

Brand Building for Individual Angus Producers

National Angus Convention & Trade Show
workshops offer tips on marketing.

Story & photo by **Barb Baylor Anderson**, field editor

How do you build brand loyalty? That was the question Becky Weishaar, director of Creative Media with Angus Productions Inc. (API), asked a packed room of attendees during one of the marketing breakout sessions of the Angus Means Business National Convention & Trade Show.

Weishaar, who joined API this past summer, has spent nearly two decades helping clients develop and execute marketing and advertising campaigns. Now she oversees API's branding and business-development efforts. She and others on the API team work with individual producers to help them build an identity, not just market cattle, to set their operations apart.

"You want people to look to you first with a sense of personal connection with you and with your products to sell," she said. "People are consistently bombarded with information from many sources, and it is hard to break through. The key is balance."

Weishaar noted the world of technology is rapidly changing the tools available and used. Desktop computer use is down 25%, while mobile-device use is up 35%.

With that information as the backdrop, she offered Angus producers 21 rules to branding:

1. No one has all the answers.
2. Be a contrarian. It is OK to be different and to think outside the box.
3. Whoever tells the best story wins. The most powerful aspect of the story you tell may be the human element.
4. Hire a kid. Put a college-age person on your payroll with social media expertise.
5. Capture, store and maintain customer information in a system you will use and update.
6. Put some hay in the barn. Photos, words and video are the currency of advertising and marketing. You will need to rely on these when marketing.
7. Develop a social-media and Internet presence.
8. Be smartphone friendly. For

example, be sure your website works on mobile devices and has active links to contact information.

9. Build a simple website that you can update.
10. Launch a YouTube channel. You can exponentially reach more people and post videos of cattle for sale, for example, and direct buyers to them.
11. Measure results. Find out the analytics behind your online presence.
12. Get moving. You still must go see people face to face to be effective.
13. Color is everything. Be consistent, just like John Deere.
14. Get a great logo. API can design one, or you can seek out other professional help.
15. Go old school. Write thank-you notes and written communications to clients.
16. Write. Build a personal touch, produce a newsletter.
17. Maintain contact. Have regular contact with customers, ask about their farm and family. Reconnect in 72 hours or less with new contacts, or you might lose them.
18. Create a story not just around you, but around specific things you have to sell.



► "Be that Velcro that makes people pull toward you because they want to do business with you," says Becky Weishaar, director of API Creative Media.

19. Teach. Angus breeders set the pace for the industry. Share that knowledge.
20. Repeat, repeat, repeat. If you are tired of an ad, it may just be beginning to have an impact on prospective customers.
21. Understand the tools you have to work with, and choose one or a few. You do not have to engage with every possible social media avenue. "Be that Velcro that makes people pull toward you because they want to do business with you," says Weishaar.

