



On the ATB BoostR Stage - Mid Campaign

What I Learned in 45 Days of Crowdfunding

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Let me start by saying that a crowdfunding campaign is a unicorn, a mythical creature - most people have never seen one. But there is a growing number of people who believe, who have heard about one somewhere and want to know more.

I was in the second group.

Kickstarter, Indiegogo and even [ATB BoostR](#) have always been on my radar, on my never-ending to-do list of cool things I'd like to try one day - when I wasn't so busy trying to grow my business. So when I hit the BoostR site and submitted my application this summer, it was on a whim and out of pure curiosity.

Now in reality I've read many articles on successful campaigns, so I had a pretty good idea of the work involved in running one. I already had a decently-sized email list for [Girl Gotch](#) and the timing was perfect - well, almost. I did not, and still do not, have actual samples. But with a gentle push to get my campaign in for a chance at the BoostR stage, I jumped. I improvised and used my first quality samples for the video, made do with a quick lifestyle photoshoot, and hammered it all out in less than a week. My strategy worked! Nobody knew the difference and voila, my campaign was brought to life.

Here's what I've learned:



With crowdfunding and business in general, you are your brand. This was a huge change from how I previously looked at my business. I was not out front, ever - in fact I hid. My campaign forced me to *be* Girl Gotch. It's *my* story. My family. My underwear. My mission to change the underwear industry. My commando-loving kids (the irony, I know). Everyone I meet now knows me as Girl Gotch (or the underwear lady). Acquaintances who didn't know that I own an underwear brand? Well they do now. I tell them. I tell everyone.

2. Use Your Network, Work Your Email, and Pick Up The Phone

I'm an introvert and like most introverts, I think asking is hard. I think selling is hard. But everyone is a potential customer, a potential raving fan - *everyone* knows people with little kids. I created email lists outside my regular customer base - everyone from our contractor, to aunts and uncles, to preschool moms from 3 years ago, to old coworkers. They've all gotten 10 emails from me and not one person has told me to take a hike. I've worked Facebook like a pro, hitting up networking and buy/sell groups, running ads, and of course posting on my personal and business page at least daily.

Calling people is so taboo these days, but do it - a quick phone call to explain what BoostR is, what my campaign was all about and what exactly I needed resulted in many purchases. This is a skill I will need when I hit the pavement to sell so I'm happy to have practiced in a fun, easy way.

3. Engage, Engage, Engage

Engage your audience instantly - a tough endeavor when you are a solopreneur, but worth it during the short campaign period. Instagram Stories are a fun way to add personal tidbits to your brand. Twitter is by nature in real-time and there are so many cool people still tweeting. Ask your LinkedIn network if they've seen the campaign - people ignore email and Facebook algorithms filter posts, so never assume that they already know. Actively work to spread the word and encourage audience participation. Attach your phone to your hand for the entire campaign and respond instantly.

4. Share The Inside Track

People are genuinely interested in the day-to-day details of your business and your success - so give them what they want! The mundane tasks of running a little underwear company can actually be pretty exciting to someone who stares at a computer all day. I shared when our samples arrived, when I was making design decisions, when I was excited about a big meeting or out meeting with potential retailers, when I was taking a break at the park, when my kids put underwear on their heads and not their butts. I also introduced other local companies throughout my campaign. In addition to helping with rewards, they got their customers in front of my campaign and I got my customers in front of their business. A total win-win.



5. Be prepared, and then wing it

I went into my campaign fairly prepared with a good outline of tasks that I needed to do. I had emails outlined and ready to go, and ideas for social media posts at the ready. The reality, however, is that a crowdfunding campaign is so fluid that in addition to preparation you also need to be flexible. When things are happening – post, email, call. When events come up – go! When people want to meet – show up. Get involved and throw yourself out there – it’s the fastest way to success and helps you live your brand. Be creative and have fun.

Crowdfunding done right is a huge marketing opportunity, a ginormous learning curve, and a very fulfilling personal achievement. Go for it! I’d be happy to help.



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