



Opportunity knocks – open the door, NOW!

If you are not using the internet to market your center you are missing the greatest and least expensive means of advertising ever created. The opportunity to reposition your business has

HOT TRENDS

by Bill Carlson

bill@bill-carlson.net

Co-authored By Beth Standlee
beth@trainertainment.net

Where are you going to? I am sure you have been asked and even asked yourself this question before, and most often you probably pondered the answer and shrugged your shoulders as if to say, “I do not really know.”

Too often businesses - and a whole industry - can ride a wave of success created externally by unexpected forces. For example, the roller skating industry benefited from disco, inline skating and now, “Derby Girls,” are here. All of these have been or are great for business, but what can the industry do to really get the world on wheels and keep them rolling?

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Successful companies have figured it out. Look at Disney, Southwest Airlines, In-N-Out Burger, Sargento Cheese Company and Wegman's Super Markets. They all have defined their core product and then got really good at delivering the goods with a smile and a touch of love. They survive quite well, even during recessionary times

Do you want to wake up the world and get millions of new skaters? Yes? Then get busy, go to work and evolve and develop your core product: roller skating.

Embrace technology and use it to communicate your new strategies and information about your center.

Tell the story about roller skating and what it really means to people. I think you have one of the best interactive social meeting places for kids in the world.

never been greater.

You have a great activity that is exciting, challenging, has an element of danger, is a lifetime sport, can be energy-efficient urban transport, stimulates all five senses, is socially interactive, boys meet girls, you can dance at speed(5-10mph), family generations can participate together...the list goes on. Centers are a sense of place - meeting spaces. And skating is healthful and fun! How many couples do you know that met in a roller skating center?

Develop your brand and image to radiate how great roller skating really is! Unfortunately, there is no national campaign available - or affordable - for roller skating. However, a grassroots movement of skating center operators will attract attention and could well lead to future opportunities for the industry.

Why not teach all first time skaters basic fundamentals about skating for FREE during sessions. An investment in instruction comes back ten-fold as you capture and create loyalty skaters at an earlier age. They also sign up for structured recreational lesson programs and buy skates. I can go to any skating center in America on a Saturday afternoon, and pick out the kids that would benefit from a group lesson during session - they are the ones not having a good experience.

If you enhance the experience, the perceived value is much greater and you will create higher demand for your product. Parents are in awe, thinking of it as an outrageous, over the top service you are providing and the word of mouth advertising is priceless.

The earlier you capture a skater the longer you will have them and the more money they will spend at your center.

You can and must liven up your sessions with age-appropriate games and activities that appeal to today's kids. Create memorable experiences that they will talk about with their friends at school. Everyone has an innate desire to

play; think of your center as an interactive play zone. It can be so much more than just a roller skating center.

Evaluate your business or hire somebody that will do it for you. Too often I see business owners struggling with their respective businesses because they do not identify competitive price strategies, their target market nor best use of the building itself. For the future you have to open your mind to broaden the possibilities that may be compatible with roller skating as an added profit center and revenue stream for your business.

Reported gains in the sale of quad skates continue to fuel speculation that a new wave of skaters are starting to hit the streets and centers. It is noticeable that outdoor skaters in the beach cities of California are increasingly showing up on quad skates. It is my view that this is a good sign of things to come.

Although new construction of roller skating centers is still slow in the U.S., the industry is beginning to take off worldwide. A number of new facilities have opened and more are under construction in China.

Four new centers have opened in Malaysia. There are over 800 skating groups in India that meet weekly at sports parks and parking lots to roller skate. Skaters are frequently seen in malls in Saudi Arabia. I am currently working on a project in Bulgaria.

What does this all mean? I believe roller skating is alive and well and will get bigger and better as roller skating truly goes global. For you, an opportunity to capitalize by expanding your profit centers, using the internet to market your products and services, and creating brand and image awareness. Tell the real story about skating over and over and teach first timers how to skate. Along the way create memorable experiences and get help if you need it to refocus your business.

Enjoy the journey by, “working on your business rather than in it.”

Did you know that the biggest roller skating party in the world is in Paris every Friday night from 10pm-1:00am as 15,000 plus skaters (30,000) in the summer take to the streets for a tour of Paris at night? Go to www.pari-roller.com and check it out.

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