

HOW TO SLAY THE SUMMER “SLOW DOWN” PERMANENTLY

ENROLL 100+ NEW STUDENTS
IN 90 DAYS FOR \$75 OR LESS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL MARTIAL ARTISTS

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Strategy, Paradigm and the REAL Opportunity

Today we're going to be talking in depth and in macro about all sorts of summertime promotional activities that you can be using in your martial arts school to fight the summer blues.

Before we get started with some big picture items, it's important to keep in mind that NAPMA has its finger on the pulse of the Industry and we're all day, every day speaking with school owners from all over the world, just from the United States and Canada, but in 26 countries all across the world, so we're intimately in touch with "what's working" and what's NOT.

In these difficult economic times, and as we'll discuss today, especially during the summertime when many school owners struggle to grow, we'll outline for you today several **PROVEN** strategies to **FLOOD your school with new students**, provide a MUCH NEEDED community service, all without expanding your marketing budget!

So I think we need to start off with a little bit of the big picture, because it's very important that school owners start off any marketing activity, any sales activity, and virtually any activity in your school has to start off with the right paradigm. And I think that unfortunately we allow the summertime in many school owner's case, to be a slow down period, to be a time where since the kids are out of school and off their regular schedules that they stop coming to martial arts classes, or even worse, new students stop enrolling.

What we've found over the years not only at Mile High Karate in the franchise structure, but also with NAPMA members, and of course me in my own schools, is that summertime actually represents a unique opportunity to be very busy.

In fact, I know in one of my schools in Florida, we had our biggest months ever in the history of that school in July and it was because all of the grassroots marketing activity that we were doing during the summertime to attract a big influx of students, and we're going to discuss some of the nuts and bolts of exactly how to do that too in your school.

But I think what's most important initially, when we're starting this conversation, is that there is really no reason that summertime should be slow for you.

Program Structure That Keep Students Training During the Summer Months

There are a couple of structural items that you want to be looking at in your school to make sure that that happens.

Structure number one is that if your students are not on some sort of robust student agreement that basically creates an environment for them to think about training during the summertime the same way they think about it during the school year, then you're working against yourself.

Meaning if your students are on month to month agreements or no agreement at all, whatever type of loose structure you have in place, what that does is set up the student to think about your school kind of like you do another sport or activity.

They think as they would in a seasonal activity, since the "Season", I'm just not going to train during the summer and of course I'm not going to pay for my lessons if I'm not training, so I can just not train for 3 months and not really worry about it.

Of course that's a counterproductive philosophy, not only for the financial results of the school, but it's a counterproductive philosophy for student retention.

We all know if a student takes 3 months off their training the odds of getting them back at a high degree of efficacy are very low.

So that's item number one.

You're students have to be "thinking" about your program the right way. ANYTHING that suggests to them that Martial Arts Training is like "Soccer" or "Baseball" is highly counterproductive to you and them!

This FIRST priority is, creating the structure of the school, and the structure of the agreements in the school and the culture of my school such that "frames" students to think that it's NOT okay to take 3 months off in the summertime.

In addition to that, it's not a productive culture. I mean we all know as martial artists if we take 3 months off training, when I go back I'm not 3 months behind, I'm like a year behind, because not only did I not learn what all my friends learned the last 3 months, they're 3 months ahead of where I was, but I also went backwards because I've got to train 3 or 4 months to get back to where I was, so really I'm a half a year behind everybody else.

Now, we all know what happens to student when they're 3, 4, 5 months behind the friend that they used to train with.

Well, you've just crushed their motivation, you've hurt their self confidence level because they sort of measured their progress in tandem with their friend, and now that the friend is a blue belt and they're still a green belt, see have you done them a service or a disservice?

You've done them a tremendous disservice.

So you've got to make sure you're setting the right expectations. Otherwise, in reality, you are really doing the student a disservice and of course you're doing the business a disservice as well.

It's much more productive and much more valuable for long term student retention for a student to perceive your school as they do a higher education where it's something that they have to be very consistent with for 4 years, 5 years, 6 years in order to accomplish their goals.

Summer “Camps” and Summer Internal Event

One important revenue generator, a lot of owners on the phone here lately are planning on putting together a summer camp, but are not sure exactly what they’re going to do. (See the Free “Black Belt Report” provided)

Pre-planning is very important.

Right now (March or April) would be the time to start putting together some ideas, advertising for it, so if you have a special program in place and you’re going to have some fun activities going on, it would be really good to have that set in stone earlier than later.

Then of course you’ll need to plan the curriculum for the program with maybe a couple of movies and some other fun activities to go along with that.

So you’ve got 2 primary objectives in your “planning” phase:

Objective #1 is to compile and plan a program/curriculum that will be perceived as HIGHLY valuable to the Student AND to the Parent. In fact so much so, that they’ll be VERY excited to enroll.

Objective #2 develop marketing pieces and messages that will effectively persuade the internal students to enroll in the program AND to bring your message to their friends to encourage them to attend as well.

Here’s your universe of opportunity with summer camps, and there’s several, and a lot of school owners make the determination about which sub-segment of this they choose to do based on how labor intensive it is.

But here is your universe of options:

- Option number one is you’ve got a summer day camp that’s a couple of hours a day, and perhaps it’s 9:00 to 3:00, or 9:00 to noon, or whatever you think fits your customer base.
- You’ve got, model number two is you’ve got the full blown all day long from 9:00 or 8:00 until 5:00 or 6:00, which is like the daycare type replacement in the summertime.
- Then you’ve got the summer sport camp models, which is several hours for a couple of days, real high intensity martial arts training for a few hours of the day that is kind of like a summer course.

Now, school owners again are going to find which one of these models are going to work best for them, but here are a couple of things to consider:

One of our Inner Circle alumni members, Jason Yi, who runs a million dollar a year school plus, actually starts promoting his summer camp in January, and he actually does a summer camp for the entire summer, for I think 10 weeks of the summer time, and again that's a decision that a school owner makes based on how much labor and how many resources they want to put into their summer camp.

Some school owners do a summer camp for 1 week of the summer, for 2 weeks, for 4 weeks, for 8 weeks, for 10 weeks, whatever.

So you sort of have the opportunity to make those decisions, and one of the things that we've always found very useful, and this is very important, this is something you should really be focused on for your summer camp, is the summer camp certainly should be there to help serve the students that you have, but it should also be a lead generator.

Parents are going out of their mind when it comes to the end of school trying to find things for their kid to do during the summer time, and ours can be a very attractive model, it can be a very attractive option.

You should be using your current student body as gravitational feeders to have them invite their friends to your summer camp as well. So it's certainly something that should be a lead generator for a new student, AND it should be of service to the students you already have, and of course, generates revenue for the school.

Parents are paying top dollar in many cases for summer camps all over their community.

In fact, I'm down here in Florida of course and we have a very nice summer camp at a private school down the road and they do field trips to things like Universal Studios, Disney World and Wet 'n Wild and things like that, and parents are paying \$300 or \$400 a week in many cases for some of these very high end summer camps, and we certainly can position ourselves exactly the same way, because the lessons that we're teaching in our summer camps are much more valuable than the lesson Johnny is going to learn going to Universal Studios.

Now, Universal Studios is going to be fun and he'll ride some rides and he'll have a good time, but Mrs. Jones, wouldn't it be even better if he can come into our martial arts summer camp and go through an anti bullying program one day, or two days (or whatever), or to go through an anti abduction class, or to go through a child identification program, or to learn character skills, leadership skills, self esteem skills, confidence building skills?

See, in the general market those are very valuable lessons that we can be and should be teaching in our summer camps.

So the summer camp in and of itself should be a profit center, should be a lead generator, and should be a great service to the current students we have in the school.

And again, that report does give you a very detailed couple of day perspective on what types of activity you can be doing in your camp and things like that, and my recommendation is to layer on as much personal development material, leadership skills, teamwork skills and those type of things, and make sure that your attendees' parents know that you're doing those things. It can't just be at 1:00 p.m. when nobody is there to watch it. It's much more strategically advantageous to give them projects and homework assignments and in class activities where the parents have to interact, and they have to understand the value of the lessons you're teaching in the class.

So obviously a summer camp is a huge revenue generator, lead generator, and student service activity. Certainly it should not be overlooked.

HUGE OPPORTUNITY in the Summer!!

For the summer time there's a huge paradigm shift everyone needs to have **right now!!**

What we hear a lot with school owners who haven't made this leap yet, is that their perception is that it's tough to enroll new students in the summertime because students aren't "thinking about" enrolling in long term programs, they're not thinking about enrolling in clubs like they are during the school year.

They're not thinking about football or soccer or baseball.

In reality I think it's the opposite, in reality if we're a family oriented school, if we're marketing to the family market which I'm assuming people reading this report are, then frankly, the perspective students are more accessible during the summertime than they are any other time of the year.

Especially if you have difficulty getting involved with your local elementary schools, public and private.

So right now, let's say for example I have principals or administrators in school districts that make it difficult for me to get involved in school related activities. Well, now they're not in school.

The story I like to tell by the way, and I tell it a lot, so I hope I'm not being repetitive, but the story I like to tell is about the grizzly bear, when the salmon are running and you've got two different kinds of bears: you've got the bold, aggressive bear who walks to the stream and sees all the salmon running up the stream and tromps out into the middle of the stream where the current is the fastest and stands there hip deep in the water and snatches all the salmon he cares to eat as they swim by.



BE THIS BEAR!

Then you've got the other kind of bear who is kind of timid and is afraid to get his feet wet and he stands on the shore, and every now and then kind of a sickly, slow moving salmon swims by out on the edge and the other bear grabs that one because he's just on the edge, not really out in the middle where the herd is running.

I'd rather be the bear in the middle of the stream.

So you have to kind of decide what your school is.

Which one of the bears is your school?

And if you're sort of standing on the sidelines, hoping someone walks in, hoping the phone rings, you're kind of like the bear that's afraid to get his toes wet and afraid to go stand out in the current.

But instead you've got to think about where the salmon are running.

In our world, in our universe, in the family market especially, think about where there are big groups of your potential students and then go there, go get in front of them.

The Big, Big, BIG Idea!!

I'll give you a great, a **huge, huge, huge strategy** on that right now that frankly, for us our typical goal for a franchise school, for a Mile High Karate franchise school is that they need to generate at least 110 new students the three months of the summer.

So that's 30 plus enrollments per month during the summertime and we're very consistent with hitting those numbers because of what we're going to talk about next, which is how to go get involved in these community activities.

You've got sports teams and you've got people that are getting involved in soccer during the summertime and baseball during the summertime and things like that, and some school owners think that that's prohibitive, that that's difficult for them and it takes their prospects away.

Well in one way it does, but in another you know where they're at, you know where there's a big group of them.

So what you should do is take your Google map or pen and paper map and draw a circle around your school maybe 3 or 5 miles wide, and in that 3 or 5 mile radius you've got daycares, churches, public schools, private schools and youth groups.

Everyone of them are doing a summer camp this year, every one of them are.

Every elementary school in your area is having a summer camp, and in many cases they're not facilitated by the school, in many cases they're facilitated by the after school activity director or something like that.

Either way, every one of those businesses, daycares, every one of them, are all doing the same thing we are.

They're saying to themselves, I don't want to be slow during the summertime, what can I do to generate more business?

So every one of those churches and daycares and elementary schools, public and private, and park and rec departments, every one of them right now are sitting down with their calendar and they're saying to themselves, *"Dear God, I've got 3 months worth of activities that I have to fill up to keep my campers busy"*.

Now that to me is a problem that we can help them solve.

They're sitting down freaking out right now trying to figure out what they can do to fill the days, to fill the hours during the day. And they're saying to themselves okay, Mondays we're going

to go to the pool, so that takes care of most of the Monday. Tuesdays we're going to do a field trip over there so that takes care of that. Wednesday we're going to do XYZ activity, but that's only half the day on Wednesday. Thursday I don't have much going on, Friday, oh my gosh what are we going to do?

Wouldn't it be a great solution if we could go to that summer camp director and say "*Dear Mr. Summer Camp Director, would you like to have you and your staff get an hour off on Wednesday? Would you guys like to take all your students and know that they're going to be safe and have a fun, productive hour, and your staff and your facilitators get to take an hour and rest, just relax? Wouldn't that be great?*"

And they say well of course it would be.

Okay, well here's a great solution: we can come to your summer camp, in reality I'd rather have them come to my school, but let's for argument's sake today, I've got a great character development program that we can come to your camp once a week, twice a week, whatever you choose.

Once a week we can teach a 30 minute or 45 minute or one hour long class and it's going to have your students saying yes sir and yes ma'am to you and your facilitators, it's going to have them raising their hand with their backs straight and their chin up in a respectful, appropriate manner during the summer camp, it's going to have them accomplishing the 4 rules of concentration and the 7 magic words of respect with their parents at home.

Wouldn't that be great if you could add this into your summer camp at absolutely no cost to you, absolutely no cost to the family, but you get to promote to the family that they get this additional benefit for free?

Wouldn't that be great?

Now how many summer camp facilitators are going to be irritated by that?

None.

You'll have the odd bird out there that just doesn't want to listen to anything, I mean that will happen, so prepare yourself for failure, but how many of those things do you need to set up to have a great summer?

Now, I'm going to give you the **key that unlocks the castle door right now**: the one absolute requirement that you have is every student that participates in your program has to complete this very brief permission slip.

And that permission slip, the parent has to fill out the permission slip and sign it, and that permission slip is going to have full and complete contact information, it's also going to have a series of questions that ask them about their interests –

- would they like more information on free leadership and character development classes at XYZ karate
- would they like more information about free anti-abduction and child identification programs at XYZ karate
- would they like more information about free self confidence and focus building courses at XYZ karate
- would they like information on free karate lessons at XYZ karate?

They're going to answer yes or no to those questions, or they're going to check off the boxes that they're interested in.

You're going to collect all of these permission slips, and then at the end of your program, perhaps you do a class a week for 4 weeks, or a class a week for 6 weeks, or whatever it is you decide you want to do, at the end of your program each one of those students who participated in the program that can accomplish these 3 goals - and you get to make up the goals, maybe it's they can do the attention stance, the high block, and they can recite the 7 magic words of respect - they all get to come back to your karate school and earn their very first white belt.

So you're bringing them all back to your school at a given place and time where their parents can come and basically you're going to do like a first intro, and each one of them will get to earn their white belts, and mom and dad get to come of the chairs and tie the white belt onto the student and give them a big high five and a hug.

Right?

I mean literally in 2008 this little school over here in Florida, we did 360 new people in summer camps. And we didn't work that hard.

It was one big one of 100 students, and then a few little ones of 40 and 50 students each.

Very easy to facilitate, you're only there 45 minutes or an hour.

Now what we're providing for everybody in combination with this call today is the report on one of the methods to conduct a summer camp activity inside your school. One of the things that we do with our NAPMA members on a regular basis, every month we have a special tele-

seminar just like we're doing today with all of our Maximum Impact members, and we go through exactly what to teach in the class, exactly how to get in the door of these summer camps, exactly how to build the relationship with the facilitator so that this becomes an annual activity for you.

All of these promotional and marketing activities that don't cost a dollar, I haven't spent any money yet, I haven't done any direct mail or voice broadcasting or outbound telemarketing or fliers on cars, I haven't done any of that yet, and already you're getting a few hundred new prospects during the summer time for basically zero money.

It's all sweat equity.

And here's the real big winner: Almost all of us have an assistant instructor, or some SWAT team members who can go to these things and help us that don't need to be sixth or seventh degree black belts, they need to be good brown belts or even perhaps first degree black belts, and when you go into these facilities, we can really be a trusted community resource, and we build deep, deep, deep roots in the community.

Now once you do this for the summertime and everybody is blown away and they're ecstatic with how positive your program was and how impactful it was, and how many times the students raised their hand and said yes ma'am, not to you and not to your instructors, but to the summer camp facilitator, who a week before you got there had a hard time getting them all in the same room at the same time.

Now they're getting them in the same room and they're sitting up straight and their chin is high and they're demonstrating the 7 magic words of respect - look, how difficult now is it going to be during the school year to be doing things with that elementary school or church or daycare or sport activity?

Again, I think if we take a half step back and we think again from a 40,000 foot in the air perspective, if I'm a school owner, number one don't allow yourself to make the excuse that summertime's are slow, therefore I'm going to be slow.

Frankly, number one it's wrong. It's just not accurate.

Number two it's not productive for you to think that way.

How it's productive for you to think is okay, it's summertime, I am going to have a certain percentage of my students that are on vacation week to week, whatever week it's going to be, I am going to have some potential slowing of the media responsiveness, so if I'm doing newspaper or direct mail or other types of media, I may have a decrease in the effectiveness of that marketing media during the summertime, so what can I do to fix it? And where are the salmon running?

What can I do that's a win-win scenario with whoever is herding the salmon?

If there's a church down the road who has 100 bible campers that we can create a relationship with and help them learn about character, and help them learn about focus, and help them learn about self esteem in a positive way, why wouldn't that be a huge winner for the church as well, for their camp as well?

So you just need to think a little differently than the average does.

And you know, the last thing I'll say about that is I was on one of these online discussion forums recently and someone was sort of describing to me how important they felt it was to know what the "industry standard" was for how far they felt the industry was down or up in any given month.

My hesitation to give them any quantifiable number was because that number doesn't help you. If I were to tell you the industry was down 21% last month, see all that does is give you the ability to make an excuse about why you're down 2%.

So instead what I challenged that person to think about was, regardless of what the industry is, regardless of what people think the economy is doing, or what they believe the recession is doing, you always have to ask yourself the question: *what can I do about it?*

What will I do about it? And I hope that you see now that there is tremendous opportunity during the summertime to do amazing numbers of enrollments. I mean amazing numbers. The biggest number we ever did in this Orlando school, I think it was in July a couple of years back, I think we did 61 enrollments in one month.

Those are signed 12 month contracts with \$300 down, \$197 a month, and it was all from these community involvement activities that basically cost me zero dollars in marketing money, it did cost me some sweat equity, it cost me some labor, I had to go show up once a week for an hour.

It did cost some time.

But what a return on your investment is that?

I mean if you can spend an hour with a group of 50 students, isn't that a huge opportunity for a great return on investment?

What's Next?

So I hope that that's useful and that was really what we wanted to accomplish today.

It was for anyone who requested this information who is not a NAPMA member, this is just one little tip of the iceberg, this strategy for building business during the summertime is really what NAPMA is all about.

And it's all about collaborating with some of the sharpest school owners in the world - not the ones who are going to say well, the industry is down 20% so it's okay for me to be down 19%. No, no, no. See we're not going to let you do that.

What we're going to force you to do is say, I don't care if the industry is down 18%, I'm going to be up 50% in the summertime.

I'm not going to allow these market factors to determine my destiny. I'm going to determine my own destiny. And I think that's one of the things that's really important to understand about the NAPMA organization.

We're not just here to regurgitate the current industry trends, or the current industry statistics, although we do publish our research for our members periodically, what we're really here to do is regardless of those trends and statistics, is to give you the skills and tools to grow your business regardless of what's happening in the market. And we've been very successful with that.

Again, in our Inner Circle and our Peak Performer group we have a huge group of school owners who are over \$800,000 a year, over \$750,000 a year, everyone in the Inner Circle group is over a half a million dollars a year in gross revenue.

The Peak Performers are between half a million and \$240,000 a year, so they're in that middle category. And there's an awful lot of those guys who are making \$5,0000, \$10,000, \$15,000 a month improvements in their schools by layering on these types of systems. So I guess my challenge to you here if you're listening to this call and if you're now getting excited about what you can do in the summertime, my challenge to you is to put a number on what you think you can do with this little glimpse inside the NAPMA world for the summertime - what will this return for you? What will this information, what will this strategy return to you in dollar and cents and in new enrollments over the next 3 or 4 months? And if implemented appropriately, it's easy, I mean easy, to do an extra 10, 15, or 20 enrollments per month over the next 3 months in the summertime using this stuff.

I mean that's a no-brainer.

If you really work hard, which we did a couple years ago, we worked really hard, well I don't want to say really hard, but we did a lot of those little programs because there are daycares out there that only have 15 campers, or 20 campers and you do have to be strategic about which of these deals you choose, we've now trended towards choosing the camps that have 100 or more students, just because it's a higher leverage use of our time, we get to impact more lives that way. But just imagine, this is a tiny tip of the iceberg for what you can accomplish inside our organization and things that we are going to be consistently exposing to you over the months and years of your participation with NAPMA are hundreds of strategies like this, things that literally can change your business forever.

So I hope that that was useful.

We are your trade association out in the industry, and we are focused and dedicated to bring the latest content and information to the table, to all of our members so that they are working with things that are actually working in today's industry and economy.

The paradigm shift you should have is that right now in April and of course in May, parents are for lack of a better description, their schedule in one hand, checkbook in the other hand, looking around for things for Johnny to do in the summertime. Right?

And I don't mean that in a negative way at all.

And here is the option that you have as a martial arts school owner: Option number one is you can allow Mrs. Johnny to go enroll Johnny in soccer, baseball, travel camp that goes to Universal Studios, you can allow that to happen.

Or, you can persuade Mrs. Johnny that enrolling in your camp is so much more impactful and valuable to that student in their life than spending the day at the pool.

And I believe that to be true.

I believe what we do is so valuable to the community that it's our responsibility to make sure that everybody knows about it. And it's our responsibility to make sure that as many people as humanly possible can participate in what we do and can grow from what we have to teach them. So I think that's a great observation that right now there is liquid resources, there's money floating right now, and it's moving towards whoever can get in front of Mrs. Jones first and say hey, we have a great idea for Jonny to do in the summertime.

So I think that's hugely valuable.

It never ceases to amaze me how difficult it is for people initially to understand, but once they do it's like the light bulb goes on in their head.

Here's what it is, the famous quote that I like is you'll become the average of the sum of the 5 people you spend the most time with. And how I translate that into the martial arts industry is this, think back to when you were a martial arts student, when was it that you performed the best?

When was it that you were at your performance peak?

Was it the 264th time that you did one of your forms?

Or was it like your first class or your first opportunity to spar in the advanced class?

Or was it when you were a blue belt and you got to work out with the brown belts?

Or when you were a brown belt and you got your first opportunity to spar with the black belts?

When are you your best?

And it's always universally we're at our best as human beings when we're challenged, when we're pushed, when we're surrounded by people who are better than we are, who are better free sparrers, who are better at forms, who are better at their self defense techniques, whatever the case may be, who are very good, who are really good, we always rise to the challenge.

And what I see so many times, which is really the reason NAPMA exists, is that once I'm a student, I'm continually surrounded by instructors that are better than I am, and it makes me a better student; when I become an instructor and then I'm surrounded by master instructors who are even better than I am; then I become a master instructor or a school owner, and then who do I surround myself with? I surround myself with students and my employees.

Well, none of those people are pushing me to do my best.

None of those people are providing for my growth, or helping surround me with people who are going to push me forward rather than drag me back.

So what most times happens, I get to a comfort level in my business and I start slipping backwards because I've not failed to do what I do for my students. I've failed to challenge myself. I've failed to surround myself with people who are always going to be pushing me forward, who are always going to be challenging me to implement new strategies, new ideas, new proven systems that are working in other parts of the country, proven techniques that are working in my business.

Just as I did when I was a student and I was learning proven techniques that worked in my sparring, proven techniques that worked in my self defense.

Right?

So it's very easy to allow this to happen to yourself, to forget what made you successful as a student, when you're a school owner.

Probably one of the most valuable things that will ever happen to you in your life, is to find a group of peers, in our universe we use our NAPMA members as those peers, who are always striving, who are always pushing and who are always helping you achieve what's next.

The next level of accomplishment, the next goal.

So I think that that's really useful and a powerful observation.