



How and When to Use Celebrity Endorsements

June 30, 2011 | 2 p.m. EST

Partnering with a local star takes more than star power. Do your research and be certain your potential spokesperson will:

- Define and refresh your credit unions' brand image.
- Creates new dimensions to your brand.
- Provide instant credibility.
- Creates instant brand awareness and recall.

Learn more during our upcoming webinar on local spokespersons. Representatives from the first three synopsis' will join us and provide more insight into how they've run successful marketing campaigns using everything from local figures, employees and actresses to play a part.

Vantage West Credit Union Makes the Most of an "Exclusive"

The local celebrity spokesman for Vantage West Credit Union (\$1.12 B, Tucson, AZ) actually grew from an exclusive sports marketing agreement for the University of Arizona football team. The credit union produced the official coin used during the "coin toss" at every home game with their logo on one side and U of A's on the other.

In order for consumers to get a ceremonial coin, which was of great sentimental value to the many local fans, they had to do something like open a new premium checking account.

And the best spokesperson to help immediately identify the credit union's link to the football team was its coach – Mike Stoops. "He is instantly recognizable in a 30-second commercial," said Gary Bram, Senior Vice President of Marketing. "And with so much of the community focused on U of A football throughout the entire season, it was the biggest stage we could have available to us over a loner period of time."

The entire promotion resulted in 2,000 new premium checking accounts, the largest gain ever on a new product.



“Beth & Page” Help Increase Name Recognition & Personify Brand

Bethpage Federal Credit Union (Bethpage, NY - \$4.1B) decided that two spokespeople were better than one. Actresses were cast in March 2010 to play “Beth” and “Page” to reinforce the credit union’s name and personify the brand.

“We really wanted to find individuals that could represent our credit union values – especially our focus on going the extra mile to serve the membership,” said Jerry Schmitt, VP of Marketing.

The team of “Beth” and “Page” appears in TV commercials, print ads, on the radio and even makes select personal appearances for large public events.



The credit union tracks overall awareness and perceptions of their brand and the initial reaction has been quite positive.

AmeriChoice Leverages Employee Talent to Connect with Community

AmeriChoice Federal Credit Union in Mechanicsburg, PA (\$173 million in assets) began using one of their employees as the “face of the credit union” back in 2007.

Toni Montgomery was the credit union’s community relations manager for several years and very active locally. “Incorporating Toni into our ads was a very natural progression of her role. She already served as the face of the credit union with local chambers and community organizations,” said Carol Fastrich, VP of Marketing for AmeriChoice.

The credit union strives to create a safe, friendly and familiar atmosphere for their members. Using a real employee like Toni helped strengthen that brand in the community. “The ads were so successful, I even had non-members come up to





me and link AmeriChoice with Toni Montgomery,” added Fastrich. “We were also focusing on drawing in a younger demographic and found that potential members could really relate to her.”

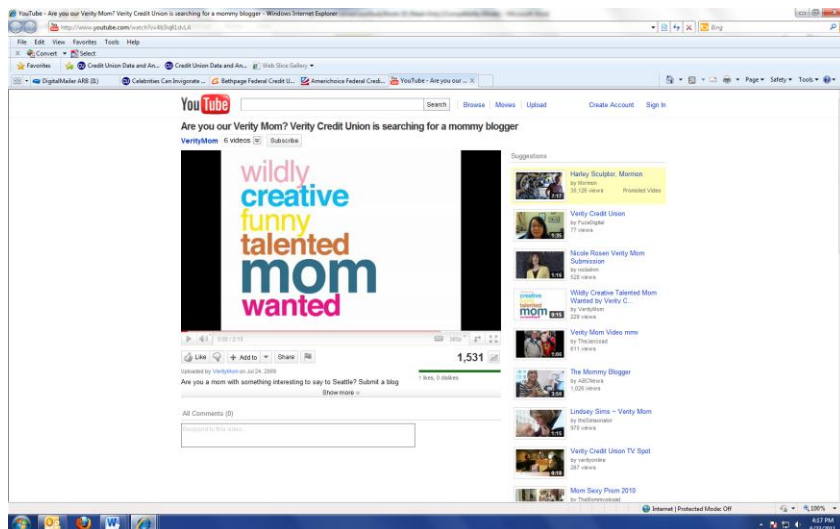
In fact, the ads were so well-received that AmeriChoice has expanded them to include other long-term employees. For example, future marketing materials will feature a head teller as the credit union’s service expert and other promotions have included business loan officers.

Online Spokesperson Helps Credit Union Connect with Local Moms

Verity Credit Union (\$371M, Seattle, WA) took a new approach using the popular Young & Free program template and worked with a marketing firm to create “Verity Mom.” A [contest](#) was held for an online spokesperson to help the credit union connect to more local Moms.

Moms competed for a one-year, part-time position as the credit union’s spokesperson. Rosemary, the winner of the “Verity Mom” contest, is just one aspect of a wider promotional plan. The credit union’s ultimate goal was to

lower the average age of their new members.



So far the average age has been lowered from 39 years to 37. Rosemary has approximately 1,000 followers and the credit union’s blog has experienced a marked increase in hits (several thousand each month). But perhaps most importantly “Rosemary has really helped us establish credibility in the Mom community,” said Shari Storm, Vice President of Marketing. “This was a focus of ours because mothers make the majority of financial decisions for their households – including where their children will maintain accounts.”

Learn more about how credit unions are using spokespeople, including national and local celebrities, on our upcoming webinar ([link to webinar](#)).

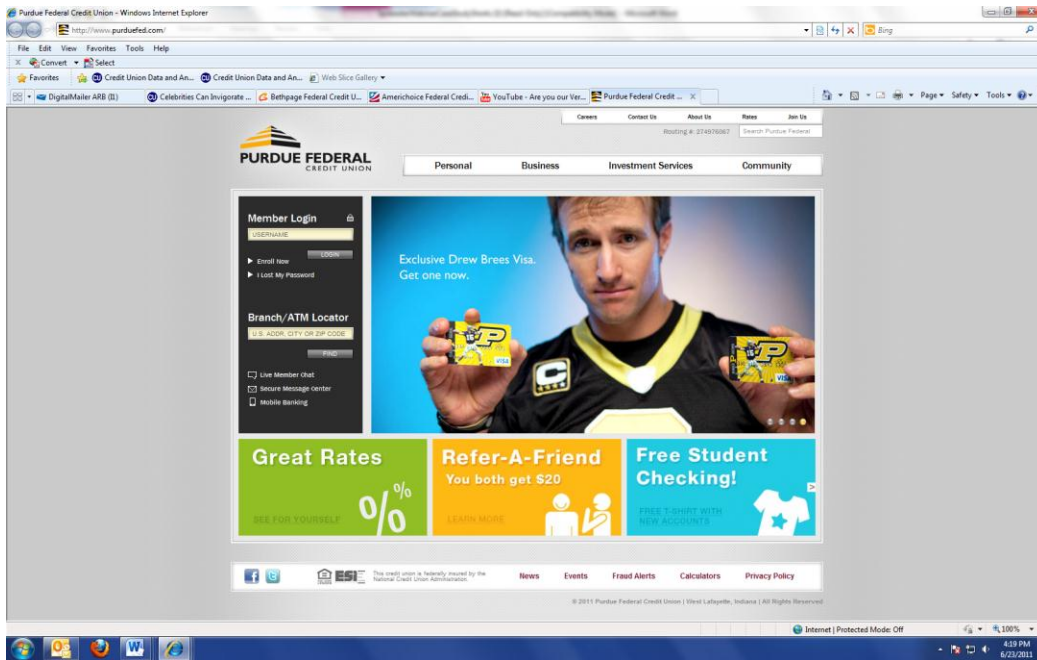
Purdue FCU’s Card Portfolio Gets a Boost from Celebrity Spokesman

Drew Brees became a credit union member back when he was playing college football at Purdue. He was a credit union fan from the beginning and willing to promote Purdue FCU to his fellow classmates. Seeing that he was also very popular on campus at the time, the credit union thought he would be a great fit as their spokesperson. That was over 10 years ago.

Fast forward to Drew’s NFL days and Super Bowl win and what began as a local, on-campus celebrity grew exponentially to help the credit union achieve national recognition. When the credit union acquired the Purdue



Alumni Visa Card, their spokesman's promotion of it really helped propel it to a new level with alumni who now lived all over the country. Today, the credit union even offers a "Drew Brees Visa Card".



"The most critical aspect of the relationship with any spokesperson is to make sure they match the credit union's core values," said Jackie Hofman, Vice President of Marketing. "We were very lucky to be able to align ourselves with someone who was such a great match and already a credit union member."

Register Today

Learn how these credit union have maintained effective spokesperson relationships and what advice they have for others considering using a celebrity or non-celebrity as the face of the credit union during our [upcoming webinar](#).