

FRIDAYS AT FOUR  
Volume One Issue Five

It's been an interesting week for GF Strategies...From Houston Texas and the Houston Livestock Show to a local Portland Oregon conference Innotech, highlighted by a speech by the CEO of Tektronix Richard H Wills.

**Houston Livestock Show** was in its first week...WE have worked with the Show and the food and beverage tracking system we first put in place there in 1996 is still being used. This the third year for the show in the new Reliant Stadium, a magnificent stadium that makes the Astrodome sitting next door look small. The Show and other parties are deciding what to do with the Astrodome...Finding a way to make sure it continues to stand versus implosion. The latest proposal is to turn it into a hotel.

Among the things we saw at Houston that might be ideas that could be taken back was a successful AG Venture section...this had areas where actual dairy farm was set up, and other hands on activities for kids.

One of the vendors in this area was the Texas Department of Agriculture. They were promoting healthy eating by kids, with coloring books, and snacks that encourage this. Might be something your state ag department might consider sponsoring.

We also noted the Show has gone to bar coding of all tickets and credentials. Each gate has a portable barcode reader and this information is scanned and can be read at anytime and given to management to determine actual gate counts, not just for total and hourly attendance but also by pass type or ticket type.

ON the parking front, the Show offered a half day parking rate if the car was out of the lot by 3 p.m and an all day rate. The charge was 7.00 for half day and 12.00 for all day. Cars not out of the designated lot by 3:30 p.m were subject to tow. This allowed for all lots to be turned over for when the concert and rodeo crowds arrived at 5:30 and totaled 70,000 to have more parking spaces and get added revenues.

**At Innotech** in Portland, Oregon there were many panels on the new media with topics such as Viral Marketing and a company that is a leader in this marketing Anvil Media.

So what is viral marketing? Viral marketing is "any marketing technique that induces web sites or users to pass on a marketing message to other sites or users, creating a potentially exponential growth in the messages visibility and effect".

Another panel was devoted to Blogs, Pod casting and RSS Feeds, and another one on when to WiFi and When To WiMax..If you are not familiar with these terms, find someone on your staff who is...Your customers are going to be asking for these services at your venues.

The keynote speaker was the CEO of Tektronix Richard H Wills. A Tek employee since 1979, his message was that you should never forget the business fundamentals. That is what happened with the dot com bust.

He has refocused the company on what they do well, sold of some divisions and refined

the core values of the company.

In Philadelphia this week there was a Boomer Business Summit. Here are some facts. There are now 77 million baby boomers, with spending power of more than \$2 trillion annually. An astounding 91 percent of the US Net Worth is held by someone 40 years or older. Speakers at the Summit were told, “aging today is where technology was 30 years ago”. Some new companies were featured including one called Life Bio that has come up with a template for those who want to create an oral history or memoir of their older relatives or family members. Other products shown included TerraClimb a stair climbing hand truck, the Power Knee that helps reinforce knee movements, and Moving Solutions that assists with packing and sorting when seniors make a move to downsize. Term of the Week...Customer Analytics. An article in ChainStoreAge points out for retailers, 40% of revenues come from maybe just 4% of transactions. When a retailer knows how these key customers are shopping, it's a good bet similar customers are doing the same things at competitors. And last I recommend again the book from last week Never Eat Alone.

**Remember GF Strategies....Food Service Planning that can Increase your revenues....**