

Research Interview Assessment #5

This week I was able to get an interview with the VP of digital marketing at Dave and Busters, Mr. Kevin Fitzpatrick. This was an incredibly interesting and thought provoking interview about the aspects of business in regards to marketing, communications, and even trends.

At the beginning of the interview Mr. Fitzpatrick discussed what it is that he does, which I found incredibly interesting. He finds ways to figure out how to get customers back to the stores, mostly by looking at the trends of the games in the stores. First off, the most incredible thing that he discussed was the use of the Dave and Busters power card. Most would think that the card is a way to just swipe the card to play games, while also storing up the tickets that you earn; however, it is surprisingly much more than that. Every time a customer swipes a card, the card stores the information on what game is being played. This information is used on a more personal level to the customer while also a company wide information level. For instance, if the most played game in all of Dave and Busters is Big Fish Wheel, then that is what Mr. Fitzpatrick will advertise more often. Or, if a player's favorite game is Doodle Jump, then Mr. Fitzpatrick is able to send out coupons to that player for a couple free Doodle Jump games. This increases the likelihood that players come back on a more regular basis. Next, if one of the most popular games is, like I said before, Big Fish Wheel, then he will send out coupons for that game to a customer that has never played it. If that customer enjoys it, then once again, they are more likely to return to the store.

Before working with Dave and Busters, Kevin FitzPatrick worked at GameStop. Once again, he discussed the power that trends have for a store. As I have noticed, over the past five years, the products that GameStop has sold has shifted more to collectibles and figurines instead of actual video games. This is because, as Mr. FitzPatrick explained that the demand for hard copy video games has drastically plummeted. He explains that the game industry has begun to change quite a lot. As more video games are being bought digitally off of stores such as the playstation store, there is no need for hard copy games anymore. Another reason is that the industry has shifted into releasing in-game purchases, that add expansions, new equipment, and all that stuff that players are spending their money on, within the games themselves. So, in order to stay in business, GameStop has begun to sell collectibles that would require customers to go into the stores.

This change in industry is an incredibly interesting discussion that I had, and I think that I learned so much from him than I could ever learn from an article on the web. I am very thankful that I was able to interview Mr. FitzPatrick, because he was able to make me even more interested in the overall field of marketing. One point that he in particular emphasized to me, was that I cannot go into the field with tunnel vision, because he graduated from college as a finance person, and even worked in

BlockBuster as a finance guy. So, I learned a lot from the interview and maybe I will be able to interview him once again in the future.