

GROW

With Cultivate's Plugged-In Creative Marketing Session



Plugged-In Marketing

Who, What, & How

The Plugged-In Marketing Session helps both sales and marketing think creatively and “plug-in” to a new marketing plan on which everyone can agree.

1. Who should attend?

Every session is different, although there are two necessary positions to be provided by Cultivate: a facilitator and a card writer.

A session should be held for each product category. In an ideal session, there should be a facilitator along with a key person from each area. These key people should be the individuals who will continue working on the project throughout the year. The agency may also have people in attendance, such as the Creative Staff, Account Executives and Writer. This group is in attendance to listen, learn and offer ideas and ask questions.

In total, a group should be kept to less than 10 people. Large groups tend to become distant and less spontaneous.

2. The facilitation.

The facilitator (Account Exec.) will be responsible for explaining:

- The goals of the session
- The rules of the session
- Examples of how the session works
- Steps to be followed in the session
- The roles of the agency both during and after the session

The Facilitator will also:

- Lead the session by questioning ideas and posing thoughts
- Keep the session going, on-track and on schedule
- Lead the group in a post-analysis meeting, explaining that the agency will provide a recap of the session and develop a plan

Tools needed:

- Meeting room with large, smooth wall areas to hold Post-It Notes
- 300-500 Post-It Notes and color markers
- Ideas and creative thinking

continued on back

Focusing Your Marketing Efforts

We have developed a way to work with clients to focus their marketing efforts and help them “plug-in” creative ideas to meet their sales and marketing goals.

This session is designed for the agency and the client to work together to think creatively and investigate marketing possibilities. It is not a time for actual creative work like a brochure, but a time for free-flowing thoughts, dreams and “wild ideas”, which may or may not be used later in the actual creative process. This session is a chance for ideas to feed off each other and is generally limited to two hours.

This is the time for the marketing department and the agency to “plug in” to the end-user and think about investigating opportunities for produce, price, promotion and planning. This is also a good chance for the team to educate each other about their expertise. It is an excellent opportunity for the client to review their business plans, research, and sales effort, while creating and refocusing their marketing efforts for a new year.

cultivate
communications

- Strategic Marketing
- Creative Design
- Direct Mail
- Web Design / Hosting
- e-Marketing

heritage
a communications resource

- Full Color Printing
- Digital Variable Printing
- Cross Media Direct Marketing
- Database Marketing
- Mailing/Fulfillment
- Web to Print Storefronts

Plugged-In Marketing

Who, What & How?

3. Get plugged in!

The first card to be posted in the session is the "end time" card. This is to remind everyone that this session will take no more than two hours. There are specific categories that will be discussed in the session. The next two cards to be posted and used to begin the discussion are **OBJECTIVES** and **MISCELLANEOUS**.

The **OBJECTIVES** category is a good starting point and should be for dreams, hopes, goals, wishes, practical and impractical things. The Facilitator will suggest something to get it started and then the ideas should start to flow. **OBJECTIVES** usually gets the most cards. When the category starts to slow down, the Facilitator will move to the next category. Even though we move on to the next topic, we can still add cards to the **OBJECTIVES** category if they come up later in the session.

The other categories might include: **MARKET, COMPETITION, PROBLEMS, UNIQUE SELLING POINTS, PROMOTIONS, MEDIA,** and **BUDGET**.

The last card to go up should be **IMMEDIATE NEEDS**. This is where call-to-action assignments are made to both the agency and the client.

4. Results are "Plugged-In".

Once the session is finished, the Facilitator will discuss the next steps. The agency will take all of the cards and type them up within 24 hours. The purpose is to record the information while the ideas are fresh. Once the cards are reviewed and changes are made, the group should meet to begin prioritizing and assigning objectives within both organizations.

When the group is done, the agency will be able to take the information, along with the business plan and develop an overall communications strategy.

Three Important Rules When Brainstorming:

1. The wilder the idea, the better. It is OK to make suggestions that may seem "crazy" or even off the wall. Everyone should understand that in the creative process, off-the-wall ideas can generate a workable idea. Remember that it is impossible to make a workable idea from nothing. **WE ENCOURAGE WILD IDEAS!**

2. No negative thoughts.

Remember the crazy idea? In this session, no one is allowed to disagree or criticize an idea. If this were allowed, creativity would quickly vanish. The Facilitator will try to stop any negative interaction.

3. One idea leads to another.

Since a session like this can stimulate so much thought, people often think of ideas that are not part of the category currently being discussed. Rather than lose the idea, it should be written down and saved.

no holds barred... off-the-wall
and crazy ideas can generate
some of the best concepts!

