

Make-A-Wish comes through with new deck for local family

Feel-Good STORY

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The Newstone family was given a brand new deck thanks to the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Submitted photo

By BEE FLINT
Of the Keizertimes

A project that should've only taken one month, ended up taking six. However, the wait ended up being worth it for the Newstone family who were able to get a new deck for their daughter with help from Rick's Custom Fencing & Decking and Make-A-Wish.

Meghan and Bart Newstone originally planned to take their daughter to Disneyland for her Make-A-Wish, but due to her medical conditions, traveling was out of the question.

The family then came up with the idea to get a new deck built for their daughter, who loves being out in the sun.

"She loves to be outside and we had a deck that wasn't super small, but it wasn't very big either. She loved to be out there, but it was completely exposed. There's no shade trees. There's nothing, it's just either sun or pouring down rain," Meghan said.

The Newstones were told that Make-A-Wish was unable to build the deck due to permit issues. Make-A-Wish noted that they could help with

supplies, but can't work on permitted projects.

The family reached out to a contractor in hopes to pay for the deck alongside with their GoFundMe, but were told that it would cost them \$60,000. Make-A-Wish suggested that the Newstones reach out to Rick's Custom Fencing & Decking for a better price.

The company had previously worked with Make-A-Wish in the past and were open to the opportunity to do it again. Taylor Pawley, the director of marketing for Rick's Custom Fencing & Decking, was in charge of that project and numerous other projects in their community.

"It was such a positive experience for our employees, for the family and for Make-A-Wish. Everybody got so much out of doing that and it had been such a positive thing, that we kind of just opened up to looking for future projects," Pawley said.



The Newstones reached out to Rick's Custom Fencing & Decking to speak to an estimator for a bid on the project. The estimator put them into contact with Pawley, who informed the Newstone family that they would work with Make-A-Wish to build the deck free of charge.

The family was shocked to know that their daughter's wish was finally going to happen after numerous barriers in the process.

"I was really overwhelmed. I think we were both in tears by that point

because we didn't think it was gonna happen," Meghan said.

The process of getting a permit for the deck ended up taking six months. Once they were able to get the permit, the deck only took five days to build.

Despite the long wait, the Newstone family loved how the deck turned out and enjoyed seeing the smile on their daughter's face.

"It is her favorite (area) in the house. It really is. It couldn't have been a better wish," Meghan said.

Marketing choices: what's essential

BY JENNIFER MORROW

Over the years, I've worked with many business owners through my advising duties at Chemeketa's Small Business Development Center. My clients often ask, "What marketing will work best?" They usually start with a website, (yes, it's essential), but what's next?

Marketing is not about what you're selling, or how long you've been in business, or how you make what you sell. All those things might matter, and can be important to how you express value and promote, but only if they reflect what your audiences want and care about.

Before you choose what to say and where to say it, know your audiences.

When you know and understand the people you must reach to be successful, what their concerns and problems are, their reasons to search out what you offer, you'll market effectively.

It's that simple. But it's still not easy.

That's why what you're marketing is less important. Answer the question, "What's in it for me?" for the right audiences, and you're nearly there.

Your message isn't "We do XYZ," but rather, it's the answer to the questions, "What's in it for me?" and "Why should I care?" from the viewpoints of your target audiences. That critical message must be in your tagline and on your website's home page and support it with detailed proof points. Avoid generic language such as "great quality" or "outstanding service." Instead, be specific about how you fulfill that answer.

Knowing your audiences better will guide where you ultimately place your marketing message. But your website is the foundation. Your marketing goal is to generate interest and send people to your website (or retail store).

In addition to having a website, there are many other creative ways to market

your business. If you're a local business with trucks or vans, vehicle graphics (with the right message) are basically free moving billboard signs. If you sell to other businesses, build a professional LinkedIn presence and ensure your website provides valuable information to download so you can capture warm leads. And if your audience is younger and your products and services are visual, utilize social media to attract attention to you and your website.

No business appeals to everyone. You want to market to your people—your best customers, those who love what you do and who recommend you. Begin with focusing on those people specifically: Who they are, how they find out about your business, what they expect from your business, what they know or don't know about what you do, what experience they've had with your competitors, and so on. Using their words (including

testimonials and reviews) will add power to your marketing—on your website, in social media or in advertising.

No matter who you're marketing to, how you sell or what you sell, the first principle of marketing is to reach the right audiences with the right message in the right way.

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