

4/14/10

Dear Mr. Elsasser,

It was reassuring to hear that public relations played a key role in changing the image of a successful company like Denny's. The article "Public relations is a main course at Denny's" published in *The Strategist* Fall 2009 issue gave an example of how social media and a single event improved the brand's image for the restaurant franchise.

Currently, I am a public relations intern for the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Alumni Association. I can thoroughly relate to how public relations can impact the longevity of a company, institution or organization, as the article stated.

When Denny's aired the ad during Super Bowl offering a free Grand Slam breakfast to customers for one day, Denny's CEO Nelson Marchioli said, "It totally changed the image of the brand." Similarly, the SIUE Alumni Association recently launched a new series of events called the Alumni Networking Breakfasts. The association has hosted a breakfast in three different cities throughout the St. Louis area. Though they are ordinary events, they are beginning to attract alumni that have not otherwise been involved with the association formerly. It is baffling to think that a single event can change the image of a brand's name so quickly.

The breakfasts are becoming popular because they are free to attend, breakfast is provided and attendees have the opportunity to network with area alumni. The convenience of the event makes it attractive to working professionals, thus attracting more potential members. Much the same way, Denny's idea to offer a free breakfast is attractive to customers. Though hosting strategic events are advantageous to any company, incorporating social media into the mix is also vital.

Denny's was smart to incorporate social media such as Twitter and Facebook to get their messages across to their customers. The Alumni Association has a difficult time staying connected to recent graduates. However, with the utilization of social media, the association has found an easy way to connect with alumni. With communication strategies in constant change, it would be in the best interest of all companies and organizations to utilize these tools such as social media to keep up with society and the way people communicate.

Sincerely,

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