori explains, “which ultimately benefited The Fun Factory because there were no other businesses close by that really used a mascot in their day-to-day business. So we kind of capitalized on the fact that there was no competition, in a way. Now Milledgeville has its own mascot and the kids identify it with The Fun Factory as a safe and trusted character that gets a lot of invitations to community programs!”

EXCLUSIVE. AFFORDABLE. PROFESSIONAL. Because mascots can be used in many different promotions and campaigns, there is an element of flexibility that comes in handy, as far as age groups, and even in charitable events, which is exactly how Portland, Oregon’s Oakes Park Roller Rink owner George Kolibaba utilizes the mascot.

“Some days we are catering to a preschool program and offering photo opportunities with the mascot,” George says, “And other days we are out in the community playing a soccer game with other mascots to raise

money for a charity. Either way, the kids and the community really enjoy the mascot and the feeling of fun and energy that it brings along to any event.”

It’s fun, easy and effective; three great reasons to use these exclusive, affordable and professionally licensed characters that the RSA provides its members. The RSA continually provides new and fun Roo and Kooky clip art to use in promotional campaigns and offers a full range of products such as temporary tattoos, stickers, tokens, redemption tickets, bookmarks, name badges, posters, cups, trading cards, coloring books, story boards and brochures. And with easy to follow guidelines to be incorporated into an existing business plan, launching an effective and recognizable marketing campaign can be achieved through the power of branding.

With trusted and longstanding licensing partners, integrating Roo and Kooky characters into a skating center is simple and smart. “It is essential to brand your image with a visual character,” Dreamland Skating Center owner, Bobby Bentley, reminds, “It really makes a difference.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Trena Nees is a research editor for Military Living Publications and has worked as a freelance writer primarily for B2B publications. She has Bachelors degree in English from Western Michigan University and a Master of Science in Administration from Central Michigan University. She is married with two boys and lives in Chesapeake, Virginia.

18 FACTS ALL ABOUT BRANDING

1 . It costs 6 times more to attract a new customer than it does to keep an old one. – *Understanding Customers by Ruby Newell-Legner*

2 . 89% of consumers purchase from a competitor following a poor customer experience. – *Harris Interactive, 2011 Customer Experience Improvement study*

3 . Only about 4% of dissatisfied customers complain. 96% just go away. *Harris Interactive, 2011 Customer Experience Improvement study*

4 . 50% of Consumers give a brand one week to respond to a service concern before they stop doing business with them. – *Harris*

5 . Only 37% of brands received “excellent” or “good” customer experience scores this year. – *Harris*

6 . Only 1% of consumers say expectations for good customer experience are always met. – *Harris*

7 . US businesses lose an estimated \$83 Billion in sales annually due to poor customer experiences. – *Parature Customer Service Blog*

8 . Americans typically tell 24 people about negative customer service, they only tell about 15 people about positive experiences. – *2012 American Express Global Customer Service Barometer*

9 . A 5% increase in customer retention increases profits up to 125%. – *Bain & Company*

10 . Probability of selling to an existing customer: 60-70%; Probability of selling to a new one: 5-20%. – *Marketing Metrics*

11 . A 2% increase in customer retention has the same effect as decreasing costs by 10%. – *Leading on the Edge of Chaos, Emmet Murphy and Mark Murphy*

12 . It costs 6-7 times more to acquire a new customer than to retain an existing one. – *Bain & Company*

13 . Customer loyalty can be worth 10 times as much as a single purchase. – *White House Office of Consumer Affairs, Washington, D.C.*

14 . It takes 12 positive service incidents to make up for a negative one. – *Understanding Customers by Rudy Newell-Legner*

15 . Customer profitability increases over the life of a retained customer. – *Leading on the Edge of Chaos, Emmet Murphy and Mark Murphy*

16 . 70% of customers will do business with you again if you resolve their complaints. – *Understanding Customers by Rudy Newell-Legner*

17 . 73% of consumers love a brand because of friendly customer service. – *Harris Interactive, 2011 Customer Experience Improvement study*

18 . 68% of customers leave because they think you don’t care about them. – *Rockefeller Corporation*

Eighteen facts – as seen in General Motors’ Renaissance Center HQ lobby in Detroit.

P.R. Essentials for Startups Now Available

Strategic Vision, LLC, announces the launch of PR Essentials for Startups, a new program that provides the critical public relations components that any new company needs. Startups are everywhere and more Americans than ever before are starting their own businesses. These new business owners understand that a comprehensive public relations campaign is vital to the success of their business. The biggest question they confront is when should the public relations campaign begin?

Strategic Vision advises startup business owners that time to develop and implement a public relations campaign is before the company opens for business. The PR Essentials for Startups provides new businesses with the key elements and execution they need for a successful public

relations campaign carried out by the Strategic Vision, LLC team.

“Most startups fail because they launched their public relations campaign after the business was opened,” said David E. Johnson, CEO of Strategic Vision, LLC. “To be successful, a startup needs to launch their public relations campaign between 3 to 6 months prior to opening for business. The PR Essentials for Startups provides the components needed to succeed and is carried out by a team of public relations professionals.

Among the components that are provided in the PR Essentials for Startups are press releases, blog, media kit, media list, media training, company story, brand mentions, reputational mentions, social media and a crisis PR template.

Public relations can make the difference between the success or failure for a startup. Knowing when to launch the public relations campaign, what makes up a campaign, and how to execute the campaign is a full time job in itself. That is where the PR Essentials for Startups program comes in. It allows business owners to do what they do best—run their business while the Strategic Vision team executes the public relations campaign.

Additional information on Strategic Vision, LLC and the PR Essentials for Startups program may be obtained at www.strategicvision.biz.

World's First Wearable Neon Clothing

Flashwear.com is the leading clothing innovator for wearable technology. Flashwear take numerous lighting technologies and applies them to fashion. Their various illuminated apparel are worn around the world.



Since creating the t-qualizer (that's the shirt with the graphic equalizer), Flashwear has, in recent months, devoted themselves to furthering wearable technology in mainstream fashion. Their latest release is what they are calling “Flat Neon” which is part of the techstyle range. Using a phosphor print process they have developed a flat flexible panel that behaves like neon sign. It stitches to any garments and quietly flickers and animates like a classic neon sign from the 1950s.

The range is kicked off with shirt slogans enhanced by the technology. So now you can wear things like “OMG”, “GEEK” or a yellow Smiley with an extra twist. They currently come on t-shirts in 10 different colors and by September they will be on everything from hoodies to dresses.

Simon Parkes, founder of FlashWear, thinks it will be the next big thing. “If you read early adopter blogs and forums, there is a buzz going around about wearable tech. I see our garments fill a niche which is growing more mainstream every day. But I do admit our products are not going help you boil and egg in space. Yet!”

Flashwear have some 10 new product ideas that are coming to the market between now and Christmas. When applied to the various fashions and styles, it will mean an additional 1000 products by the end of the year. “Illumination is one area, we have solar reactive inks and next month we even have clothes that interact with Smartphones,” said Simon Parkes.

For more information on the FlashWear developments and to see the Flat Neon shirts in action go to www.flashwear.com

SBA Holds Free Webinars on How Affordable Care Act Will Impact Small Businesses

The Small Business Administration and Small Business Majority are excited to announce the next set of Affordable Care Act 101 weekly webinar dates, with SBA Administrator Karen Mills joining as a special guest on August 15.

U.S. Small Business Administration



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Each week, small business owners can learn the basics of the Affordable Care Act and what it means for their company and employees, including insurance reforms, the small business health care tax credit, the new health insurance marketplaces, and employer shared responsibility provisions. SBA representatives help small business owners understand the facts of the Affordable Care Act so they can make informed decisions about providing health insurance for their employees.

The Affordable Care Act 101 takes place every Thursday from now through the opening of the marketplaces in October. Below are the dates for upcoming presentations.

- Thursday, September 5 at 2:00 PM ET
- Thursday, September 12 at 2:00 PM ET
- Thursday, September 19 at 2:00 PM ET
- Thursday, September 26 at 2:00 PM ET

To register for one of the above webinars, check out www.sba.gov/community/blogs/affordable-care-act-101-weekly-webinar-series.

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BY: MEGHAN MOLONY



Junior Derby Teams Step into the Spotlight!

Roller Derby is taking over! With the recent advent of men's and women's teams, it was only natural that the kids would want a turn at derby, too. The Savannah Derby Devils are just one of the many teams that are beginning to foster a junior addition; in this case it's the Savannah Jr. DerbyTaunts. The league is a great outlet for many young girls in the community and is an exciting alternative to traditional sports outlets.

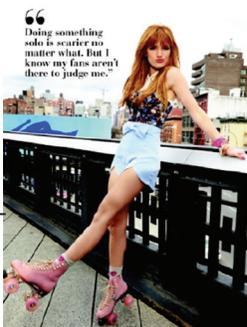
Source Photo: <http://svrollergirls.com/programs/junior-derby/>

Source Article: <http://savannahnow.com/community/2013-07-18/derby-devils-mentor-young-skaters#.UgGdq5KsiSo>

Bella Thorne Sports Skates

Bella Thorne, a popular Disney Channel star from the show 'Frenemies', rocked a pair of pink suede Moxie Skates in a recent photo shoot for Girls Life Magazine. The star looks confident in skates and is shown giving credit for her success to all her great fans.

Source Article and Photo: <http://moxirollerskates.com/bella-thorne-roll-in-moxi-roller-skates/>



Sophia Vergara makes Moxies Look Good

While filming the 'My Hero' episode of Modern Family, Sophia Vergara, who plays a main character named Gloria, pulled out all the fashion stops with a striking pair of leopard print Moxie skates! The stunning star had a bit of trouble learning the skating ropes, but she sure looked good doing it.

Source Photo: <http://fabzz.com/wp-content/uploads/celebrities/sophia-vergara/on-roller-skates-on-the-set-of-modern-family-in-la/Sofia-Vergara-in-Spandex-on-roller-skates-in-LA--12.jpg>

Source Article: <http://moxirollerskates.com/sophia-vergara-rolling-with-moxi-into-modern-family/>



Skating with Modern Family

The television sitcom, Modern Family, is a critically acclaimed comedy that follows the antics of a zany and interesting family. The episode 'My Hero' is no different; it's a hilarious comedy of errors that takes place mostly on skates. Characters learn to skate together, do a couples skate, grab some nachos – and one main character, Claire, even returns (temporarily) to her high school job at the snack bar!

Source Photo: <http://www.tvoverymind.com/modern-family-tv-news/modern-family-season-4-episode-22-my-hero-recap-212857>

Source Article: <http://www.vulture.com/2013/05/modern-family-recap-season-4-roller-skating-rink.html>



Eastbound and Down Star Takes a Turn at Roller Skating

Eastbound and Down is a hysterical HBO comedy that details the comeback of a 'down on his luck' former professional baseball player who is adjusting to life in the minor leagues. An upcoming episode will feature the lead character, Kenny Powers, played by Danny McBride, performing some roller skating moves at Jellybeans Super Skate Center in Raleigh, North Carolina. Unfortunately, McBride took a tumble, but is reported to be just fine.

Source Photo: <http://i.cdn.hbo.com/assets/images/series/eastbound-and-down/character/kenny-powers-1024.jpg>

Source Article: <http://www.wect.com/story/22856660/star-of-eastbound-and-down-injured-treated-released-from-hospital>



Nonprofit Skating Rink Benefits from Long Distance Trek

Norman Stocks owns and operates His & Our Skating Rink in Robertsonville, North Carolina – a Christian, nonprofit rink. In order to help in his ministry, and to keep the rink going, he recently completed a 70-mile skating trek from Greenville to Ahoskie, hoping to raise around \$20,000. Stocks took two days to complete his journey and was aided and protected by a motorcycle in front and an ambulance behind.

Source Article and Photo: <http://www.reflector.com/news/man-skates-support-ministry-2124065>

Roller Skating Prodigy Returns to Wheels

Guinness World Record holder, Rohan Kokane, was invited to Istanbul to showcase his skating prowess for a popular television show. The young skater holds two Guinness World Records, one for Longest Blindfold Limbo Skating and one for Lowest Limbo. Going to Turkey gave him the opportunity to cinch a third record: Longest and Lowest Limbo, where he skated under 10 bars set only at 35 centimeters high!

Source Photo and Article: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/guinness-record-holder-to-skate-his-way-into-istanbul/article4935829.ece>



One Woman Derby Play Hits Montreal

Working the fringe theater circuit in Canada is a charming one woman show that has been winning hearts, and turning many on to the underground world of Roller Derby. 'Roller Derby Saved My Life' details the journey of Amy, a single 30 year old who loves sci-fi reruns and hates her dead end job. The show is a comedy drama that shows how joining a local Derby team helped her gain confidence and eventually starts her life in an upward trajectory.

Source Article and Photo: <http://www.montrealgazette.com/entertainment/Zoofest+Roller+Derby+Saved+Soul+amusing+comedy+drama/8672896/story.html>

Intrepid Six Year Old Competes Nationally

Douglas Whealon is breaking new ground by becoming one of the youngest skaters to compete nationally. He comes from a skating family that got him on skates as soon as he could walk, and started competing (and winning) when he was only three. He recently skated at the 2013 Roller Sports Figure National Championships with a feisty "Star Wars" themed routine.

Source Article and Photo: <http://www.bnd.com/2013/07/14/2691551/the-force-is-with-young-swanssea.html>



Derby Girls Donate Time and Blood Cells

Not all blood-shed in the name of Derby happens on the track. Bay Area roller derby teams have been working together with The Red Cross to host the "Make 'em Bleed" Blood Drive. This event is a series of blood drives where donors receive a special "Make em' Bleed" t-shirt, roller derby temporary tattoos, roller skate shaped cookies, and the rowdy support of their local derby teams!

Source Article and Photo: <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2013/7/prweb10952558.htm>



Small Town Skater Makes it Big as Choreographer

The resurgence of the on-wheels play, Xanadu, may be attributed to nostalgia, or just sheer fabulousness. But either way, this classic production in Addison, Texas has been given new life by New York-based choreographer, Jacob Brent. Brent grew up on skates in a small town in North Carolina which gave him a distinct edge in landing his choreographer role for Xanadu. His past skating experience helped him see what he needed to choreograph, and who he needed to cast. He not only had to look for good singers, but also good skaters!

Source Article and Photo: <http://www.dallasvoice.com/wheel-rock-you-10153457.html>



International Skating Pair Sojourns to China

New Zealand skating twosome, Krystine Davies and Rebecca Smith, will be travelling to China this August to compete in the World Inline Cup marathon in Suzhou, Eastern China. They have been exclusively picked by Coach Bill Begg to compete and will face many challenges, such as temperatures in the 100s and skating in near darkness through the night.

Source Article and Photo: <http://www.wanganuichronicle.co.nz/news/distance-skating-duo-invited-to-china/1971238/>



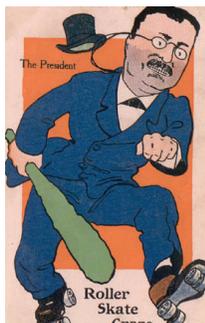
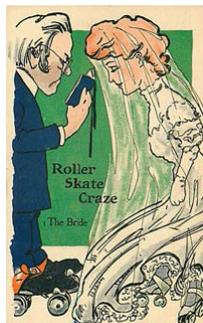
Roller Skating in the White House

When researching whether or not any U.S. presidents actively participated in roller skating, information surfaced that roller skating took place inside the White House. This activity did not solely involve one presidential stay, but included different presidential terms throughout the years. The known accounts of skating in the White House pertained to the children of the presidents. Most of the skating took place inside of the White House itself.

Over the years, many presidents have endorsed the activity of roller skating. It was a way to have fun, as well as to exercise. There were four specific presidents who allowed their children to roller skate inside of the White House. These presidents included: James Garfield, Theodore Roosevelt, Gerald Ford, and Jimmy Carter.

The East Room housed the main roller skating activity. This room was very large and mainly used for presidential gatherings and parties. When not used for a social function, the room remained mostly empty. The children of the presidents saw this as a great room in which to play. In addition to roller skating, the children of President Roosevelt rode their bicycles and walked on stilts in the room. The tall windows and chandeliers illuminated the room for great skating conditions.

Roller skating in the East Room began under the presidency of James Garfield in 1881. He and his wife, Lucretia, had seven children: Eliza, Harry, James, Mary, Irvin, Abram, and Edward. Eliza and Edward died before he took office. The remaining five children used the East Room as an occasional playroom. They soon took up roller skating around the large room as a sibling activity. It was not known whether the president himself approved, but the skating continued



on numerous occasions.

The roller skate during the later 1800s saw great evolutions. Samuel Winslow began producing his own line of skates during the 1870s after having worked for James Plimpton. By the 1880s, over one million skates were in use. The Samuel Winslow Skate Company manufactured this line of "Vineyard" skates. It became the most popular skate produced in the 1880s and a possible choice for the children of President Garfield.

Some twenty years later, roller skating again appeared in the White House under the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt brought his eight children to the White House for his term. These children had a wide variety of activities and pets that entertained them during their father's reign

as President. They were even known to have a pet bear in the house. The children also occupied their time by roller skating in the East Room—a favorite activity amongst the kids, especially little Ethel.

Another seventy years went by before another White House child indulged herself with indoor skating. Susan Ford was known to skate inside the White House. One summer a friend stayed with her. This friend, named Kimberly Nardi, also enjoyed roller skating. Susan and Kimberly once skated through the Oval Office while President Ford met with Henry Kissinger.

Finally, Amy Carter enjoyed roller skating in the East Room during her father's term in office. She flew around the room in the late 1970s, practicing often. Not always the best skater, Amy was known to bump into things. The marks she made while skating remained unfixed until some thirty years later.

While growing in popularity, roller skating saw no boundaries. It even found its way into one of the most secure and isolated places in the United States: the White House.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



James Vannurden is the Director and Curator of the National Museum of Roller Skating in Lincoln, Nebraska and contributing writer for the Roller Skating Association. If you would like to contact James

to make a donation or to add to the collection of historical items at the museum, please call 402-483-7551 or email directorcurator@rollerskatingmuseum.com.



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To take advantage of this offer, simply visit the following link to download the PDF document to print and take to your local Sam's Club Store.

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employment/affiliation (business card, ID badge, paystub, RSA Membership Card, etc.) to your local Sam's Club on or before November 30, 2013 and go to the membership services desk at the front of the store to signup or renew. Membership certificate is good at all locations.

Other information

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Idyl Wyld Roller Rink - 75 Years



This past October the Idyl Wyld Roller Rink in Marion, Indiana, celebrated its 75th anniversary. The rink, which was built by Dewey Trueman, opened for the first time on October 17, 1937. The Trueman family opened the rink and it has not left the family's hands since. Dorothy Trueman is the current owner whose husband operated the rink until his passing. Her daughter, Deborah, helps her operate the rink as manager. Dorothy's son-in-law and her two grandsons work at the rink, as well. Clearly, skating is a family affair. Dorothy's daughter, Sheryl, and her son-in-law, Jack (a Men's Singles World Champion in his own right) were World Pair Champions.

Like any business opening in a community for the first time, the challenge sometimes lies in getting the community members interested. Dewey Trueman was

very energetic and contacted schools and other businesses to get them involved. As the business grew, renovations had to be made.

Fifteen feet of space was added on each side of the skating floor and twenty feet to the front. The building, as it stands now, is 100 feet by 200 feet and has gone through three floors. For a while, the ceiling was so low that the pairs teams could not do lifts properly so the floor was lowered, which resulted in a flooded floor one morning. After the clean-up, the current maple floor was installed and has been in place since.

In addition to the new flooring, they've added a large game area with video games and pool tables and offer birthday parties, as well. While that may seem standard issue for roller rinks, Dorothy says, "simple is better for us."

To celebrate such a successful 75 years,

there was a three day weekend celebration at the rink. On Friday night, admission was thirty-five cents and skate rental was twenty-five cents; the same prices that were used when the rink opened in 1937. On Saturday night, there was a seventy-five dollar giveaway to celebrate seventy-five years. Sunday afternoon, both admission and skate rental were seventy-five cents. "It was a very good weekend," Dorothy said.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Taylor Crenshaw is a student at DePauw University, a small liberal arts school in Greencastle, Indiana, where she intends to major in English and minor in Spanish. She currently works with an on-campus work study program where she takes part in several different technology-based internships throughout the year. In Taylor's spare time, she enjoys playing volleyball on the intramural league at DePauw. Taylor hopes to pursue a career in journalism after completing her studies at DePauw.

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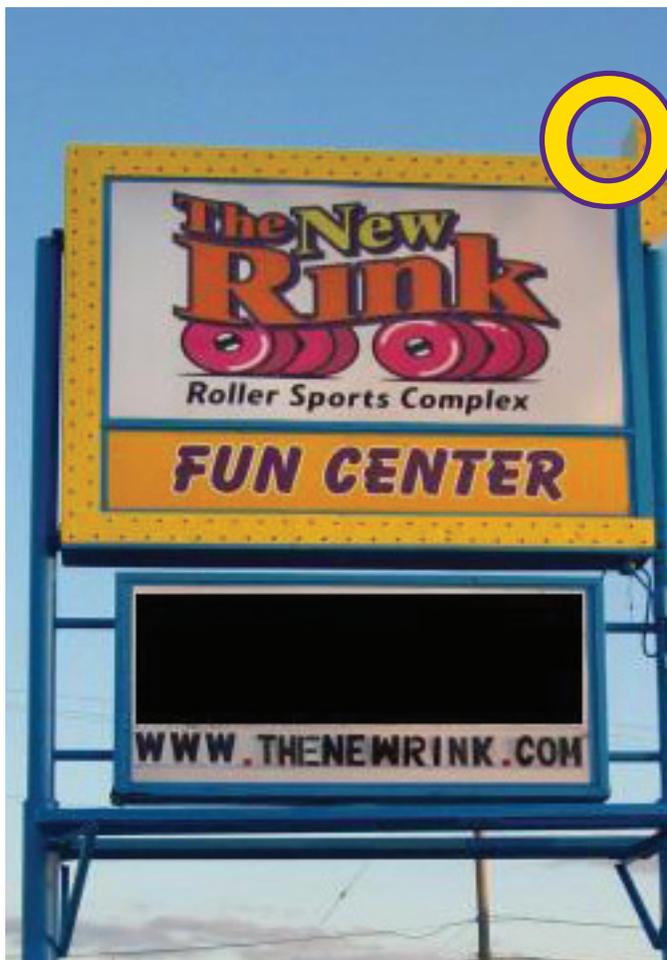
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Old Rink New Life

Roller Skating Family Breathes New Life and Energy into Empty Rink

The rink in Shelby Township, Michigan stood dormant and vacant. That could have easily been the end of the story, as it is of many rinks in the new economy. However, one family saw the potential for change and growth in this outdated and overwrought rink.

This family was the Jacksons, a family that comes from skating stock and own and operate four other skating facilities in the eastern Michigan area: Rollerama, BonaVenture, Skatin' Station, and EDUR Skatarama.

The New Rink, as it was aptly re-named, is their newest and largest project, which utilized the expertise of every member. The Jacksons poured time and love into the rink to create something new and profitable out of the enormous 90,000 sq. ft facility.

Purchasing and Basic Remodeling

After purchasing the property and taking stock of what was needed, plans were drawn up for basic remodeling. Since the space had been an existing rink, some equipment was still there, though disorganized and in disrepair.

Denise Koziara, a member of the family, said, "There was so much open space; the skates were just stacked up in piles on the floor."

After sorting out each area, the Jacksons realized how much could be done inexpensively with a little paint, especially since vandals had broken in and spray-painted everywhere.

Several re-painting projects give the rink a bright, contemporary color and energetic feel. Other remodeling was needed, a few walls were



added, and the skate room was reorganized. A new lighting system for the parking lot was put in, as well as landscaping, and a new hardwood floor and carpeted areas.

The Legacy

Koziara is one member of the family who is extremely proud of all the progress they've made. She said, "The Rink was here for thirty plus years, and it was a big project to take over." Since the existing rink had so much history and was a big part of the community, keeping its legacy alive was important as they planned what The New Rink would look like in the future.

The facility is multi-level, with a sport court on one level where they hold roller-hockey games and practices, and the second floor houses a beautiful wood skating floor.

"When we got here, the previous owners had put a bounce slide on the wood floor," said Koziara.

Removing the bounce slide from the hardwood was an important first step and though they still have some bounce play, Koziara said that they very much wanted to bring back the focus on skating. That means that bounce play is a fun extra that is available, not the sole reason for coming.

The same goes for some of the other extras that Koziara found to be superfluous, such as laser tag, paintball, and Whirlyball. It got to be too much for the old owners, she expressed, and "taking things back to the basics" is essential for survival. "I would love to add laser tag back in the future" she did add thoughtfully, "but the equipment is very expensive."

Updating the Facility

Starting fresh was a great opportunity for the Jackson family, and they added certain extras like a computerized POS system that has helped day to day operations.

Koziara loves the way technology has helped the rink, and is eager to do more in the future, such as starting an online party registry that would make planning and organizing birthday parties much easier.

Another non-technology extra that they hope to have in place by the winter of 2013/2014 is an updated party area.

The preexisting laser tag area was "a bit of a black hole" according to Koziara, and they are transforming the area into an additional "Party Pit." The "Party Pit" will help with overflow from parties, and since it will be opposite the front doors, will be a great place for parties to congregate, and hopefully be a big draw to the rink.

Getting the Word Out

Once the rink was redone and operation ready (a process that took around three months), the Jackson family joined the local Chamber of Commerce and started getting out in the community. This included visiting community centers, schools, and using their other four rinks to spread awareness and build excitement.

Koziara loves how large the Shelby school district is, with around 2600 students ready and raring to skate, and she focused much of her attention on getting those skaters back.

In addition to creating a Facebook page to tap into the youth market, she also visited all of the schools, handing out free passes in order to capitalize on the upcoming spring break skating market.

Birthday and school skating parties were a main focus, and Koziara is happy to say that all her hard work definitely paid off. At least 23 schools regularly have annual parties at the rink, and her birthday rooms are usually booked – so much that they need more room!

Using Their Resources

Having a family that has owned and operated four other rinks was a boon for The New Rink. They were able to use much of their previous expertise as rink operators and utilize existing staff members to help get day-to-day operations in place. This included help with the remodel, as well as training new staff members. However, "It was definitely still a challenge," Koziara remembers, "and we're still making improvements."

Roller Hockey and Roller Derby

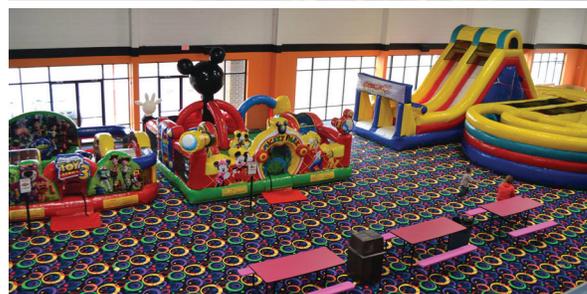
The New Rink is the proud home of East side Derby Girls, a local team that is tough competition on the derby scene. Roller hockey is another skating sport that they are proud to introduce back to the community, since many teams drifted away during the prolonged closure.

Roller rinks have traditionally been staples of the community and The New Rink in Shelby, Michigan is no different. The Jackson family saw what was there and what it could become. Through hard work and determination, they took a rink that had fallen by the wayside and elevated it to where it should be – a place for fun, family and most of all, roller skating!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Meghan Molony grew up in a skating family that instilled in her a deep love of skating and the skating business. She loves seeing how the community grows and changes around a rink, and gets on her skates whenever possible. A recent graduate of Aquinas College, she now manages a rink in Kalamazoo, Michigan.



3 Keys for a Successful Content Marketing Campaign

Online marketing and SEO used to be all about banner ads, paid link building, email campaigns, and pay-per-click. While those things are still used, to be truly relevant to today's consumer, you must add strategic content marketing in the SEO space to the mix.

SEO (search engine optimization) refers to anything internet-related that is based on organic results. In other words, it's when someone goes to their favorite search engine and types in a keyword or phrase related to what you offer, and your company or product appears naturally in the results. Making sure your information is visible in the search is important and plays a huge role in the art of communicating with your customers without selling them. It's about creating fresh, relevant, and unique content through your blog and social media that reaches your ideal customers and enables you to earn a presence in the SEO space.

For any business, content marketing is one of the most important online activities to enhance their SEO ranking. Unfortunately, many are not fully utilizing it because they lack an understanding of the concept, impact, and necessity of content marketing. As a result, companies frequently get stuck in the old way of doing SEO, which entailed writing keyword heavy content tailored for search engines, versus the new way of doing SEO, which is writing engaging content for the readers. It's about focusing on user intent, which takes a little more time but yields great results.

In order to fully leverage your content marketing activities, follow these three simple steps.

1. Identify personas for your target audience.

You likely have a target audience for your products/services, and often the audience is quite broad, such as "women age 35-50 who have kids" or "Baby Boomers" or "men age 18-40 who like sports." While there are certain characteristics that go across the entire target audience, there are also many subsets of people (called personas) within the target.

For example, using the "women age 35-50 who have kids" target audience, you could have specific personas of "married, working mom," "stay-at-home mom," "single, working mom," etc. Each of these

personas within your target audience has very different interests and will respond to specific content. Someone who is younger with preschool kids may be looking for more engaging content, whereas an older working woman with teens may be more responsive to the technical information you can provide. Therefore, identify the various personas within your target audience so you can reach and engage each group.

2. Create a targeted and consistent blog.

The purpose of your blog should be to connect with and engage readers by providing value to them through relevant content. After all, when readers like the information you provide, they are more apt to return to your site and ultimately purchase what you offer. The key is being able to provide usable content for all the personas you've identified.

Staying with the "women age 35-50 with kids" example, you may write a narrative blog entitled "The Best Toy I Ever Purchased" to reach the stay-at-home mom persona, and the next day you may write a technical blog entitled "The Safest Way to Clean Electronic Toys" to reach the working mom persona. Each blog would have a different tone based on the persona you're targeting.

In addition to providing relevant content, being consistent in your blogging activity is important. Whether you post something daily, three times a week, or four times a month will depend on the topic and your readers. The key is keeping your schedule consistent—doing the same number of posts every week. Posting a blog every day for a month and then not doing anything for two months can hurt your SEO efforts. For most businesses, doing two to three blog posts per week is sufficient.

3. Concentrate on engaging your audience.

Engaging your audience means getting them to share your information with others via their social media channels, comment on your blog posts to create conversations, or click to your marketing pages to learn more and ultimately make a purchase decision. It's about getting your readers to take some sort of action without pressuring them to do so.

Today's readers don't want to feel pressured to do anything. So the engagement needs to be natural. Even the search engines

have changed their search algorithms to make the results more innate based on what a user would naturally do. Therefore, putting a link within your blog post to a page on your site that's related to a product you're talking about is totally fine and recommended. Someone would naturally click on that page since they're reading a post about the topic. But putting in eight different links with optimized anchor text that either all go to the same page or to one specific product is the epitome of putting pressure on a reader.

Additionally, when you keep the focus on engagement and categorize your blog posts correctly, your posts can show when someone is looking at your products. In other words, if someone is shopping and comes across your product, they can see that you wrote a blog post about the product and click on it to learn more information, which can then influence their buying decision.

Content marketing is a way to expand your reach, build relevancy in the search engines to gain traffic and visibility, and convert readers into buyers. Realize, though, that content marketing is just one piece of having a winning online marketing strategy. No single technique or strategy will make your business profitable. However, when you combine content marketing with all the other online and offline marketing activities you do, you'll soon realize the success and profits you deserve.

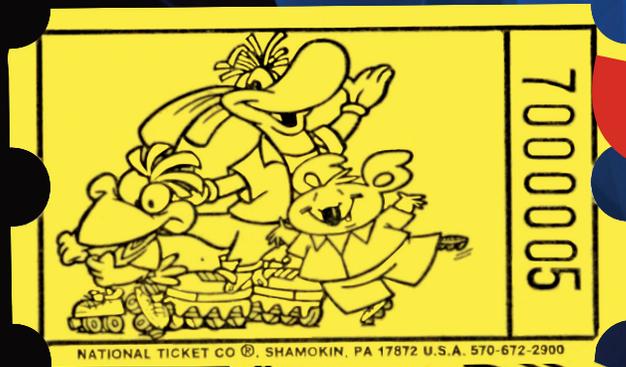
ABOUT THE AUTHOR



With 11 years of experience in Internet Marketing, Jen Alsip is the Content Marketing Manager for Volume 9, Inc., helping put together strategies for her clients to improve their outreach and personalize the information they are putting out on the Internet. Volume 9 creates custom search marketing campaigns for clients, including a mix of SEO, paid search management, social media, local search marketing and website development for over 200 websites. Jen and Volume 9's enterprising team leverage search marketing into bottom line results for their clients. Recently honored by both the Inc. 5,000 and the Denver Business Journal as one of the fastest growing companies in Denver, and in the US. For more information, please visit www.volume9inc.com.

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THE NEW PIONEERS

Roller Derby Teams Pave the Path Towards Olympic Gold

In 1848, the discovery of gold in the central valleys of California gave start to the Gold Rush and changed the history of the United States forever. People from all over the country heard the news and a few of them made the tough decision to follow an uncertain dream, attempting to do better for themselves.

The “forty-niners,” as they later were called, faced many hardships to reach their destination, but ultimately changed the course of history and helped pave the way for future generations.

The city of Fresno, located in California’s Central Valley, steps away from Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks, projects the same sense of adventure and natural beauty of what was once called the new frontier. The snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Nevada, which represented the last natural obstacle for those brave pioneers, now provide the spectacular background for a city that serves as the commercial, agricultural and trading hub of the San Joaquin Valley.

It would be hard to find a more appropriate place to host the first USA Roller Sports National Roller Derby Championship, an historic event that represents the first step in the sport’s hopeful path to Olympic gold. The tournament, which took place December 14 - 16, featured eight clubs competing for the Seltzer Cup, the recently introduced trophy named in honor of Leo Seltzer, creator of the sport.

The Fresno Convention Center, located in the heart of the city, provided a top-notch location to complement USARS’ 41 years of experience organizing roller skating competitions. The main hall was outfitted with a brand-new competition track, vendor areas and stadium bleachers, while a second hall featured a full-size track for warmups.

Private areas were created for announcers, officials and media on the main floor,

while the second floor provided a quiet environment for the dressing rooms.

Fourteen competition games and two junior exhibition games were part of the three-day schedule, which was followed like clockwork, much to the delight of the thousands of viewers watching on Derby News Network free of charge.

The organization of the tournament was assisted by Fresno’s own NOtown Roller Derby league, whose players and volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure that every detail was promptly addressed. Their immense contributions as a host league made the event possible and certainly added to its success.

As the players, officials and coaches arrived on Thursday night, the excitement was palpable. Some of the teams had traveled from as far as Oklahoma and Alabama to compete against some of the best players in the world. For most teams, playing under the USARS flag had given them their first opportunity to participate in a national competition and they were thrilled to do so. But the most important part of the tournament was, of course, the roller derby. The first day of competition offered tons of action and quality skating, but the disparity of the teams eventually was made clear and the scores showed it.

The Oly Rollers (Olympia, Wash.) beat Port City Roller Girls (Stockton, Calif.) 312-21, while the Tulsa Derby League (Tulsa, Ok.) defeated Underground

Derby League (Olympia, Wash.) 156-40. Later on, San Diego Roller Derby Starlettes (San Diego, Calif.) found victory against the Deep South Derby All-Stars (Mobile, Al.) 224-57, while Resurrection Roller Girls (Rohnert Park, Calif.) defeated Birmingham Roller Derby (Birmingham, Al.) 220-24.

The second morning saw Port City beat Underground 126-39 and Oly exerting their supremacy against Tulsa 241-24. Immediately following, in a battle of the South, Birmingham and Deep South gave fans the closest game of the tournament, a nail-biter that was not decided until the last jam, when Birmingham was able to close the deal with a final score of 121-115.

Then, Resurrection surprised everyone giving San Diego a run for their money, keeping the score close for the entire game and honorably losing 128-104 against the more veteran team.

Later that night, Tulsa and Port City gave fans another epic battle that ended 96-79 in favor of the team from California, who qualified for a chance to win bronze.

Resurrection won a 165-26 victory during the last game of the day under unfortunate





circumstances when one of the players from Birmingham collapsed and was rushed to the hospital. USARS made the decision to end the game and the next day Birmingham elected to forfeit from the tournament.

Two of the most exciting and entertaining games fans witnessed during the weekend were the exhibition games played by the three invited Junior Roller Derby clubs: the Bakersfield Jr Roller Derby, the Motown Misfits and the Vtown Derby Delinquents.

The boys and girls who participated displayed an amazing understanding of the USARS rules and its associated strategy, as well as what might have been their purest execution.

Sunday morning saw Underground defeat Deep South 155-108 and also provided players and officials with the opportunity to skate during an informal scrimmage, motivated by Birmingham's forfeit. The battle for the third place was fought by two California teams, Port City and Resurrection. Both teams left it all on the track, in a game that epitomized the style of play that USARS is promoting.

After an intensely strategic and exhilarating game, Resurrection ended ahead 124-84 to win the bronze medal. After three days of intense competition it was time for the final match of the championship, featuring

Players were in continuous forward motion on the track. Blockers, in constant fight for the front positions, were engaging each other while playing both offense and defense. Jammers found themselves battling each other for the lead status, which can change mid-jam.

Pivots, in what might be the most exciting rule, often assumed the role of active scorer, breaking from the pack to chase without passing the helmet cover. Most importantly, the crowd loved the action and the tension that the game situations created, especially the lead changes and the pivot breaks. Several fans and players praised the philosophy and intention of the rules using phrases like "roller derby is back," "we love fast derby" or "this reminds me of how roller derby used to be, skaters skating and blockers blocking."

The 2013 version of the rules will bring even more confidence in the direction in which the USARS Roller Derby Committee is guiding the sport. The new version will incorporate a few innovations and will also address some of the issues that have arisen from the tendency for speed of the USARS style of play.

Throughout the tournament, the collective feeling was almost indescribable,

the Oly Rollers against San Diego. Oly came out strong from the beginning and dominated their opponent all the way to the end with a final score of 181-35, becoming the first USARS National Champions and demonstrating why they are one of the top teams in the world.

For almost everyone watching, there was very little doubt that the new rules had passed their first test and had achieved, for the most part, the desired effect.

a powerful combination built from a strong sense of achievement, a touch of pride, and hope, which morphed into certainty, that the future of roller derby as a recognized sport is brighter than ever.

Just like those first pioneers who had the vision of what the future could bring and who, despite the odds, dared to take the next steps to make it happen, participants in this event embodied the same spirit of adventure and perseverance, the spirit that moves us forward.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Fernando Regueiro is a member of the USARS Roller Derby Committee, Bout Manager/Events Committee for the Windy City Rollers and served on the board of directors for the Windy City Rollers from 2006-2009.

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REVIVING THE GREAT AMERICAN SKATE SALE

Creating a “Great American Skate Sale” for National Roller Skating Month and the upcoming holiday season is a great way to encourage patrons to buy roller skating products. Implementing ideas from manufacturers and distributors can increase the likelihood of sales.

Advertising products and sales effectively, leveraging the power of the Internet and social media, having ample stock of staple skating products and accessories, displaying products in an inviting and appealing manner and reaching out to manufacturers can increase the chances of a successful “Great American Skate Sale.”

The original plan for the “Great American Skate Sale” involved roller rinks working with manufacturers and distributors to help move obsolete inventory on a consignment basis and to set a world record for the most roller skates sold in one day. The program was continued on by several rinks and evolved into one that analyzed stale inventory in the warehouses of manufacturers, distributors and even roller rinks that were simply not selling certain goods. The concept also often included giving patrons an equal amount of free admission for the price of their skate purchase. It later morphed into moving stale product beyond roller skates within the skate shop, giving the free admission equal to their purchase price.

DID YOU KNOW...

Many roller skate manufacturers and distributors will work with you to host a roller skate viewing party for customers? Not only can you use this as a customer appreciation event, you’ll increase sales and learn about what customers are drawn to - plus, it’s a great way to kick off the holiday sales season and launch a “Great American Skate Sale” throughout the fall.

Today, some rink operators still utilize it as a marketing plan, evolving it over time to increase a return on investment and decrease the need for extensive marketing.

Roller rink owners we interviewed explained this is a great investment because it helped decrease the need for a marketing budget and made space for the latest products while forging a mutually exclusive relationship with their manufacturer and distributor.

In addition to moving old product, roller rink operators see more traffic because individuals who have free admission with their purchase bring friends and family members who pay admission. Skaters are anxious to break in their new skates, so once individuals with free admission and paying patrons are in their facility, they are paying for the roller rink's other services (rentals, food, games, etc.). It also leads to an increase in roller rink services (birthday parties, social gatherings, etc.) advertised to individuals otherwise unaware of their services. This program, however you choose to market it, takes advantage of word of mouth advertising, but you can also advertise the program through local media outlets. Either way, promoting a program of this sort can result in increased profits.

TIPS FROM THE PROS

There are many effective tips to create interest and advertise for a "Great American Skate Sale." Michael Lehrke, Chief Marketing Officer of RC Sports, recommends advertising by sponsoring community events. Offering free or reduced admission incentives in-house and online encourages patrons to visit your rink and exposes them to products. He also recommends branding roller skating as a fun and healthy activity the entire family can enjoy.

Using social media and a strong online presence as part of a marketing strategy is recommended by Joey Barbera of Reverse Sports, Inc. Having a social media presence, along with a strong website, according to Barbera, helps connect with and cater to local customers by describing and upselling the benefits of products at the customer's convenience. A well-defined online presence also helps increase sales to customers regardless of their location.

Roller rink operators who leverage online marketing tools can also increase their patron's interest. Listing all available products online, informing customers of the rink's web page address and implementing a mobile application are all recommended by Scott Riegelman of Riedell Skates. He noted that since children use their phones

extensively, engagement through mobile devices, including social media and mobile applications, are essential to increase interest.

Having the right products on display and in stock greatly increases the chances of a sale. Riegelman recommends having at least one to two pairs of common sizes for patrons. Recommended children's sizes include sizes 5-8. He recommends the Dark skate, the Riedell R3 and the Riedell R3 Limited Edition skates with respective price points of \$99, \$119, and \$149. If roller rink operators choose to stock other skates, he recommended price points from \$69 to \$149. Riegelman cautions if a product is not in stock, customers will go online and purchase elsewhere. Lehrke reported that roller rinks with adequate product inventory sell 50 percent more products compared to rinks with little to no inventory.

There are many marketing tips roller rinks can apply to encourage potential customers to purchase their products. Rinks can supply literature and online resources (website and social media) for their products. This increases interactivity and product knowledge according to Riegelman. He also recommends having accessible product literature and links to online resources to learn more about the products. Lehrke recommends offering potential buyers free skating for themselves and their family as an added incentive.

Riegelman recommends roller rink operators maintain an area exclusively for product placement to encourage sales. Having a separate display area with products in reach for patrons helps them experience products. You wouldn't want to go to a grocery store and not be able to read or touch the products, and roller skates are no different. Customers who are able to experience skating products first hand are much more likely to purchase them.

Riegelman also suggests stocking a pro shop with a variety of accessories. Sometimes it's not all about just the skate. Kids want to personalize their belongings, so offering them a variety of accessories helps tremendously. Having Dart or similar session wheels in stock, with hardness levels from 91a-95 are recommended. The greater the variety of commonly used wheels, the better. Offering accessories in the pro shop, such as skate bags at a medium price point, provides a great upselling point. Kwik ABEC-5 skate bearings are another great selling accessory.

There are multiple ways to reach out to skate manufacturers and distributors, according to Riegelman and Lehrke. In addition to visiting their website, emailing or calling, another great opportunity to see new

and current products is by attending trade manufacturer and distributor trade shows. The RSA holds events throughout the year with several RSA Section Meetings hosting such vendors, as well. This helps roller rink owners form business relationships with distributors and manufacturers. Establishing a relationship with distributors and manufacturers, according to Lehrke, helps rink owners learn of products best suited for their needs, including new products and closeout specials that you may not otherwise be aware of. He said representatives anticipate needs and are proactive with suggestions.

KICK OFF A GREAT AMERICAN SKATE SALE

Manufacturers and distributors can assist both directly and indirectly with product marketing. Manufacturers can help rink owners by holding product seminars and product nights for customers. Why not kick off your "Great American Skate Sale" with a customer appreciation skate viewing sale that offers exclusive discounts for one night only? Riegelman said these events can be coordinated with the local community and advertised in advance. Customers are able to learn more about products through product demonstrations and by asking questions.

Riegelman and Lehrke said their companies provide training to roller rink employees on product knowledge through representative visits. This translates into more informed, confident staff who can explain and sell products to customers. It also differentiates their businesses as experts to better compete.

Advertising with the community, including through social media, becoming a product authority, maintaining adequate stock, working with manufacturers and distributors to determine the appropriate products for sale and focusing on the customer are recommended guidelines from roller skating product manufacturers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Thomas Hill is a full-time professional freelance writer. He attended Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, CT majoring in U.S. history and minoring in social sciences. He is passionate about all things writing, including issues that impact roller skating facilities.



7 Steps to Finan

FACT:

The SBA offers a high percentage of loan guarantees. There is an 85 percent guarantee rate for loans up to \$150,000 and a 75 percent guarantee rate for loan requests. For example, if the loan amount is \$4,000,000, the maximum amount guaranteed to the lender is \$3,000,000.

According to Bill Carlson of U-Profit Business Success, building a new rink can cost anywhere from \$2 to \$6 million or about \$65 to \$125 per square foot. This figure primarily depends upon where a roller rink is located within the country. Understanding the financing process to construct a new roller rink or to remodel an existing facility is essential to making an informed business decision.

1. What Financing Options are Available?

SBA Financing options, through partner lenders, include two types of business loans and venture capital.

The SBA's 7(a) loan offers eligible businesses financing if they have already exhausted other financing options, used personal assets, already have a fair amount of equity invested in the business, and can demonstrate a need for the funds. A rink operator in Florida explained that after all available cash was put towards his project, he "took a personal line of credit" against his home to finance the rest of his project because he lacked the necessary funds for his rink.

The Certified Development Company (CDC)/504 loan is geared towards established roller rinks. Eligible businesses should have liquid assets less than \$15 million, earn less than \$5 million for the two previous years, have exhausted other funding methods, use the money for real estate purposes and demonstrate a future ability to pay it back. Bobby Bentley of Skater's

Choice of the Southeast explained that if multiple rinks are owned, using equity from other rinks is a common way to secure a loan for a rink remodel or renovation.

The Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs) Program distributes venture capital through loans and investments of capital from SBA licensed investor funds and government-backed loans.

New rinks and remodels can take advantage of direct financing for fixtures (arcade games) and skating equipment (skates) directly from the manufacturers to reduce the cost of new construction or renovation. Roller rink operators in Ohio and Illinois have reported that financing is available directly from manufacturers at industry trade shows and seminars. This is one way to defray the total loan amount when applying for the initial construction loan and ultimate fixed real estate loan for the facility. Bentley said that similar to auto financing companies, roller rink operators can have fixtures financed directly from the supplier.

2. How Can New and Existing Rink Operators Find Financing?

Loan options for new and existing roller rink owners are found at: www.sba.gov/loans-and-grants. Available venture capital, on a state-by-state listing, can be found at: www.sba.gov/content/sbic-directory

3. How Does the Process Work?

Having a completed business plan, according

to Carlson, is the first step in obtaining financing. This explains financial projections for the building and equipment costs, shows anticipation for individual market needs through demographic research, documents existing organization funding, explains how funds will be appropriated and spells out how the business will be run.

The next step is to go the bank and apply for a loan. This is applicable whether SBA funding is involved or not. Speaking with a small business loan specialist helps applicants with the bank's application process and submission steps for approval.

The last step is to wait for a decision from the bank. Decisions are made in as few as two weeks to 90 days, depending on the type of loan (new business loan or remodel). Direct experience from roller rink operators include four months from start to finish for the purchase of a defunct roller rink. Bentley reported new facilities take anywhere from 45 to 90 days, while decisions for existing facilities take about 45 days.

4. What Documents are Necessary?

According to the SBA and rink operators we interviewed, banks require the following documents for 7(a) and CDC/504 loan applications:

- **Profit and Loss Statements:** Partners must submit current statements (within the last 90 days) along with additional schedules for the past 36 months.
- **Projected Financial Statements:** Applicants must submit the documents,

cing Your Next Rink Project

FACT:

7(a) loan applicants can have their loan review expedited with SBAExpress. This program gives applicants a decision within 36 hours of submission.

FACT:

Believe it or not, banks look more favorably upon business applicants with a strong online presence and social media following. The idea is that the more people who show interest in your business online, the more likely you are to be serving them as customers to thus pay off your loans.

which must contain figures and a written plan that documents how the business plans to achieve the forecasted amounts within the next 12 months. Bentley's experience included submitting financial projections for the next 3, 5, and 10 years. Lenders want to know how it will be accomplished through the location's demographics.

- **A list of all business ventures:** This list includes all business ventures for all of the business the partners are involved in. This includes company names, business addresses, direct or indirect ownership, affiliations, and all types of investments.
- **Loan Applications:** All loan applications, present and past, must be documented.
- **Federal Tax Returns:** Tax returns for the past three years of all business partners must be furnished.
- **Lease (If Applicable):** A copy of the lease must be furnished or a letter from the landlord documenting its terms.
- **Company Overview:** Documentation is required to explain the company's history, its past and current challenges, the need for an SBA loan and how the loan will increase the company's viability.
- **Proof of Existence:** Original licensing and incorporation papers must be supplied.
- **Resumes:** All business partners must submit their resumes.
- **Corporate Seal:** Businesses formed as a corporation must affix their corporate seal on the SBA application.

5. How is Financing Secured?

The SBA expects 7(a) and CDC/504 loans to be fully secured with all available personal and business assets. Personal assets may be subject to liens based upon the SBA's discretion. Personal guarantees are normally required of business partners with at least a 20 percent interest in the business. However, applicants with less equity may be required to make personal guarantees. CDC/504 loans for remodeling often use the equity built into the existing facility.

6. What Type of Collateral is Considered?

Understanding what types of collateral and how it is valued by the SBA and the lender will help you know what determines the amount of financing available. Lenders value a house's equity at 75 percent of its market value, while the SBA values it at 80 percent. The SBA and lenders value heavy equipment and trucks (cars are not allowable collateral) at 50 percent of their depreciated value.

Existing businesses can also secure a loan with money they expect from outstanding invoices. For receivables within the past 90 days, lenders value them at 75 percent, while the SBA values them at 50 percent. A Certificate of Deposit (CD) is valued at full value, while stocks and bonds are valued from 50 percent to 90 percent.

7. How Can Applicants Improve Their Chances of Obtaining Financing?

Carlson said individuals who apply at a local bank and where they have a pre-

existing personal or business relationship increase their chances of approval because they already know the customer and their history. The same rink operator in Florida noted that applicants who show lenders they understand the community with thoroughly researched demographics and proven community support, including an established social media following, are more likely to obtain financing.

Bentley agreed that banks indeed do look more favorably at business applicants with a strong online presence (website and social media). It is important to evaluate and prepare a business plan before approaching a bank.

Take advantage of the comprehensive information available on business loans and venture capital found on the U. S. Small Business Administration's website, www.sba.gov. The SBA Answer Desk's phone number is 1-800-827-5722. A full directory of SBA offices, listed state-by-state is available at: <http://www.sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/districtoffices>.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Thomas Hill is a full-time professional freelance writer. He attended Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, CT majoring in U.S. history and minoring in social sciences. He is passionate about all things writing, including issues that impact roller skating facilities.

To Drive Performance, Manage the Whole Employee

The term “human resources management” is essential in business. But have you noticed that the majority of the literature about the topic focuses on the “resources” and the “management” aspects, but barely addresses the “human” element? As a result, most managers see their employees as resources to be managed, and not as a whole person that can contribute so much more.

Managing the whole person at your roller rink means acknowledging that everyone is multi-dimensional and has numerous roles to balance in life—all of which affect job performance. However, this goes much deeper than simply work-life balance. It’s about recognizing all aspects of an employee to ensure a work-life “fit” that benefits the company and each individual. In fact, when you focus on the whole person rather than just on an employee’s work performance, you build more meaningful connections with employees, which results in greater loyalty and productivity. Following are some suggestions for better managing the whole employee.

See the input, not just the output, of each employee

When managing the whole person, you need to look beyond the person’s job description. Look beyond the output (the deadlines, the expectations, and the day-to-day job duties) and start looking at the input factors, as these determine the quality of the output.

Input factors are the drivers and drainers in the employees’ lives that affect their job performance. Some typical input factors include:

- The employee’s best time of day to get work done
- What’s going on in the employee’s family
- The employee’s physical, mental, and emotional health
- Other stressors the employee has, such as being a caregiver to aging parents, being pregnant, being the only income-earner in the home, etc
- What community or hobby events the employee is committed to

Basically, it’s about paying attention to all of the different drivers and drainers of what motivates employees to either perform at the level of acceptable performance, to go above and beyond an acceptable level

of performance, or to underperform to expectations. Because all of the various inputs affect the overall output, being aware of the input makes good business sense.

Acknowledge that everyone is multi-dimensional

Many managers believe that finding out about their employees’ lives outside of the work role is intrusive. They don’t want to ask personal questions for fear of appearing nosy. Not so! The good news is that you don’t have to ask questions to find out about people. You simply have to acknowledge the clues that are all around you.

For example, if you see photos of children in someone’s office, you don’t have to ask, “Are those your kids?” You can simply comment, “Those are beautiful children.” With that one acknowledgment, most people will open up, tell you who the children are, and offer lots more personal information. Likewise, if you see sports gear stashed away in a corner of someone’s cubicle, you don’t have to ask, “Do you play tennis [or whatever sport is evident]?” Instead, you can comment, “I’ve always been interested in tennis.” Again, the person will naturally start talking about the sport, the team or league she’s on, her accomplishments, and so much more. While it’s true that most people don’t want to sit through a session of 20 questions with their manager, they do enjoy being acknowledged—not just for their work, but also for their other interests.

Look at the big picture, not just the day-to-day details

The average full-time employee works 2,080 hours per year...at the office. That doesn’t include time the employee puts in at night and on the weekends. With all of today’s technological innovations, more and more people are connected to work 24/7, even while on vacation. As the separation between work and life becomes narrowed—what many people are referring to as a “blur” of roles—a person’s ability to focus intently on any one role becomes more difficult, resulting in errors and burnout.

In many organizations, the managers set the expectation for this blur because they’re not looking at the big picture of what the organization accomplishes; rather, they are focusing on the day-to-day stressors, the errors, the requests for time off, or the

employee’s lunch hour that was really an hour and a half. By keeping your eye on the day-to-day details, you’re missing the big picture of what your people really contribute.

In essence, you’re adding undue stress on everyone—including yourself. Of course, details are important, but it’s also vital to take a step back and look at the big picture so you can see your employees as people and not as parts of a machine to be fixed.

Take management to a “whole” new level

When you put the “human” element back into human resources management, you’re acknowledging the needs of the employees so they can perform better. When employees feel recognized as more than just a number on a monthly report, they tend to give you more discretionary effort or what’s called “citizenship behavior,” where they’re supportive of other employees and of the organization as a whole. As an added benefit, when employees are more supportive of their managers, the manager’s workload becomes less stressful too. Ultimately, the sooner you recognize all the drivers and drainers that impact people and then manage them, the sooner you’ll be able to create a high-performing team.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr. Marty Martin, known for his state-of-the-art content presented in an engaging, dynamic fashion, has been speaking and training nationally and internationally for many years. His second book, *Taming Disruptive Behavior*, will be published by The American College of Physician Executives (ACPE) in 2013. He is currently working on his third book, *Do You Have Career Insurance?* Dr. Martin is the Director of the Health Sector Management MBA Concentration and Associate Professor in the College of Commerce at DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois. For more information to obtain a free chapter of *Do You Have Career Insurance?* please visit his website: <http://www.drmartymartin.com>.

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DIGITAL TRENDS

Why Embracing Digital Marketing Can Mean Big Profits For Your Roller Rink

Marketing is an essential part of any business venture. According to Startup Nation, implementing an online marketing strategy is a crucial layer of a comprehensive marketing plan. Current marketing trends for 2013 and beyond include visual marketing, mobile and video technology, social media marketing, metrics and a customer-centric approach. Understanding how technology can help a marketing plan, along with traditional forms of online marketing, is essential to maximizing exposure.

Here we will teach you more about digital wallets, social media, mobile marketing, location-based marketing, customer-centric marketing, QR Codes, online and offline reputation management, entrepreneurship, utilizing metrics, mail marketing options and content marketing - all essential tools to embracing a 21st century digital approach to reaching your customers.



ACCORDING TO THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER, 56% OF ALL AMERICANS OWN A SMARTPHONE AND MORE ADULTS ARE FORECASTED TO ADOPT ONE IN THE COMING YEARS.

ACCORDING TO BLOOMBERG'S BUSINESSWEEK, 50% OF CHILDREN AND 1/3 OF ADULTS OWN TABLETS, UP FROM JUST 3% OF PEOPLE OWNING TABLETS IN 2010.



ACCORDING TO ENTREPRENEUR MAGAZINE, DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE ONLINE CUSTOMIZED CONTENT IS ESSENTIAL TO CONNECTING WITH CUSTOMERS, MAINTAINING STRONG CONSUMER RELATIONSHIPS AND INCREASING SALES OVER THE LONG TERM. 50% OF ALL TIME SPENT ONLINE IS TAKING IN CONTENT, WHILE ANOTHER 30% OF INTERNET USERS' TIME IS SPENT USING SOCIAL MEDIA.



DIGITAL WALLET

A digital wallet is any digital device, be it a smartphone, tablet or computer, that contains digital information (personal and financial) that helps identify a user and provides a completely electronic transaction. Credit and debit information, along with unique customer information stored on the device or in a database, works through commonly shared software that enables personal and financial information to be securely exchanged with a retailer to make a purchase.

Digital wallets can be used as a customer loyalty program much the way reward cards are used in retail outlets. Through an online and mobile application, purchases and coupons, for example, can be monitored and analyzed to see what services are used and which products are bought. Based on the data, coupons, tickets and promotions can be marketed directly to smartphone and computer users. Despite this technology utility, roller skating rink operators we interviewed did not report using this technology for their facilities, but this is definitively an area worth exploring. Companies like Square, Google Wallet, and Paypal all offer digital wallet software and charge significantly less than most credit card software processing companies.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a digital medium that is similar to a website. However, social media provides a level of interactive communication between the owner and visitors to exchange information in a seamless manner, similar to a person-to-person conversation. This is unlike a website that only permits the owner to share information. Common social media includes Twitter and Facebook.

Entrepreneur magazine reported that shared content on social media is 500 percent more likely to be purchased by the receiving patron. With this kind of data, it's hard to ignore the need for rink owners and operators to begin embracing digital trends to increase profitability.

According to rink operators we interviewed, social media is a powerful tool for their marketing strategy. It can be used as both a direct advertising tool and to develop

rapport with customers.

Charlene Conway of Carousel Family Fun Centers in Massachusetts uses her Facebook and Twitter accounts to message "Friends" and "Followers" of upcoming promotions for skating and food specials and to advertise what events the company car will attend (school events, farmers markets, waterfront festivals, etc.). Conway's customer e-mails feature a Facebook link and a share button to help customers share the e-mail with contacts.

Bobby Bentley, owner of Skater's Choice of the Southeast (and several other rinks throughout the area), uses Facebook to establish a rapport with the community through pictures of patrons enjoying skating and birthday parties, for example. Leveraging the "social" part of social media, he offers "friends" free coupons if they repost his messages

to their "friends" to maximize digital referrals.

Bill Hoefler of Interskate 91 explained that he uses Twitter and Facebook to both advertise events, offer promotions and to simply say "hello." Similar to Bobby Bentley's approach, Hoefler also believes that using fewer social media platforms is more efficient than attempting to spread one's marketing thin across additional platforms.

MOBILE COMPATIBILITY

Mobile compatibility is a necessity for online marketing because more and more people are using smartphones and tablets.

According to the Pew Research Center 56 percent of all Americans own a smartphone and more adults are forecasted to adopt one in the coming years. According to Bloomberg's Businessweek, half of children and one third of adults own tablets. This is up from just three percent of people owning tablets in 2010.

With such diverse browser formats (for Apple, Palm, BlackBerry, Windows Mobile and Android devices), understanding how all mobile browsers display your website is essential to ensure all smartphone and tablet users can and will use your website to learn about your roller rink.

According to interviews with roller rink

operators, mobile website compatibility is widespread as they are aware of customers' extensive mobile device uses. Bentley suggested using portable media files for mobile websites because the decompressed file sizes work better for mobile devices that have poor reception or slower network speeds.

LOCATION AWARENESS

Businesses can accomplish location awareness marketing through social media websites including Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and Foursquare. Review-based websites including Yelp, Google Places for Business and Yahoo! Local Listings, help businesses target new customers and receive feedback from past patrons.

Through the use of GPS and Wi-Fi, rink operators can target existing and new customers located in proximity to a roller rink. Foursquare has "check-ins" that reward visitors who learn about the latest promotion. Facebook also has a "nearby" setting for mobile users. Roller rink operators can inform and attract visitors with informative posts or direct advertisements. If you have not yet updated your information on Google Places, Foursquare, Yelp, etc., you are encouraged to do so. Allowing the information to simply sit unchecked could result in incorrect data, poor reviews being unaddressed and more.

USER-CENTRIC APPROACH

Roller rinks are still taking advantage of traditional offline marketing tools. Charlene Conway explained that her rink mails personalized birthday greeting cards to children. Birthday boys or girls enjoy a complimentary, one-time skating pass and can take advantage of a \$25 credit towards a future birthday party. Every month her rink emails birthday club members an invitation with incentives and discounts.

In addition, her rink's frequent skate card enables skaters to earn a free skating session after five visits. When the punch card is redeemed, the customer's contact information is added to their database for future marketing purposes. Her print media methods include flyers for programs and events, postcards for direct mailings and in-person postcards with the rink's schedule and a coupon for their next visit.

Taking a user-centric approach to marketing is essential to cater to the needs and wants of customers. According to CMS Wire, if a customer or potential customer can't find the information they are looking for easily and quickly, they will move to another competitor. In order to capitalize on traffic, in person and online, making the customer's

"Entrepreneur magazine reported that shared content on social media is 500% more likely to be purchased by the receiving patron. With this kind of data, it's hard to ignore the need for rink owners to embrace digital trends to increase profitability."

“According to Entrepreneur, email marketing encourages recipients to purchase as much as 83% more compared to non-email marketing.”

experience as easy as possible to learn about a business is essential. Understanding ways to do this through effective online tools is essential to provide exceptional customer service.

Roller rink operators are committed to working with the community as part of their user-centric marketing strategies. Bentley is actively involved with his community, showing up to parades, car shows, and holds events at local beaches in his advertisement-wrapped Hummer with roller girls to increase his rink's exposure.

Conway explained she and her staff attend local fairs, farmers' markets and waterfront festivals and advertised through social media to establish a community connection. Catering to her 13 and under demographics, she purchased “Buttons” and “Babs,” a pair of teddy bears to build rapport. She also works with local papers and helps develop press releases to inform the local community of her two rink's events.

EMAIL MARKETING

Using email marketing, according to Entrepreneur, encourages recipients to purchase as much as 83% more compared to non-e-mail marketing.

Conway and Hoefler use Constant Contact, an e-mail marketing program, to make customers aware of upcoming events, specials and to drive traffic to their websites. Hoefler uses it to promote and remind subscribers of events and to reward them with exclusive offers. Conway sends out one to two e-mails per month for product and themed events such as a “Back to School Skate.” She also uses it to highlight product specials. Rink operators ask patrons to sign up for their e-mail databases for future promotions and some have even gone so far as to purchase used laptops to attach to the front counter that will allow visitors to sign up directly on the computer - a fun and interactive way to increase your exposure.

SEO (SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION)

Implementing search engine optimization practices is an essential marketing approach

to drive traffic towards a website. According to Entrepreneur, organic search (SEO) leads to a 14.6% conversion rate compared to direct marketing conversion rates of 1.7%. This means that people are far more likely to purchase your products from information they found online versus standard forms of advertising.

Bentley reported using Google Analytics to measure the results of his website's SEO campaign. He uses keyword rich content focused on the roller skating industry, geography and the rink name. Customizing keywords will increase the likelihood of more traffic from keyword searches.

QR CODES

Quick Response codes, better known as QR Codes, are based on bar codes found on many consumer products. QR Codes are more useful because they can store ten times the data and can be read by a reader, in any orientation, from a tablet or smartphone. This provides capable individuals a quick and easy way to interact with a roller rink's online media. Commonly available on the Internet, Google has its own tool that converts any



URL into a QR code that can be transferred to virtually any medium.

QR codes are versatile for marketing purposes, including links to websites, social media pages, and videos that can inform and advertise products, events and specials. QR codes can be superimposed on virtually every media imaginable. Conway uses QR Codes on her print material, advertisements, and her company's car for couponing and informational purposes. Bentley said he put QR Codes on everything from t-shirts and advertisements to print materials and his company's Hummer. With a simple image,

this QR code is simply scanned in with a smartphone's QR code reader app which directs the web browser directly to the website link of choice.

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

Have you ever had something happen at your rink that ends up all over the internet, yet you're not sure how to repair the image? Have you ever had an irate customer leave negative reviews on sites like Yelp and Facebook? These negative online reputation problems can drastically decrease revenue. Luckily, there are companies that specialize in reputation management that allow you to help repair your online image. Companies like RSA member, Trustworkz, actually specialize in repairing your online image.

While this may not always be necessary for everyone, it's a nice option to have available to your business.

Conway prefers to skip such reputation management companies in favor of working with the local business community and directly with the customers. She reported working with other businesses in the community to determine how to effectively target customers. Working with the local chamber of commerce and helping to form a city small business association, she explained that understanding what the community wants is the most direct way to reach customers. She said “if you are not connected to your community, how can you market to it?”

USING INTREPRENEURALISM

Roller rink operators can use their team to come up with ingenious marketing ideas to increase business. Conway explained that her team comes up with in-house mailers that she combines with direct mail options from the United States Postal Service. Promotions include monthly events such as March Madness for March, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day for January.

Hoefler's rink enables skaters the option to text their song request to the DJ. Bentley's roller rinks have used marketing promotions based on reality television including beard contests from “Ducky Dynasty” and gator wrestling from “Swamp People.” By utilizing your best assets - your customers and your staff - you can come up with a variety of ingenious marketing tactics to increase profitability.

UNDERSTANDING AND USING METRICS

Understanding how metrics works and how to apply the results is essential to see what business practices are working and what needs an adjustment. Conway explained that her rinks keep track of coupon usage in a spreadsheet and the results are analyzed every quarter and at the end of the year.

Email marketing uses metrics to measure return on investment (ROI). Metrics include the number of opens, the frequency of each link clicked and how many times an e-mail was shared via social media.

Measuring the number of “likes” on Facebook and the number of “followers” on Twitter is also a good way to determine customer engagement over any time period.

DIRECT MAIL OPTIONS

Roller rink owners have new direct mail options from the United States Postal Service that is a considerably affordable and an exciting addition to any marketing plan. According to the United States Postal Service’s website, roller rink owners are able to target local or far away customers based on individual addresses, streets or intersections, a complete town or city, an entire state, a zip code or even a 5-mile radius immediately

surrounding a roller rink.

Owners can focus on target demographics with the tool and determine how much postage will cost based upon how many mailers are sent. According to Conway, the direct mail options are cost-effective based on her use of available targeted zip code options combined with her in-house created mailers. She also reported looking at door-to-door direct mailings. Bentley reported that purchasing an entire zip code for his mailing marketing needs was the cheapest option.

CONTENT IS KING

According to Entrepreneur magazine, developing effective online customized content is essential to connecting with customers, maintaining strong consumer relationships and increasing sales over the long term. Content delivered through websites and social media is king because half of all time spent online is taking in content. Another 30% of Internet user’s time is spent using social media.

Conway, Hoefler and Bentley have also indicated that online content is ideal because it can be used to advertise, inform and build a relationship. Sharing content is accomplished through each medium and

According to Entrepreneur, organic search (SEO) leads to a 14.6% conversion rate compared to direct marketing conversion rates of 1.7%.

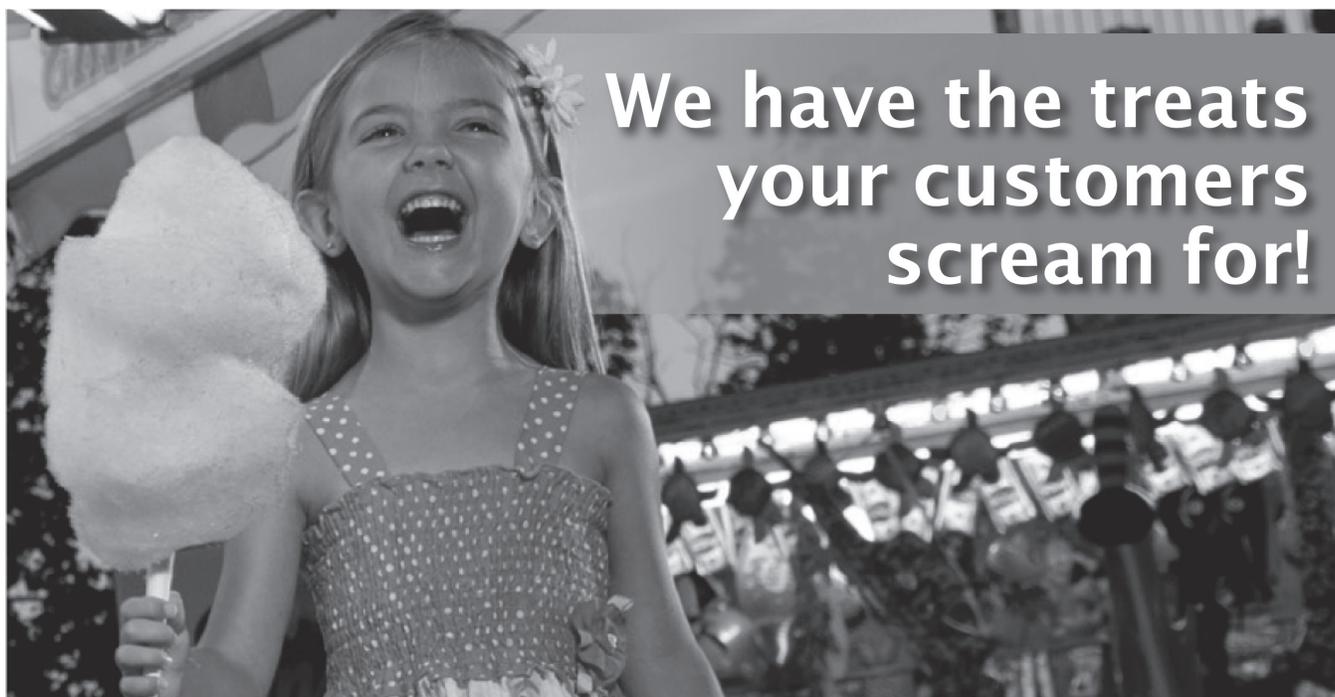
can be leveraged through social media and social sharing. Using each medium as part of a comprehensive marketing plan can reach customers offline and online.

Marketing is a comprehensive approach that requires constant learning. Understanding what customers are using, how information is obtained and what approaches convert more sales will help roller rinks increase profitability.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Thomas Hill is a full-time professional freelance writer. He attended Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, CT majoring in U.S. history and minoring in social sciences. He is passionate about all things writing, including issues that impact roller skating facilities.



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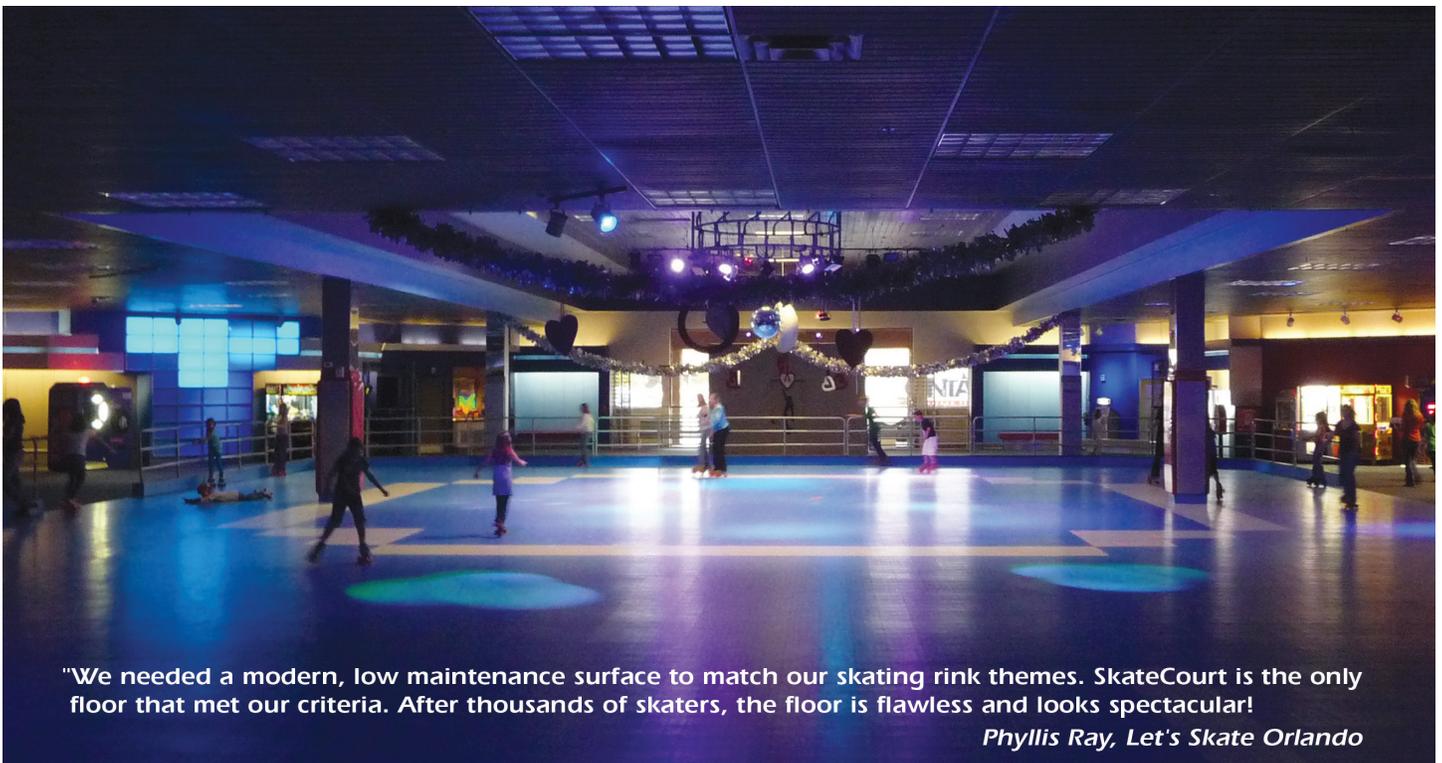
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Roller Skating Association's

Promotional Calendar of Events

November 2013



sun	mon	tues	weds	thurs	fri	sat
<p>November is also: Child Safety Protection Month, National Novel Writing Month, National Peanut Butter Lovers Month, Family Stories Month, Lung Cancer Awareness Month, National Adoption Month, National Pomegranate Month and Vegan Month.</p> <p>To get these ideas and more visit: familycrafts.about.com, brownielocks.com, zanyholidays.com, thenibble.com, holidayinsights.com, daysoftheyear.com, or purchase a copy of Chase's Calendar of Events.</p>					<p><i>National Authors' Day</i></p>	<p>2</p>
<p>3</p> <p>SANDWICH DAY</p>	<p>4</p> <p>King Tut Day</p>	<p>5</p> <p>ELECTION DAY</p> <p>Saxophone Day</p>	<p>6</p> <p>National Bittersweet Chocolate with Almonds Day</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Domino Day</p>	<p>9</p> <p>On this day in 1955, the National Child Safety Council was founded, thus was born the "missing" images you see on milk cartons today.</p>	
<p>10</p> <p>SESAME STREET</p> <p>On this day in 1969, Sesame Street made its debut!</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Veteran's Day</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Young Reader's Day</p>	<p>13</p> <p>WORLD KINDNESS DAY</p>	<p>14</p> <p>international girls day</p> <p>she can do anything!</p> <p>Visit www.confidencecoalition.org for a complete planning guide!</p>	<p>15</p> <p>America Recycles Day</p>	<p>16</p> <p>International Day for Tolerance</p>
<p>17</p> <p>Take a Hike Day</p>	<p>18</p> <p>MICKEY MOUSE DAY</p>	<p>19</p> <p>ROCKY & BULLWINKLE</p> <p>On this day in 1959, the first episode of Rocky and Bullwinkle aired.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Universal Children's Day</p>	<p>21</p> <p>World Hello Day!</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Humane Society Anniversary Day</p>	<p>23</p> <p>FAMILY VOLUNTEER DAY</p>
<p>24</p> <p>NATIONAL SARDINES DAY</p> <p>Go on, try one!</p>	<p>25</p> <p>National Parfait Day</p>	<p>26</p> <p>National Cake Day!</p>	<p>27</p> <p>National Day of Listening</p>	<p>28</p> <p>HAPPY THANKS GIVING!</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Lemon Creme Pie Day</p>	<p>30</p> <p>National Mousse Day</p>



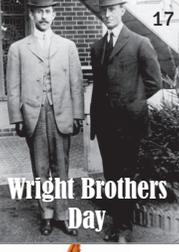
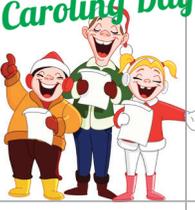
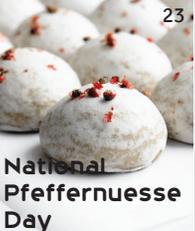
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Roller Skating Association's

Promotional Calendar of Events

December 2013



sun	mon	tues	weds	thurs	fri	sat
<p>1 Rosa Parks Day</p> 	<p>2 CYBER MONDAY</p> 	<p>3 APPLE PIE DAY</p> 	<p>4 National Cookie Day</p> 	<p>5 International Ninja Day</p> 	<p>6 National Miner's Day</p> 	<p>7 COTTON CANDY DAY</p> 
NATIONAL HANDWASHING AWARENESS WEEK						
<p>8 Chocolate Brownie Day</p> 	<p>9 Christmas Card Day</p> 	<p>10 The United Nations' (UN) Human Rights Day is observed on this day to mark the anniversary of the presentation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.</p> 	<p>11 International Mountain Day</p> <p>Find out more at: www.un.org/en/events/mountainday/</p> 	<p>12 Gingerbread House Day</p> 	<p>13 ICE CREAM DAY</p> <p>You scream I scream No all scream For ice cream!</p> 	<p>14 Monkey Day</p> 
<p>15 Bill of Rights Day</p> 	<p>16 CHOCOLATE COVERED ANYTHING DAY</p> 	<p>17 Wright Brothers Day</p> 	<p>18 On this day in 1892, the premiere performance of The Nutcracker by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky appeared in Saint Petersburg, Russia.</p> 	<p>19 NATIONAL REGIFTING DAY</p> <p>DECEMBER 19, 2013</p> 	<p>20 Go Caroling Day</p> 	<p>21 World Peace Day</p> 
<p>22 National Haiku Day</p> 	<p>23 National Pfeffernuesse Day</p> 	<p>24 Eggnog Day!</p> 	<p>25 Merry Christmas</p> <p>Joy • Love • Peace</p> 	<p>26 BOXING DAY</p> <p>December 26</p> 	<p>27 Fruitcake Day</p> 	<p>28 National Chocolate Days</p> <p>(Dec 28-29)</p> 
<p>29 Tick Tock Day</p> 	<p>30 It's BACON Day!</p> 	<p>31 new years eve</p> 	<p>December is also: Universal Human Rights Month, Worldwide Food Safety Month, Bingo Month, National Tie Month, Spiritual Literacy Month, Worldwide Food Service Safety Month</p> <p>To get these ideas and more visit: familycrafts.about.com, brownielocks.com, zanyholidays.com, thenibble.com, holidayinsights.com, daysoftheyear.com, or purchase a copy of Chase's Calendar of Events.</p>			

RSM Member Listing

The companies listed below—manufacturers and suppliers—are members of the Roller Skating Association International as of August 2013. Company information is updated in each issue of RSB for your reference. If your firm services the roller skating industry and you would like information about becoming a member, or you are a current member needing to update your information, call the association headquarters at 317-347-2626. If you would like an additional listing under another RSM category, there is a charge of \$125 per additional category. Please email membership@rollerskating.com.

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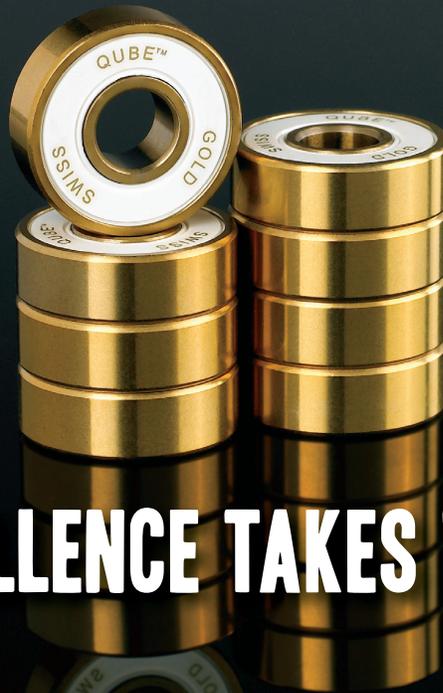


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