

The March

The automated system to save or reinstate any wrestling program

Synopsis

While there is a lot of motivation and enthusiasm from constituents when a program is first threatened, that energy wears off all too quickly. Soon AD's & University president's return to tending to the squeaky wheels and wrestling is out of sight- out of mind. *The March* is a system to save or reinstate any wrestling program through consistent, coordinated contact with key decision makers. It requires the moderate dedication (3 hours per month) of 3 individuals and minimum dedication of *at least 27* constituents (10 minutes per month). If a program cannot raise an army of 27 supporters to join in it's *March*, the program is not worth saving or reinstating.

The Premise

Athletics is like politics: the squeaky wheel gets the grease. If we want to save wrestling we need to squeak more. Our squeaks need to be coordinated, educated and consistent. This requires a system directed by a few and executed by many.

The Method- an overview

Marketing. Basic marketing principles include:

- Communicating with and educating consumers
- Multiple contacts with consumer
- Creating a community so that the consumer feels they are part of something

The March executes these 3 principles to key university decision makers *and* to the program constituents.

Directors

1. Coordinator- this person is the keystone of any March. He/she oversees and holds other directors accountable.

Characteristic(s): a self-motivated figurehead of the program, good communicator and motivator

Duties: monthly call to other 2 directors to remind, motivate and discuss.

Hold the other directors accountable for their jobs per their job descriptions and checklists (see attached)

2. Mailer- this person is responsible for sending monthly mailings to the army.

Characteristic(s): an organized person who enjoys hands on work. printing labels, stuffing envelopes and maintaining a database. This person has some emotional tie with the program.

Duties: printing labels, stuffing envelopes and maintaining a database

3. Webmaster- this person is responsible for all electronic communication. This person has some emotional tie with the program.

Characteristics: comfortable with technology (though no web development experience is necessary).

Duties: build and maintain website with a blog and e-mail marketing opt-in form (more details on exactly how to do this to follow)

How The March Works

The three key university decision makers (dm) will be identified by the Directors. Each dm will have 3 contact methods: phone, email and regular mail. Each dm will be contacted monthly through all 3 methods from members of the army.

The army will be divided into 9 groups. Each group will be responsible for contacting the dm to whom they are assigned through the assigned method (phone, email or regular mail). The rotation template will determine which group (1-9) will be contacting whom and how that contact will be made.

The soldiers will not be required to think... only act. The Mailing Director will send each army member a business sized card each month with the following information:

1. Name of assigned decision maker
2. Assigned method of contact
3. Three discussion points

The soldier will be required to take 5-10 minutes to make that contact. They are done Marching until next month.

How to Start Your Machine

1. Choose Directors: Coordinator, Mailer and Webmaster.
2. Directors (and any key soldiers) will hold Initial Meeting in person or via conference call to:
 - a. create a list of known potential soldiers
 - i. Compile their contact information
 - ii. Format this information in a database or spreadsheet that will allow for easy updating, printing of mailing labels and copy and pasting of the list of email addresses: suggest Excel or Access
 - b. Set a date of the 1st monthly mailing and subsequent mailings
 - c. Determine where funding will come from for \$100-\$200/month for mailings and e- newsletter
 - i. Note: Verticalresponse.com offers free email marketing service to registered 501(c)3 non-profits
 - d. Determine three key decision makers
 - e. Determine three talking points
 - i. Note: see suggested topics as referred by (NWCA, CollegeSportsCouncil, othes TBA)
3. Webmaster creates website
 - a. Officelive.com has free website that a person knowledgeable with Microsoft Word can use
 - b. Add free blog (see attached steps to create blog). Blog allows:
 - i. Easy interaction through readers comments
 - ii. Easy publishing of updates and news
 - c. Add email marketing opt-in form in prominent place for soliders to join
 - i. Note: Require name AND mailing address
4. Mailer
 - a. Creates 9 business cards (vistaprint.com or iprint.com)
 - i. DM #1

1. Name, Phone, 3 talking points
 2. Name, Email, 3 talking points
 3. Name, Mailing Address, 3 talking points
 - ii. DM #2
 1. same as above
 - iii. DM #3
 1. same as above
 - b. sends mailing to initial list of potential soldiers compiled at Initial Meeting with “The March” Initiation Letter (see attached template) explaining *The March* and requesting their participation
5. MARCH! Mailer will divide the list of soldiers into 9 groups per Rotation Template (see attached) and send the first mailing

Monthly Flow

1st The Coordinator will contact each director to remind, motivate and discuss the progress of *The March*

2nd The Webmaster will send any new soldier contact info to the mailer. This person will then update the blog with any news or responses from dm’s. Then send the e-newsletter. E- Newsletter suggested topics:

- Reminder- keep your eye out for your envelope that will be arriving in the mail
- Publish any dm responses you have learned about
- Publish any news or developments on the program (as learned from Coordinator or otherwise)
- Send us your thoughts
- Send us your responses from DM’s
- Be firm but keep it polite, politically correct and take the higher ground
- Success stories of other *Marches*
- Motivational quote
- Historical note regarding the program or alumni
- Be creative and have fun with this!

3rd Mailer prints labels, stuff envelopes and mails the 9 Platoons their respective contact information business cards

- Note: consider including 1 stamp for those that are to mail a letter. Remember- the goal is to make the soldiers’ job as quick and easy as possible so as to get the best response rate from them.

This program is scalable to any size army. As you reach each increment of 50 soldiers add one key “decision maker” to your list. Use the Rotation Template for 4, 5 or more decision makers. The maximum should be 6.

When your program is saved (not if... You must believe you will do this) you must follow the *marketing program* to maintain your program’s viability.

Consideration: The mailer's job could be minimized or even eliminated if the mailings were done simply via email. This could eliminate time, material and cost. The drawback is that emails are easily deleted or skipped while a paper business card with your information can be put in your pocket or posted on a refrigerator.

Coming soon....

Monthly checklist for each director

Fundraising Director- to gather pledges to put \$ where your mouth is

-add to suggested topic for monthly newsletter