

A templative tale from
Mischief Marketing

Mischievous Elvis Costello

[excerpted from Chapter 6 (print edition) ...]

➤ **Do you know someone who knows someone who can put you in touch with your VLP?**

In Chapter 12, we'll discuss the theory of "six degrees of separation," a statistics-based concept which asserts that any two people in the world are separated socially (whether they know it or not) by not more than about four or five people.

That is, you *very probably* know someone who knows someone (... and so on ...)
But the good news is that you *also* know someone who (blah blah blah) who knows your VLP. So start asking around. You may be surprised to find out how well connected we all are on this planet.

➤ **Can you produce a truly interesting press release?**

This is another subject about which entire books have been written.

For the mischief marketer, however, the essential question is how to write a genuinely amusing — perhaps even somewhat bizarre — press release.

Case In Point: My friend Sue Doanim once wrote a conventional press release — but she completely forgot to include the most basic information: namely, when and where the announced event was to take place.

Once she'd spotted her embarrassing mistake, Sue realized that the only possible way to save face would be to use a mischief marketing weapon: the *Simple Truth Tactic* (Chapter 12).

So she issued a second press release that essentially said, “The previous release failed to tell you when and where this event will take place. This is chiefly because, as a publicist, I am what is known in the trade as an incompetent jerk. If I were on a supermarket checkout line, you would recognize me immediately.”

And what happened? Sue got something publicists often covet but too rarely get — primetime television news coverage for her event.

➤ **Can you perform some odd public demonstration?**

This is an old trick, but it does sometimes work.

Case In Point: In 1977, musician Elvis Costello was first starting out. He had signed a contract with Stiff Records, and he was happy enough about that. But he also wanted to get an international record deal. So he strapped a pignose amp on his back, planted himself outside the London hotel where CBS Records happened to be holding its annual international convention — and started playing. (He also got arrested. But hey.)

Conventional Marketing and Guerrilla Marketing Tools

Every mischief marketer should learn as much as possible about conventional and guerrilla marketing. There are lots of perfectly good concepts in these fields — ideas that have passed the test of time. Why waste such good information?

Here are some examples of tools drawn from this arena:

- **Principle of Integrating Interests** — a sales technique in which the salesperson knows the buyer's personal interests or buying motives, and emphasizes these in the presentation rather than the features or benefits of the product. Also known as one-to-one (or 1to1) marketing.
- **Kinesic Communication** — communicating through body movements such as head nodding, stance, posture, hand gestures, and so on. Nonverbal communication. Body language.

[... Chapter 6 (print edition) continues at this point ...]

Know anybody struggling to get started on a shoestring budget?

Why not help them get started?

Tell them about *Mischief Marketing!*