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PALMER MARKETING

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Getting it Right

Transportation specialists Palmer Marketing celebrates 30 years in the industry

By John Tenpenny

When Lee Palmer decided 30 years ago to get into business for himself, the idea that it might not have anything to do with transportation industry probably never occurred to him.

"I've been in the industry pretty much my whole life," said the founder of Palmer Marketing (PM), which has been providing advertising services to the transportation industry since 1988 and currently operates a 10-person team, including General Manager and son Tom.

Lee is originally from Hartland, New Brunswick, the home of Day & Ross, where his father was President during the 1960s and '70s. "My brothers and I all grew up in that environment and worked there in many capacities as teenagers, from dock workers, to dispatchers, to terminal managers," he recalls.

After university and time spent as a professional musician, Lee spent three years at Sameday Worldwide. He was their national pricing manager and built an in-house marketing department, before leaving to found PM.

During the business' first five years, promotion was its bread-and-butter. It was a much quicker sales cycle than the development of sales literature and the digital media the company is now known for.

"We started at the same time that the industry was shifting from traditional print media to digital," says Lee, "and that worked to our advantage. The industry was relearning how to do things, so we were not at a disadvantage compared to longstanding firms. They had to learn the new ways of doing things too."

For Palmer, marketing is about getting the message right.

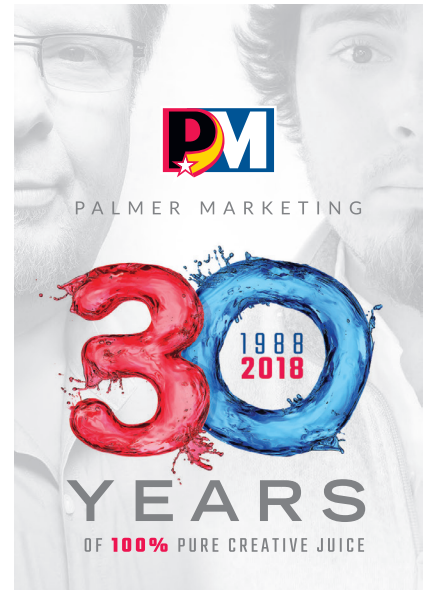
"Transportation doesn't do a lot of research and planning, so the marketing is more on an as-needed basis and for us, it's about how we can differentiate each client from the rest of the industry. Crafting the differentiating story to be told and utilizing the best media to reach the audience is always the focus at PM."

"These days it's about using every resource available to us," says Tom, who took over the day-to-day operations of the firm two years ago after his father had heart surgery.

"It's always going to be about using an integrated mix of different media and search engine marketing to optimize results for our clients. That mix is always changing."

*Tom Palmer, General Manager,
Palmer Marketing*

"Social media has circled back recently in importance to our clients, as well as other trends such as video, Google AdWords and implementing ongoing SEO techniques," Tom states. "It's our job to stay in the know with best practices. Now, we have more people capable of doing



Palmer Marketing, founded by Lee Palmer (left), has been in the transportation industry for 30 years.

these things in addition to the creative artists and writers we've always had. It's always going to be about using an integrated mix of different media and search engine marketing to optimize results for our clients. That mix is always changing."

Tom comments further: "We see many opportunities for growth. We will maintain our specialization in transportation but our process does work for any industry. Along with the hundreds of transportation companies we have worked with over our history, we serve accounts in areas as diverse as finance, vet hospitals, engineering firms and roofing companies."

"Tom has a good sense of logic, knows how to get the best from our creative team and truly cares about doing the best for our customers," states Lee, adding, "I'll keep my hand in, but grooming my own successor has worked out just fine, especially with the team we have built around him." ☺