

The T.K.D. Flash

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Upcoming Black Belt Tests:

Black Belt Testing in North Carolina on March 25. The Region 5

Regional Black Belt Test for 2006 will be held on September 16. Master Earl Weiss will preside. Instructors, contact either Master Weiss eweisstk@aol.com or Mr. VH fmvh@execpc.com. Students, your contact should be with your instructor.

A blessed man, indeed, is Mr. Wesley Day, to whom, at Christmastime at the highest tower of the Church of the Holy Family in Barcelona, Chodan Alice Soriano said, "Yes."

The Grafton Academy Basketball Outing was held February 19. The Marquette University Women played the Georgetown Hoyas at "The Al" named after legendary coach Al McGuire. After a victory for the home team we went out for custard at Kopp's, the "model" for Happy Days.

ERRATA: The following photograph was published but incorrectly captioned last month. The proper caption is below. We apologize to Mr. Love for confusing him with Mr. McDaniel's feet.



From left, front row: Mr. Love, Mr. Keller, Mr. Hoskins, Mrs. Johnson. From Left, back row: Mr. McDaniel, Mr. VH, Dr. Bauman, Mrs. Karpinsky, Mr. Mattias.

Big Dog TaeKwon-Do has moved. The new address is Thornhills Plaza Suite L, 6504 28th Street, Grand Rapids MI 49546. That puts them next door to Mama's Pizza, reportedly very good.

See photos of the last Fall Classic action at www.foxvalleytaekwondo.com

A Black Belt Test was held at SOCTKD (northern Illinois) on February 25. Mr. Braxton Miller and Mr. VH presided. Congratulations to Ms. **Cynthia "SuperShoes" Austera** of Island Lake, IL, on her promotion to First Dan Black Belt! Ms. Austera showed ample pluck and skill. Also to be noted was the hard work of Dans Don Thomas, Sandra Lasky, Ann Covalt, William Akin, Jim Gritschke, and Kasey Kruckenberg.

On a cold and blustery Upper Peninsula February 18, Danielle & Mic Spiessl tested for their Second Degree Black Belts at Marquette TaeKwon-Do. The temperature was -15 degrees with a wind chill of over -30 degrees. While the whole of the Upper Peninsula was in a blizzard the Keweenaw Peninsula protected the City of Marquette MI from the snow. Dr. Steve Osborn (Michigan State Director), in a valiant attempt to come up the Friday night before the test made it only to Sault Sainte Marie, three hours away. Surrounded by family and friends, Danielle and Mic demonstrated their excellence. Fourth Dan Jack Eibler presided over the test while Chuck Giotto (U.P. State Director) cornered the proceedings. Also in attendance was Mr. Jeff Scott, who helped prepare Danielle for her self defense routine. After the awards, the attendees braved the cold and convened at the Vierling Restaurant to celebrate the Spiessls' achievement. This makes four Spiessl ladies with a Second Degree Black Belt rank simultaneously. (*Ed. note: This has got to be some kind of record!!!*) There are more Spiessls in the wings.

Welcome to Flying Tiger TaeKwon-Do, headed up by the immensely capable Braxton Miller, 6th Dan, located in Lakemoor, IL. Their beautiful new facilities are located at the corner of Darrell Road and Route 120.

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A gup level test was held on January 28th at the Academy of Martial Arts Sheboygan. Mr Marc Mikkelson presided. Mr Edward Girdaukas was also on the testing board. Mr Alex Kornetzke did a fine job of helping Mrs Karpinsky corner. Three students tested to their next gup level, Mr Dan Kelly, Mr Josh Wakefield and Mr Gabriel Pech.

A movie/game night was held on Friday, February 24th at the Academy of Martial Arts Sheboygan. Twenty-four students, friends and staff attended. So you heard us in the next county? It appears a good time was had by all. This school and its personnel are treasures to their students and to your editor.

On Wednesday, February 22nd, I went to Richmond School in Sussex, WI as the guest speaker for that day of their Disability Awareness Week. They hold the event every two years so that students can learn more about various disabilities and to emphasize that even though some people have disabilities that may challenge them in some ways and force them to do some things differently, they still are all just regular people who can do some really great things. To emphasize this idea they ask each of their speakers to talk to the students about an activity that they do for which they have had to work through some of the challenges

that their disabilities present them.

I spoke about my cerebral palsy and some of the challenges that it presents. I pointed out that TaeKwon-Do has helped me as well as my students in the Special Needs Academy to work through many challenges. Mr. Harley Pals and Mrs. Mary Lubner helped me demonstrate some TaeKwon-Do for the kids and subsequently teach them some TKD basics so they could try it out. We did several sessions with 50-60 students and by the end of the day the entire student body of around 450 students from 4K to 8th grade got to see our presentation. The students really seemed to enjoy it. It was a great experience for all involved!

--Luke Mattias, 3d Dan

On February 18th a test was held at the Academy of Martial Arts Sheboygan. Mrs Jacqueline Karpinsky presided with the adept help of Mr Marc Mikkelson. Four students passed to their next level, Miss Ashley Doebert, Mr Jacob Norlander, Mr Ryan Ansorge and Miss Michelle Kelly. Mrs Caren Johnson had a chance to display her talents as a Blackbelt for the Sheboygan students and families who were not able to attend her test in Middleton. Mrs Johnson **Wowed** those in attendance with her forms, ho sin sul and sparring and was awarded her Blackbelt certificate.



Ashley Doebert and Jacob Norlander at the Feb 18th test in Sheboygan WI showing off twist kicks.

A Marketing Plan for Your School

By Aaron Prohuska, B.S.B.A.
(Marketing)

The premise of this thesis is to provide some general idea as to how a martial arts school may more effectively market itself in the community and surrounding areas.

One of the first steps that many companies take is determining how to present themselves to the public.

This can be done by coming up with a mission statement, which should define the specific mission of an organization within its broader mission. In broader terms, a mission statement should say why an organization exists and illustrate the intentions of the organization.

After a mission statement has been adopted, many companies then evaluate themselves by identifying their potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in what is called a SWOT analysis. In that analysis,

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opportunities and threats exist in the external environment, and strengths and weaknesses are an internal issue.

Marketing opportunities are areas either of need or interest in which an organization can perform profitably. For example, an opportunity that has come up at the Grafton Academy in the last couple of years is a growing student body. The Academy is able to respond to this opportunity by holding classes four days a week, holding classes that are appropriate for one's level for both children and adults, and finally, for a large student body Grafton has a large and diverse faculty, allowing students to get more individual attention and learn from a variety of instructors.

Marketing threats, on the other hand, are challenges that come up by virtue of unfavorable trends or developments that lead to decreased profit.

The obvious example in this respect would be other martial arts schools that are competitors for new students.

Examples of other external threats for us are anything that can be thought of that someone can put their money and time towards besides TaeKwon-Do. Examples could be after school programs, recreational programs, social clubs, fitness clubs and classes, etc.

In the long list of potential external threats, some

threats will clearly be more serious than others. By way of example, fitness classes may be regarded as more seriously threatening than a social club which does not appeal from an athletic standpoint.

Not all threats are entirely negative, as their very existence can be turned to our advantage. (One could ask "Why should I join TaeKwon-Do and not an aerobics class?" Another may ask "How can TaeKwon-Do classes benefit my aerobics classes?")

As stated before, the strengths and weaknesses of an organization are essentially internal issues.

In defining our strengths, the big question to ask is what the key selling points of our school or organization may be.

For the Grafton Academy, I would say our key selling points are that our rates are lower than most other schools out there and we don't have any contracts that one is obligated to. Next, the school is not going anywhere anytime soon, since it has been in business for the last 21 years, and as we all know has grown to an association of schools that cover multiple states and regions. Finally, we have a large and diverse faculty and student body that consists of many different types of people. The faculty is mostly home grown from within the school, and is extremely competent, with many of them earning college degrees, currently in college, or intend on being college bound upon their

graduation from High School.

Last of all, an organization may analyze any weaknesses that it may have with a few simple questions.

First of all, one can ask if there is anything that an organization is not doing that could be done. Secondly, is there any issue of ineffectiveness facing an organization where there could be better performance.

Before planning any advertising campaign, it may be helpful to figure out a target audience to which you want to advertise. By analysis of historic rosters of students, for example, one might be able to determine whether there is a particular age group more likely to participate in TaeKwon-Do. For example, you might find that you have a lot of students in their teens, and also a lot of students that in their late twenties and thirties. You can also choose an audience based on demographics. (An example of this is that you want to target teenagers, since that seems to be the majority of your student base, but you also want to focus on entire families as well, since TaeKwon-Do can be a great family activity.)

Once that has been established, think of different methods that one can use to advertise to your chosen demographic. Some ways to advertise for free (or at least for little to no cost) are by putting flyers about a school in local grocery stores, gas stations, community buildings, etc. (Most of these places will

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allow you to advertise free of charge.)

Demonstrations may also be a good way to increase public awareness of a school, but as far as recruiting efforts are concerned, they have not proven to be very successful.

Easily the best and most effective form of free advertising is Word of Mouth. It is important for a martial arts school, or any business for that matter, to establish a good reputation, because good word of mouth can lead to many referrals to a business, and bad word of mouth can keep people away from your place of business.

The form of advertisement that almost has to be done is to advertise in the phone book, and it is up to the school owners if they want to do anything flashy or just simply advertise the school's number.

Other forms of advertising are newspaper, radio and television commercials, billboards, through the web, and finally, advertising at one's own place of business.

Radio and television commercials may not be nearly as expensive as one may think.

Television commercials can be done affordably on cable networks that view to the immediate area. The cost of the commercials usually depends on the channel, as some channels get higher ratings than others. For example, ESPN would more

than likely get higher ratings than the home and garden network.)

Local radio stations may also be an effective form of advertisement, because the average of cost of commercials during prime-time listening (anywhere between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m.) tend to be under \$20 a commercial, and can be very effective in increasing public awareness.

I personally would not recommend advertising through the use of a billboard, because I'm not sure how effective it would be, and this form of advertising can be very expensive (usually anywhere from \$500 to \$700 a month, all depending where in town the billboard is located.)

In the age of the internet, it is very helpful for any business to have a good, effective web site that can be easily accessed, and display a good amount of information about the service that we provide. It may be helpful to advertise links to a web site through pages commonly viewed by those in the local community.

Finally, it is helpful to present a neat and clean appearance to a school, both on the inside and the outside, for it displays professionalism.

Counterpoint

By: Mr. Anonymous

Put yourself in the shoes of the person who knows little of the martial arts schools in a community but desires to get himself or a

member of the family involved. It makes little sense to spend money on a general mailing or an advertisement the price of which is dictated by access to a broad demographic; you need only reach those whose interest is already at least latent.

The best way to reach that demographic is to be available to those who would search out your service. Thus the Yellow Pages and the internet make up the important first prong of the marketing program.

The second is to promote your school by running such an excellent program and engaging in sufficient community outreach through demonstrations for the community at large that your reputation merits the calls of those who make inquiry. Ask your students to "tell a friend."

Being a presence by reasonable signage and location is helpful but secondary.

Maintaining the student body you have results from making your program worthwhile and pleasurable.

Finally, CLOSE. Have your "phone rap" down. Don't ever sell a program for a child without trying to sign up mom or dad. ("We have a lot of families....") Sell your faculty, your student body ('really nice kids'), your Art ("builds character, gets you in shape...."), your program ("available at a choice of times..."), your facility (which sells itself if it appears clean, safe, convenient). Good luck!