

buckle up

Some companies just get it. They create recognizable brands, train rock-star employees, execute a well-defined mission and it all seems to click — or at least that's how it appears to the customer.

In early May, I traveled to Sedona, Arizona, and in less than five minutes of being inside the city limits, I thought to myself, "There sure are a lot of pink jeeps on the road."

In a market with an abundance of jeep tour companies, the sheer number of vehicles in that electric hue immediately gave Pink Jeep Tours a leg up on the competition, and even instilled a sense of credibility in my mind.

They could have built a business on black, grey or red jeeps, but that would have been somewhat more expected.

While flipping through all the photos Team GPN brought back from California Spring Trials, I noticed one thing that really stood out: color.

It wasn't just the vibrant new variety introductions but the containers that were used to show them off. Flip to page 12 to see some colorful merchandising ideas that could get your customers to stop in their tracks.

press record

Back in Arizona, I looked up Pink Jeep Tours on Yelp and watched a handful of videos on YouTube.

People took the time to write that they had great tours, and the videos made it seem like the best way to see the red rocks, which are on every postcard of Sedona.

Who wouldn't want to spend money for a bumpy four hours of edge-of-your-seat adventure?

Barlow's garden center in New Jersey might not have a fleet of pink jeeps, but the idea

behind owner Stephen Barlow's videos is the same: Connect with your customers and provide a look into the business, with a little humor. On page 16, Barlow shares more easy marketing tips.

staying on course

Once getting me in the door, or in the jeep, Pink Jeep Tours continued to impress. Our tour guide, "Mike from Iowa," was enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

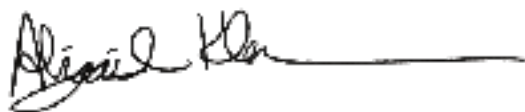
I learned that after the interviews, the onboarding process is extensive, and less than half of the tour-guide hopefuls make it through to the end.

They are tested on hundreds of pages of company and local history, undergo rigorous four-wheel-drive training and are certified in CPR, among other credentials.

The education never stops, with weekly presentations from various employees who are experts in different areas: flora, fauna, geography and history.

Pink Jeep Tours has a plan and leaves nothing up to chance. Turn to page 34 where Brian Kight explains the importance of a systematic approach in your business and with your employees.

I'm sure operations are not always as smooth as they seem for this off-road business. But the combination of unique jeeps, fun tours and skilled employees that the company presents keeps customers coming back for more, and recommending the rough ride to others. **LGR**




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