

DUKE'S SPECIAL MARKETING RECIPE



February 2010

Thinking about hiring a new marketing firm? Consider Duke Marketing. A short drive over the Golden Gate Bridge in California, north of San Francisco in the city of San Rafael is a small integrated marketing firm headed by marketing expert Linda Duke. A northern California born and raised bundle of energy and 20+ year veteran of the restaurant industry Duke and her firm, Duke Marketing, specialize in marketing for multi-location and franchise organizations.

Noah's Bagels was one of her first clients and she helped the new brand get on the map before its peak and purchase back in the mid-90's. "When you hire Duke Marketing you get, Linda Duke, a senior executive Vice President-level person, with her entire marketing department," says Noah Alper, founder of Noah's Bagels.

Duke Marketing has created award-winning advertising, marketing and public relations for many national restaurant chains. "Some of the brands we have worked with may have lots of restaurants open, and not have a marketing executive in place or any materials for their restaurants," says Duke. "They need an action plan, marketing tactics and collateral materials for franchisees or general managers."

Duke provides senior leadership and a full service marketing team including creative and graphic services, advertising design and media buying, local store marketing and more for a select group of clients. Some of Duke's big name clients have included Chevys Mexican Restaurants, Togo's Sandwiches, Jenny Craig, Boudin Bakeries, Pei Wei Asian Diner, Rubio's Fresh Mexican Grill and Daphne's Greek Cafes.

What about public relations? Restaurants need to get media impressions or viewers, listeners and readers. Duke says, "PR is more than just sending out a press release." Ms. Duke has built relationships with the media over the past twenty years, and manages public relations and media relations for clients worldwide. She has landed TV news segments and media trained top chefs and operators for appearances on The Food Network and Travel Channel, CNN, CNBC, FOX News and local television stations across the country. Ms. Duke manages investor relations for publicly-held companies and is an expert in crisis communications.



"Local Store Marketing is the least expensive way to generate sales in any economic climate," says Marketing Expert Linda Duke



One of Duke's first clients was Noah's Bagels working with founder Noah Alper who started the soon to be successful brand in Berkeley, California.

Several of Duke's clients have garnered national media attention. Sales results from her efforts have earned her the nickname "Double-digit Duke. "Public relations isn't all we do," says Duke. "We create customized local store marketing programs that generate news."

Duke's first client was a restaurant chain with 12 franchisees. "I learned early in my career what local store marketing was all about," says Duke. Duke Marketing provides local store marketing planning and training, as well as events and grand openings for multi-unit operators. Duke herself has opened restaurants and handled hundreds of events for numerous multi-unit restaurant organizations across the country.

Duke is an accomplished author and speaker, and she is obviously driven with a results-oriented no nonsense approach. "With parents from the 'show me state' Missouri –proving myself is in my blood," says Duke. Duke's team is made up of a handful of smart young women who provide support for all client projects, and her husband, Michael the COO and CFO. "They call me the CEO for chief errand officer," chuckles Michael Fagen. Duke counts her blessings when she talks about Michael. "I couldn't do what I do and have the ability to work along side each of my clients without the best support possible." With no children of her own, Duke says, "My Company is my baby—it's 24-7 but doesn't cry too much!" Duke is sure to point out the three most important people in her life: who handle everything so she doesn't have to take her focus off of clients, her husband, her long-time assistant and recent college graduate, Laura and chief creative officer, Janet.

One of Duke Marketing's clients, Becky Ann Hughes, Director of Black Angus Restaurants, offered "Linda is the most energetic person I know. She has helped my team with everything from press releases to events. Her connections with the restaurant industry press where highly valuable to helping my team with opportunities and challenges. Linda is a talented and dedicated professional who is highly skilled at creating energy and excitement for any brand."

When asked about annual billings or book sales, Linda Duke side steps the question. "We prefer to stay small," says Duke. "When I was in the corporate world, I would meet with agency principals, big hitters and get handed over to some assistant account rep and never hear from them again." Duke prides herself on her one-on-one communication with operators and clients. She insists on being on location at client events to test her tactics and get customer feedback first hand. "If I can break down a marketing activity into the simplest form, a recipe let's say, then any restaurant operator can use it."

"The success of my book is only as successful as it inspires those restaurant operators who use it."

Linda Duke



In August of 2008, Duke did just that, she published, [Recipes for Restaurateurs Marketing-Cookbook](#). "I was inspired to write my marketing recipes because of the enormous audience demand after my speaking engagements," said Duke. Duke's self-published marketing cookbook has had great reception. Containing over 100 different "recipes" marketing tactics and real client case studies, Duke's book release and tour was a huge success. Many restaurant chains, operators and suppliers have ordered thousands of Duke's marketing cookbook and some already proclaim results.

"We purchased *Recipes for Restaurateurs* when it first came out," said Melanie Farkas, CEO of [Churro Station](#) franchises. "Three of our franchisees used the recipes in Duke's book for their grand opening, fundraisers, initial local store marketing plan and in less than six months, we are seeing sales increases," she continued. "Instead of struggling to stay ahead in this tough economy, all of our locations are seeing same store sales up over last year thanks to the local store marketing efforts we implemented."

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Recipes for Restaurateurs offers step-by-step sales building recipes, from planning, timelines, and supplies, all the way through to execution. “Most restaurant operators were in need of an all encompassing guide—a real tactical marketing toolkit even before the economy soured,” says Duke. “The biggest challenge restaurant operator’s face is creating, executing and tracking sales driving promotions in their three to five mile radius,” she continued. *Recipes for Restaurateurs* delivers applicable ideas, proven methods, and easy to follow instructions to get results.

In addition to being a published author, Ms. Duke is a nationally recognized speaker, educator and motivational trainer. She speaks frequently at industry and client conferences, and is a member of the board of directors of the California Restaurant Association’s Educational Foundation CRAEF, and the National Restaurant Industry’s Fast Casual Council.

Duke provides customized seminars, workshops and keynotes and has received many accolades for her efforts including her recent keynote at US Foodservice (one of the largest food distributors to restaurants in the United States), kick-off meeting for 2010. “No one thought Duke could entertain our 200 sales people for 90 minutes—she did it! Her presentation was the best and her book is a must-have for all our reps restaurant operator clients,” said Michael Cala, Director of Marketing, US Foodservice San Francisco Division.



Duke sits on the board of the California Restaurant Association’s Education Foundation CRAEF along with Food Network star Guy Fieri.

As a self-proclaimed, “naturally caffeinated and vertically challenged” person, the five foot tall Duke energizes any room she walks into. She lives with her husband Michael in the San Francisco Bay Area on the border of Sonoma County where she gets to experience, taste and try some of the world’s greatest food and wine. “People ask me all the time, ‘what’s your favorite restaurant?’”, says Duke. “How can you answer that when you work with so many great restaurant operators and you live in the Bay, Napa, and Sonoma area?” She’s not shy to offer, “They call me “sister bubbles” since I love champagne!”

When asked about the recent negative sales trends, restaurant industry economic conditions and negative press about the food industry, Duke just shrugs her shoulders and says, “I have told operators across the country—be thankful you’re not selling lingerie, people still have to eat and the restaurant industry will prevail. See continued, “Local Store Marketing is the least expensive way to generate sales in any economic climate.”

Ready for her next challenge, Duke is planning on publishing a series of marketing booklets or “small plates” for restaurant operators. “I want to make it easy for any restaurant operator to host an Anniversary event or an eating competition. They can purchase a small plate—or one of my marketing pamphlets which come with a video and explains how to do it.” Other small plates Duke will offer include grand openings, fundraisers, and hosting a tasting event and all will be available for purchase online at www.marketing-cookbook.com.

Duke isn’t finished with her list of goals; she is quick to point out that she recently launched *Restaurant Marketing Magazine*, an online marketing publication for restaurant owners, operators, marketers and chefs. “Our first issue of *Restaurant Marketing Magazine* came out six months after the marketing cookbook debuted,” Duke says. “We’ve been so busy but will have a March 2010 issue coming out and hope to have at least four a year.” Duke says she has plans to offer a Marketing Shop and will be having a Tour of events across the country, but says, “I wouldn’t want to give away such a great news story... just yet!”