

Chicago's social-marketing standouts

By: Taylor Rogers January 28, 2013



In response to a challenge from his boss to create a viral video, Chicago Music Exchange guitarist/salesman Alex Chadwick made "100 Riffs (A Brief History of Rock N' Roll)."

John R. Boehm

Nowadays, every company must be a social company. But what does an effective social-marketing campaign really look like?

Crain's asked readers to nominate the Chicago companies they think are doing the best job of using social media to communicate with customers, promote products and services, and find new audiences. Among the scores of ideas that came our way, these social media campaigns emerged as among the very best.

See them all here, then vote for the ones you like best.

BEST USE OF YOUTUBE: CHICAGO MUSIC EXCHANGE

13,560 subscribers; 223 videos; 6,045,567 total views

THE CAMPAIGN: Store owner David Kalt challenged his staff to create a viral video. Guitarist/salesman Alex Chadwick responded with "100 Riffs (A Brief History of Rock N' Roll)" – a recording of 100 of rock's most recognizable tunes, all in one take.

WHY IT'S A STANDOUT: The video has lots of viral elements. For one, it's about "inspiring and educating people to be better players," Mr. Kalt says. But it's also about history, inspiration and a little bit about showing off. "It's kind of like watching someone do gymnastics or acrobatics," he says. Mr. Chadwick is "doing all sorts of really technical things, and he's not even coming up for air." Another plus: The video's theme dovetails well with the Chicago music equipment retailer's core mission.

EXPERT OPINION: Mandy Edwards of ME Marketing Services, a social media consultancy based in Statesboro, Ga., says YouTube's prominence as a search engine allows for videos like "100 Riffs," with its range of songs and historical emphasis, to see results. "It's the content. It's something everyone can relate to," she says.

