
GUERRIERO'S THREE LAWS OF INCENTIVE TRAVEL

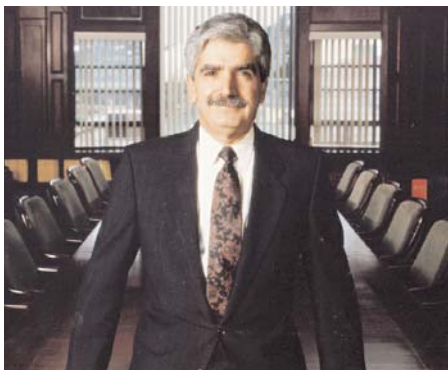
by Bob Guerriero

1 Law Number One: Make the goal attainable!

It starts with a planning meeting in the marketing department. "If they can do \$18,000 with a little effort, they can do 22 with a little more, and really, when you think of it, why can't they do 35? And . . ." the guy with the calculator adds, ". . . If only 20% of the dealers increased their business 100% (or 75%) our profit from the incremental sales would be . . ." punching out those numbers, while euphoria sweeps the room.

Let's stop this "planning meeting" and inject some realism. We've all had new and aggressive customers double their business in a year. And you all remember the guy in Chicago who tripled his business then doubled the triple the next year. Yes, there are people who can increase 100%. But are they the majority?

You are designing a major corporate contest. You need the majority of your customer base to respond enthusiastically if the program is to "be good!" The majority of your customers, remember, not the anomalies.



Bob Guerriero founded THE JOURNEYMASTERS in 1968, at a time when the incentive travel industry was entering adolescence. He has remained an industry leader for these past years. Guerriero was a founding member and first full term President of the industry's professional society, SITE (The Society of Incentive Travel Executives) as well as the first President of The SITE Foundation, established in 1986 to fund research in the field of motivation. Guerriero was also instrumental in developing the IT&ME (Incentive Travel and Meetings Exposition), the industry trade show, and served on the IT&ME advisory board for its first seven years. He presently is in his second term on the Las Vegas Incentive Travel Advisory Council.

2 Law Number Two: Make the reward deluxe!

Deluxe! I mean a trip the dealer could not duplicate on his or her own no matter how wealthy they were, or how willing they are to spend that wealth.

I'm not talking about a wholesaler's package, an alumni tour from a company that specializes in such things. Such wholesalers fill a place in the travel market, and heaven forbid they should ever stop doing it. However, we appeal to those who listen to an upbeat drummer. Any dealer that can win your contest, can afford to call a travel agent and book a wholesaler's package.

A wholesaler, by his need for volume, cannot design a deluxe trip. Who'll pay for it? He needs the heads. He has to fill the rooms. He has to appeal to the bargain hunter inside of his customers. And even if they know London, can he or she get the COLD STREAM GUARDS to march into the ballroom and perform at your welcome dinner? Can they get you a private cocktail party in the HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT? Or hire a fleet of Mercedes and organize a motorcar rallye through Switzerland – Italy – Austria and back to Switzerland? Or take your entire group by helicopter to the top of Mendenhall Glacier for a cocktail party. We can and we do. It is what your dealers are entitled to, and should expect. *The exceptional deserve the unforgettable!* I believe it, so should you.

3 Law Number Three: Promote it constantly!

An incentive travel contest cannot reach fruition unless you have the attention of your contestant universe. What does it profit you to follow LAW ONE & LAW TWO and not remind them again, and again, and then once more, that you are offering an extraordinary reward in exchange for their extraordinary effort.

I think the average American is bombarded with 27,000 advertising messages a day. (I read that some place. Probably *Incentive* magazine.) With all that clutter, do you honestly think they will remember from the introduction of the contest until the end of the contest that they are in a contest?

Send weekly mailings, standings reports, sales bulletins, travel pieces. Promote your contest! OK, you can't do it weekly. Twice a month then. Twice a month at the least!

You're competing for their attention, shouldn't at least one of the 378,000 attention getting messages they've received in the past two weeks be from you? At least one?

You want them to do something for you they wouldn't ordinarily do. If they do it you're going to reward them with something they ordinarily would not have. Then doesn't it make sense to tell them about it? And tell them again? And then, tell them once more? However, if you adhere to the THREE LAWS, you'll discover that when it's good, it is magnificent!

Author's note: This article is a condensed version of an article I wrote for the old INCENTIVE MARKETING magazine in January of 1979. The LAWS haven't changed. The author got older is all.
