THE TRIAD VIRTUAL FIRESIDE CHAT SERIES™

via zoom mastermind | february 4, 2022

featured speaker

JOHN RUHLIN

John Ruhlin exemplified and mastered the art of sales through relationships at Cutco, where he cut his teeth (and went on to become the largest distributor in Cutco history). After years of speaking on stages across the country on growing your business in unconventional ways through gifts, he published a book on his learnings. Giftology went on to take the world by storm, become an international best seller, and crowned John as THE expert on giving gifts that grow your relationships (and your revenue). Today, John is the CEO of the Ruhlin Group, a gift logistics company that serves Fortune 100 companies and world-reknowned speaker & thought leader.

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"I'm always looking for the little hinge that swings a big door."

"It's not the THOUGHT that counts,
its the THOUGHTFUL thought that counts."

"This isn't a conversation about gifting.
This is a conversation about relationships."

Nobody needs more crap, nobody needs more stuff, but everyone
has room for a thoughtful artifact."

"If you're giving gifts for the tax write-off, you're probably not gifting for the right reasons. If I can put a dollar into something and it kicks me back $10, I don't care about the tax write-off."

"Take the extra 5% and put their name on it.
You'll connect with their heart."

"A sucky gift at unexpected time is better than the great gift when they're getting a ton of other gifts."

"That's why I treat the CEO of the Orlando Magic the same way I treat his executive assistant."

"If they're gonna be opening up wine from their competitors, what if we invested $500 in the nicest wine key they've ever seen?"

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USING "GIFTS" TO DEEPEN PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Return on relationship is better than ROI on relationship (ROR > ROI):

- Everything you do either communicates intimacy and closeness or puts you farther away
- **The gift is a delivery vehicle for the emotional connection**
  - No one cares about gifts
- We're not looking to be better "gift givers" but to solidify our relationships
- Grow revenue, grow relationships, grow generosity

Cool "swag" is cool. But company swag is not a true "gift":

- There's nothing wrong with promotional products or swag, but most people are confused in what they're trying to do.
  - Why are we trying to turn our relationships into billboards?
- **No one would ever go to their best friends wedding and give gift that says "Compliments of (X)" on the box or wrapping paper**
  - So why we do it in business?
- **When all you do is give "swag", you're telling the receiver that "this is a business relationship" more than a "personal relationship"**
- When you give articles of clothing with your logo on it, its not a GIFT, its a UNIFORM.
- People won't be emotionally moved by swag - swag doesn't bring you to tears
- You don't need your logo to remind them of you; they'll remember the gift came from you

More affluent they are, the less they want to be a billboard:

- They can afford to buy whatever they want
  - Example: Papa Johns bought all key relationships a Rolex, but put their logo on the face of it
  - Most of them ended up in a pawn shop
- **A GIFT is a reminder to the receiver that "I see you, I appreciate you". The logo does the exact opposite of that.**
- We have to make the gift about the human relationship - and ideally the most thoughtful thing they've ever received

Consider "ARTIFACTS" and this insane story about an artifact that broke apart a family:

- Story comes from Joey Coleman (recovering lawyer)
- Joey was working w/ family over inheritance when family patriarch passed away
  - His inheritance was $5 mill+ - but the family fell apart over a $20 item, a harmonica
  - The patriarch would play the harmonica every day for five years at the dinner table
  - The harmonica reminded the family of every gathering, celebration, meal together
- **How can you create gifts that turn into family artifacts?**

When you give REAL gifts, people are likely to disproportionally reciprocate:

- **When you give a meaningful gift, the receiver is subconsciously reminded of you, grateful for you, and wants to see you win**
  - Example: Robert Cialdini's Principle of Influence: Reciprocity
  - In a study, when the waitress delivered the check with a mint (vs without a mint) the tip went up by 23%
- Remember: some people are givers, some are takers, some are matchers

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Nobody needs more stuff, but everyone has room for a thoughtful artifact

- When you craft thoughtful artifacts, include the following:
  - THEIR name (instead of your logo)
  - THEIR legacy, family, faith, values, favorite quotes
  - Don't look at your gift as THE ITEM, think about what it REPRESENTS
  - Aim for "love bombs"
  - **Handwritten note HAS to go with it**

John likes to aim for gifts used in the kitchen - aka, the HUB of people's homes:

- Kitchen physically represents, food, family, festivities, gatherings, holidays, memories
- **The most expensive real estate in someone's house is their countertop**
- Use gifts that emulate dinner at your house, instead of a sales pitch

Aim to give gifts/artifacts that tie in the whole family:

- **You have to get the entire family behind you**
  - Example: If you're hosting a dinner party, your wife will put out the wine glasses with YOUR family initials (and definitely not the ones with someone else's brand)
  - Example: If she is picking out your outfit for the dinner party, she's not going to pick the one with some logo on it
- **Include the kids and grandkids as much as possible**
  - Not just a onesie for the FIRST grandkid, but a family BLANKET that can be passed down
  - Most people go all in on the first (grand)kid, but what about the second (or fifth)?
- **In a B2B setting, this also includes the "work family"**
  - Wives & assistants are always the first to say thank you
  - Treat the receptionist the way you treat the person you're trying to connect with

The ROR AND ROI is much greater when you DON'T go CHEAP/LAZY:

- **Think about "cost per impression"**
  - $50 long term doesn't beat the $500 wine key
  - If the $500 wine key is used once a week for 10 years, that's 500 thoughts/reminders of you
  - The $50 wine key will end up in the trash
- Its about making an impression for DECADES, not DAYS

Things to AVOID when gifting:

1. **Try to stay away from luxury items, that can come across as a bribe**
   - When you're too over the top, it can make people uncomfortable
2. **Avoid tying into birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas, when its EXPECTED:**
   - Hit them on a random Tuesday when you went out of your way to do it
   - "I did this because I CHOSE to/I WANTED to, not because I had to."
   - Expected and obligatory makes it transactional. When its expected, you lose 95% of impact\
3. **Don't expect to hit the mark everytime - you're never going to bat 1000%**
   - There will be people who say - "Oh, this isn't for me". Aim for the 80-90%
4. **Don't try to send too much stuff to too many people**
   - Give more to less people
5. **Try to avoid "consumables" & remember "decades", not "days"**
   - Consumables tend to be a "one and done"

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DO BUSINESS.
DO LIFE.

AS A DBDL INSIDER, IT'S OUR GOAL TO ADD AS MUCH VALUE AS POSSIBLE.

This document is an excerpt from a private, Triad Member-Only mastermind with John Ruhlin.

We are sharing a portion of it with you as a special give for being a DBDL Insider.

To explore what membership with Triad Partners looks like (and gain full access to this document)...

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