



Making Lemonade Out of Lemons in a Sour Industry

**Tuesday, March 9, 2010
12:30 - 1:45 p.m.**

Content Leader:

Beau Ballinger, corporate communications
manager, Investment Management
Consultants Association

Sean Walters, CAE, deputy executive director,
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Association

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Making Lemonade Out of Lemons in a Sour Industry

Implementing a Growth Plan within an Industry Hit Hard by the Great Recession

Tuesday, March 9, 2010
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Sean R. Walters, CAE, Executive Director/CEO
Investment Management Consultants Association

Beau Ballinger, Membership & Communications Manager
Investment Management Consultants Association



situation analysis

2008

- Founded in 1985, IMCA is a professional 501(c)6 association, serving 7,600 investment consulting and wealth management professionals
- \$13M annual budget - first and foremost a credentialing organization, but majority of revenues come from membership and conferences
- IMCA has enjoyed double-digit growth almost every year since its founding, averaging 10% annual growth each year for the past five years
- 43% of members come from the "big 5" brokerage firms: Merrill Lynch, UBS, Smith Barney, Morgan Stanley, and Wachovia Securities
- Though independent financial advisors represent the largest and fastest growing segment in the industry, only 15% of IMCA members were independent advisors at the beginning of 2008



situation analysis

2009

- Lehman Brothers and Bear Stearns fail: Bank of America "saves" Merrill Lynch, Wells Fargo "saves" Wachovia, Japan's Mitsubishi UFG Bank "saves" Morgan Stanley, etc.
- Government bails out Wall Street
- Asset management companies fourth quarter profits drop as much as 84%
- Citigroup unloads Smith Barney to Morgan Stanley, BoA can't unload Merrill Lynch, Wells Fargo ditches Wachovia name, UBS can't find a buyer for their brokerage division

Wall street firms layoff more than 200,000 employees. Remaining advisors faced with three options:



- take their firm's retention bonus
- switch to a competing firm offering a more appealing signing bonus
- "go independent" by joining a small firm or starting their own firm



situation analysis

Into the present...

- And then there were four...
 - Bank of America/Merrill Lynch
 - Morgan Stanley Smith Barney
 - Wells Fargo Advisors
 - UBS
- Training departments in disarray
- Cautious professional development expenditures—No more junkets!
- Bernie Madoff and others...

interactive exercise

fight, flight, or freeze?

- What is your focus?
- Who do you serve?
- What's in it for them?
- What marketing, PR, sales, or other tactics would you implement?




organizational focus

- **Focus:** credentialing organization
- **Serve:** advanced investment consulting and wealth management professionals
- **Value:** world-class educational content
- **Tactics:** execute integrated outreach plan




integrated tactics

Advertising

- Trade agreements and paid agreements
- Resonant messages developed using focus group and task force input
- Awareness vs. action; online vs. print; penetration vs. development
- “Hook and drag” using portal Web sites to track effectiveness (CIMAConsultant.org; JoinIMCA.org; IMCAAdvantage.org; etc.)
- Follow-up marketing



The screenshot shows a webpage for IMCA (International Management Association) with the heading "Gain the Advantage...". It promotes "Advanced Educational Offerings" and "Exclusive Research". A registration form is visible with fields for "First Name", "Last Name", "Address", "City", "State", "Zip", "E-mail", and "Company". There are also checkboxes for "I have read" and "Privacy policies". Logos for CIMA and CPWA are also present.



integrated tactics

Direct response and drip marketing

- PURL (personalized URL) campaigns
 - Brand and awareness
 - WIIFM (what's in it for me)
 - Data gathering
 - Follow-up, targeted marketing
- *IMCA Ideas* sent to nonmember prospects monthly
- Relevant brochures mailed



results analysis

- **Advertising and direct response** campaigns generated 10.2 million impressions in 2008 and 2009 and more than 5,000 qualified leads
- **Sponsored conference presentations** touched more than 2,000 participants in 2008 and 2009
- **Trade show and personal sales** activity doubled in 2009
- **Earned media activity** grew from 303 stories reaching an audience of 44 million in 2008, to 384 stories reaching 53 million readers in 2009
- **Web site traffic** increased by 39 percent from 2008 to 2009



results analysis

- **Membership growth** of 8% in 2008 and 4% in 2009, mostly due to high retention (90%). Independent advisors among IMCA membership grew to 24% in 2009 from 15% in 2008.
- **Conference paid attendance** is higher than prior years: up 4% from 2007 to 2008, and up 9% from 2008 to 2009.
- **Certification applications** remained stable throughout 2009, and have increased in early 2010.



keys to success

- **Volunteer and staff discipline**
 - Focus on the mission: to deliver premier credentials
 - Deliver on the value of membership and conferences: advanced, world-class content
 - Avoid mission-creep: no lobbying, no consumer education initiatives, no international expansion, no new priorities or strategic imperatives
- **Timing and budgeting**
 - Be forward-thinking and take advantage of strategic opportunities
 - Membership benefits budget doubled in 2008—a new (or revamped) member benefit was unveiled nearly every month
 - Maintained 4-5% budget allocation for sales, marketing, PR, and membership acquisition—increased budget for 2010
- **Smart and strategic hiring**
 - Hired the right people at the right time: communications manager and corporate relations manager hired in 2008 (before the crash), director of finance position created and hired in late 2008



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