

FRIDAYS AT FOUR
Volume Eight Issue Seven
June 13, 2011

News and Trends from GF Strategies
www.gfstrategies.com

So here it is...A Fridays at Four coming to you on Monday...There is a good reason for that. We could call this issue the **Bonnaroo Special**. For those readers who have never heard of this event, it is one of the largest and most successful outdoor music festivals in North America. Drawing crowds of 80,000 per day for four days to a 700 acre farm in Manchester Tennessee near Nashville...WE were invited to the event this year to look at all their food and beverage sales points, as we have done for 19 years for our many customers.

So let me tell you a little bit about the event. Founded ten years ago, the event brings some of the top names in music from around the world to perform on eight stages--- names from Eminem, to Buffalo Springfield, to Mavis Staples, to Lil Wayne to Bela Fleck. For a four day admission required, the 80,000 pay at least \$300 each to attend the event. Most of them either bring a tent or an RV and campout for the entire event. Music starts at noon each day and goes on continuously until 4 a.m.

Now for some of the innovative things we saw at the event:

- RFID wristbands for admission...NO paper tickets and each wristband had a unique number associated with each attendee that controlled access to VIP areas and cut down on the issue of fraud and forgery. It will be interesting to hear the results.
- Water bottles...A big concern...so they dug their own well. Around the grounds they have these large thirst stations, where if you have a bottle, you just put it up to a faucet and you fill your bottles. This did not impact their water sales.
- Waste reduction. They have hired a firm Clean Vibes to do all they can to reduce the waste stream. Volunteers stand at all of the disposal sites where there are three bins. They educate the customer on which bin to place their waste into. The Festival takes the food scraps and actually generates energy from the waste.
- Cell phone charging relax station sponsored by FUSE and HTC phones. The lines to recharge mobile phones was at all times 500-1000, using solar power to power the juice to recharge the mobile phones.
- A comedy tent and a cinema tent. large tents seating 2000, that showed movies and also brought in comedy headliners, including Cheech from Cheech and Chong. This event clearly shows that if you continue to give the customers what they want they will still come no matter what the economy. WE hope to work with them to look at some ways for the event to manage the food and beverage cash systems and POS locations.

Other news you might want to follow that we came across in our readings:

- The modern business card is evolving to bridge gaps—a twitter handle or cards equipped with a quick response code. To read more about these technologies visit a blog called **Lifehacker**. GF Strategies sees these QR Codes as becoming a real marketing tool once those who have smart phones see what these codes can do.
- Did you see the new USDA food pyramid that came out? Now it is a plate graphic and has the brand ChooseMyPlate.gov. The new pyramid replaces the old pyramid and was designed to become more relevant to consumers of all ages.
- A new Chicago startup called Grubwithus, is an online service that brings together strangers to have a meal. The firm says that more than 10,000 have registered with the site. It has sold some venture capitalists on the concept of social dining. Another firm Sonar, is a mobile application that combs a users connections on Face book, Twitter and Foursquare and alerts them if they any friends in the vicinity. (New York Times)
- Google Wallet has launched in New York and San Francisco. The technology is powered by NFC or near field communications, and is compatible with newer point of sale terminals. Google is building an open platform for this new payment service...Just think about the ability to preload your cash and not have to carry cash with you when you attend a large event. The challenge is the lack of NFC equipped mobile phones right now. (Wall Street Journal)
- Text traffic is declining. New threats are emerging, including an app shown by Apple last week that will allow I Phone and I Pad users to bypass carriers and send messages over the internet to others with Apple devices. According to one company “its not cool anymore to SMS” (Wall Street Journal)
- And watch for a startup founded by Jack Dorsey who co-founded twitter called Square. His new company will allow small mom and pop merchants with a way to accept credit cards. “Money is a concept that has been with us for 5,000 years. And it’s never been designed to be anything but a burden” says Dorsey. (Wired June 2011)
- A new term comes from the latest issue of Digital Signage Magazine...”mobile context”.It is defined as the match between a consumer’s environment (store, restaurant, event venue) and the best mobile experience (mobile app, ad campaign, transactions for that environment). According to the article, very few digital signage installs are being used to create mobile context.

We close this issue with a quote from one of our favorite books **The Go Giver** by Bob Burt. **The Law of Value**

“Your true worth is determined by how much more you give in value that you take in payment.”