

XENA'S PROMO BATTLE TIPS

A Sales Warrior's Guide to Getting the Most
from your Promotional Product Dollar



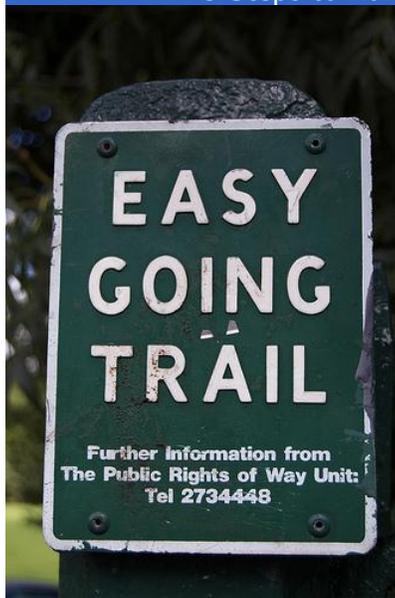
Easy Does It

5 Steps to Handling Business Gone Sideways

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I am not a terribly easy-going person. In fact, most people who know me know I lean a little on the [Sally Albright](#) side of life.

I like things the way I like them. I prefer that everything goes perfectly and though **experience proves that *nothing* goes perfectly**, I still want it that way.

This, I've discovered, presents countless opportunities for me to either gain those easy-does-it skills, (yes, I believe they're skills.) or, fight the world around me.

I've chosen to learn the skills because, as I've further discovered, fighting for perfection is a fruitless orchard of frustration and a whirling spiral into unhappiness.

Especially in business, where client relations and how you handle situations that go wrong, are the backbone to *everyone's* success and happiness.

Monday afternoon my client's order of Green Team shirts were due for an event the next morning. When I discovered that the courier had picked up the wrong box and could not go back and deliver the correct box *before* the end of the day, I nearly lost my mind in the panic (it takes a while for the dog to learn the new tricks, you know). Thankfully, my shipper stepped in and found someone who could get the shirts to my client the next morning.

And yes, Mr. Courier Man successfully delivered them - an *hour* before the event!

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I could breathe, my client could breathe, all was well. Not *perfect* but well.

And then this: "Jenn, I am missing some shirts and there are sizes in there that we never ordered!!"

WHAT? How is that possible?

The not-very-easy-going me would have kicked into a slight tantrum, I shamefully admit. The me-learning-to-be-more-calm self kicked into "what do we do to solve this, hopefully *fix* this" mode.

From my experiences of near misses, total misses and close calls in business, here's what I suggest when things go a little sideways.

1. Own Up: Ditch the excuses because in the moment, no one wants to hear it. Your client is disappointed and **all they want to know is that you get it**. There is nothing more validating, not to mention disarming, than hearing the other person say, "Yes, you're right. Something went wrong." And then, before you charge into step two, **apologize**. Forget about who messed up. **Just listen and apologize**. Even if you don't know, *in that moment*, what kind of miracle you are going to have to pull off to solve this.

2. Investigate: This is where you step back, breathe and contact the other parties involved. Together, you go over everything to **determine how and when the ground opened up, swallowed your perfectly smooth chunk of business and spit it back out in a heaping mess of mistakes and miscommunication**. The Green Team shirt fiasco started when the delivery nearly missed the event date; heated up when we discovered the supplier shipped the wrong sizes; and hit the boiling point when we learned the embroiderer's new hire ran the shirts without checking that the sizes in the shipment were correct. Okay, you got the facts, now what?

3. Explain: Call your client and **apologize**. Yes, again. Then explain, (not excuse) briefly, what happened that led you both to this moment. An understanding of the facts can calm everyone and reminds us all that there are real people behind the scenes. And, **despite my** (I suspect I'm not alone on this) **Utopian vision of a perfect order and delivery every time, people do make mistakes**. So, you've explained, hopefully they're still listening, then what?

4. Make An Offer: This is your chance to make it all better. A kiss on the scraped knee doesn't fly with business partners but **a sincere approach to a best solution goes the distance for that client relationship**. I offered to replace the shirts within 48-hours and told my client there would be no charge for the wrong sized shirts, but to "please keep them, in case you can ever use them."

5. Give Thanks: Give big, BIG thanks when you **find yourself in business with a client who not only understands but can still come back with "Thank you for your hard work,"** as my client did. Turned out they could use the replacement shirts, though late, and they would find a home for the incorrect sizes. Thankfully too, my supplier and embroiderer offered me a credit for the cost of the shirts and embroidery.

Life seems more manageable since I started accepting that sometimes, despite ordering my apple pie a la mode with the a la mode *on the side*, it won't always come this way.

Links

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"Achieving Greatness Starts with Asking The Right Questions. What's Holding You Back?"

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And the day-to-day business bumps and stumbles seem a little less hard to take when you remember that **life goes sideways and getting back on track is a two-way path between you and your client.** A path of respect, communication, managing of emotions and getting on your big girl/boy boots to solve the situation, together.

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About Xena Sales Warrior

As your **Marketing and Promotional Products resource and creative consultant**, my goal is to give you outstanding value, inspired choices and economically sound solutions to your promotional needs.

To go the distance to communicate your message and have you stand out among your peers with warrior-inspired promotional products.

Bottom Line: Making you look great everytime.

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