

Special Report



Effective Sales And Marketing

“The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well the product or service fits him and sells itself.” Peter F. Drucker

Sales and Marketing are essential to any business. Be it a huge company selling computers, a finance firm selling their loan products, a homecentre selling their wares or even a dentist selling his services. All transactions are sales of one kind or another. And in order to make sales, marketing is a key element and a prerequisite. In every business, marketing will always be an ongoing process. At some level or another, in some form and manner, and it will always need to be monitored regularly.

This means it is imperative that you handle your marketing, and make your sales, carefully and with as much time and effort as you can. You must market yourself effectively and distinguish yourself from the competition, not just to make yourself known to more and more people but to also grab your customer's attention so you can ensure you convert customers into repeat customers!

As the famous marketing guru Mal Emery (author of the web-based marketing program and newsletter 'Rebellious Rant') says, *you have a right to be rich!* Effective marketing is the one key step to realizing that right.

Even though this maybe obvious and fundamental to marketing, one thing that seems to be evident to a lot of the experts is that most of the new businesses starting up today seem to be marketing ineffectively. In other words, they are not getting the most "bang" for their marketing bucks. They seem to think that it might just be possible that they are getting the best results for the same amount of time, money and effort already.

And, the funny thing is, that many don't even care. They actually think their business is all about their trade. They haven't realized that it is just as much

about the trade as it is about the marketing, probably more. It is really about finding and holding onto customers for as long as you can. Still, most businesses just plain ignore creative marketing, and keep doing what they have always done.

Although this way of conducting business may seem a little insane to most people, it could be said that the insanity lies in those who emulate others. By definition insanity means "doing the same thing continuously, but expecting a different result." Now in marketing, I guess you can say, "*marketing your business the same way as everybody else is insane!*"

We've all heard varying statistics like "one in three businesses fail in their first year" or "three out of five businesses will no longer be in business after five years." While these are probably true, the main reason for this is: *these businesses don't know how to effectively market themselves*. Because they offer something they think that customers will just start flooding in the door. But the reality is, if no one knows you exist then no one is likely to come and do business with you. Because you are good at what you do is no indication that people will do business with you. If however, you love what you do, you have a much better chance of making your business succeed.

Another way to look at it is, if you threw a diamond ring into the desert for someone to find, let's say it was worth \$2 million dollars and then let's say that you told no one, would that mean people would go rushing to find it because it was valuable? Absolutely not – that would be inane!

Marketing is all about good communication with potential and existing clients and about the benefits, value and clear advantages that you offer. Without good communication with these clients, they wouldn't know anything about you. So, their only choice would be to go to someone who is communicating with them.

What you need to know is that it is essential to always communicate with your potential clients as well as existing clients but how you communicate with them is what really matters. You must understand though that you should not base your entire marketing plan on what everyone else is currently doing, therefore:

- You shouldn't be copying your competitors.
- You shouldn't be doing what your previous boss did.
- You should always do what works for you and learn to market yourself.
- You should always do what works best for your business.
- You should never guess. You should always test and measure.

TEST & MEASURE YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY

The most powerful marketing strategy you can employ is to test what works and what doesn't work. This allows results to be the final determination of what really works and what doesn't. What separates the "men from the boys" is making sure that you test your marketing strategies. This way you should stay in business much longer because you won't just keep doing what doesn't work.

So what should you test? To start with, you could test the following:

- Advertisements against one another
- Headlines against one another
- Sales approaches against one another
- Promotional offers against one another
- Event dates against one another
- Publications against one another

Make sure you always test any strategy or plan before you decide to adopt it. Never just guess what might work and what might not work. By testing and measuring then making small improvements is the only way to find out whether something is working. If something isn't working then just don't use it again.

Regardless of all our discussions about not copying your competitors, if they do have a successful program or marketing strategy, there is no reason why you couldn't test to see if it would work for you. Just make sure you have some point of difference.

You can even try testing strategies outside your own industry but just don't go copying everything. Even though you may deal with a slightly or completely

different clientele, the results could be quite different. So make sure you test and measure carefully so you can see what the real results are.

PLANNING YOUR MARKETING

Remember, marketing insanity happens when you assume that just because someone else is doing something, you should be doing it. Think about doing what most businesses don't - dare to be different. Test and measure everything you do first. This way you and your customers will be much better off.

The funny thing about marketing is that the price and the results aren't always connected. You can pay the same price for great results as you could for poor results. The main difference is the planning that you put into your marketing before you actually implement it.

Planning is one of the most important elements of any business activity and marketing is no different. By ensuring that you plan your marketing well, you can put more effort into it and hence, get much better results from it. Below is an easy yet effective method to help you plan your marketing so you can achieve better results without spending a lot more money. Your marketing plan should identify:

- **What product or service you're offering** – It should state exactly what you are offering to your clients and what the likely life cycle would be. Also note if there are any substitutes available in the market and if so will they meet your clients' needs;
- **Identify who your market is** – For example; the approximate size, trends, demographics and general geographic location;
- **Identify your customers** - Who are they likely to be? What, why, where and how often would they buy?
- **Identify your competitors** - Who are they? Find out how they compete on price, service and quality.

So, your marketing plan will need to cover strategies to find and keep your customers. It will also need to include how you are going to make your products and/or services available, how you will promote them as well as building your business brand, networking opportunities and your policies on pricing.

A. Understanding your Strengths

You need to ask yourself these questions:

- Why is it that people buy from you?
- What exactly do you do for your customers?
- How are you different from your competition?
- Do you have any special skills or advantages?

Answering these questions can help to give you a competitive advantage. These are what makes you different from your competition. They may be related to a number of things like price, location, skills, service, responsiveness or your own personality and style.

People generally buy from you because you do something for them no one else does, you sell something that no one else has or they just plain like you. Understand this and you're on your way to improving your marketing and growing your business enormously.

B. Identify your Customers (your target market)

When promoting your business you should look at focusing on those people who value what you do. Your strengths and competitive advantages should help you to focus on who will most value your product or service. For example, if high quality is one of your strengths then your customers should appreciate this

and if your location is strength then your customer base will reflect your location.

Look at your current customers to get an idea of who your target market is. Or simply look at your profit margins to help you to identify the customers you should be focusing on. If you have several services or products and a variety of strengths, you may have several target markets. Just remember to focus on the people who place a high value on what you can do for them. According to the "Pareto" principle 20% of your customers will be your most loyal and be the result of 80% of all your profits.

C. Create a meaningful Message

The key to any successful marketing campaign is to make sure you deliver the right message to the right people and as often as your budget will allow. So, you need to have a clear message that tells your customers why they should do business with you.

Make sure your message reflects your strengths because you do these best. Your message should also be directed in the same language, tone and terms that your target market is interested in. In other words say what your customers want to hear and speak their language.

For example, lets say you are a Property Manager and your main strength is that you lease properties fast and your target market is people who want their properties leased fast, then your message could be: "I lease properties fast!" Then you could give them some details that demonstrate how you lease properties faster than anyone else in the area (like statistics or testimonials).

Your message should be a reflection of your strengths and your target market. You can have more than one message because each part of your marketing

should really have its own message that focuses on the product, service, target market and/or your strengths

Just work on one message to start with though. Then as you test and measure and start to develop a system that works, you can then look at adding others to your marketing system.

D. Deliver your message as often as your budget allows.

Now you have to find and purchase the most appropriate delivery methods for your marketing messages.

Three things to consider when planning how to deliver your message are:

1. Set a realistic budget for your project.
2. Get the biggest bang for your bucks.
3. Focus your exposure on your target group.

Unless you have an unlimited budget, you will need to choose delivery methods that focus your message. For example, if you have a hardware store and know that 80% of your customers live within three miles of your store, then you might focus your message delivery on those people who live within three miles of your store. This way you can put the power of repetition to work because it gives you the ability to repeat your message to them several times.

There are so many ways that you can deliver your message like advertising, direct mail, networking, phone calls and personal visits. Some other ways might be to teach classes or offer seminars that relate to your product or service. You could also sponsor events or partner with a nonprofit organization. Try to achieve a balanced mix of media when delivering your message. This increases awareness of your business and multiplies the impact of your message.

ADVERTISEMENTS

“Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising.”

Mark Twain

We've spoken about getting your message across to the right audience, in the right manner, by the right medium, the right frequency and with maximum impact. So now let us discuss the most mainstream and universal method – **advertisements**.

All sales begin with some type of advertising. To build sales, this advertising must be seen or heard by potential customers and cause them to react to the advertising in some way.

Generally, a "copywriter" wants the potential customer to do one of the following:

- Visit the store so they can judge the product for themselves, or immediately write a check and make a purchase.
- Call for an appointment, hear the full sales pitch, or write and ask for further information.

The bottom line in any advertisement is to make the reader buy the product or service. An advertisement that causes the reader to pause and just admire the product, or to simply believe what's written about the product - is not doing its job properly.

In order to get the required action from the prospect, most advertisements follow a basic guideline:

- **Attention** - make sure you attract the attention of your prospect
- **Interest** - you need to interest your prospect in the product
- **Desire** - cause your prospect to desire the product
- **Action** - Demand you prospect takes action

Never forget the basic rule of advertising copywriting: *If the ad is not read, it won't stimulate any sale if it is not seen, it cannot be read and if it does not command or grab the attention of the reader, it will not be seen!*

These are the fundamentals of advertising copy and whether you know that already or you're just now being exposed to them, your knowledge and practice of these fundamentals will determine the extent of your success as an advertising copywriter.

So, how do you **write great copy**? To some it is an art and you just need the skills while to others it is a science and you just need to master the formula. It is actually a combination of both art and science.

Accomplished copywriters "to believe that you could write good copy simply by having access to the *exact* words, you would also have to believe that if you had access to the *exact* set of brushes and paints used by Picasso, you could become a great painter.

Here are some simple steps you can take to improve your copy

Step 1: Figure out What to Say

A lot of copy fails mainly because the writers don't pause long enough to figure out what they should say. When you miss the "what to say" stage and jump straight to the "how to say it" stage, you end up simply highlighting the great features and benefits of your products and services, and tell your audience that they really should buy everything right now.

When you spend time on "what to say," you'll find yourself thinking more about the people to whom you are writing. Your copy becomes more reader-centric. What do they bring with them when they open that page, envelope or email? What are their expectations? What do they want from you? What are they hoping for? What can you say that will make them think, "Yes, I'm in the right place. These guys might be able to help me?"

If you can achieve that then everything else will become a great deal easier.

Step 2: Write Well

Again, don't get all worried over "how" to write great copy, or which "power words" to use. Just focus on "what to say," and saying it well.

When you write the first drafts of your copy, use a program like Notepad, which has no formatting features – no bold, no underline, no color. People often format their copy to make up for poor writing. For example, if you write a sentence and then immediately feel that you need an exclamation point at the end and a few words emphasized in bold... then this usually means that you didn't write the sentence very well in the beginning.

Good writing, through its own structure and rhythm, already places emphasis in the right places. If you feel the need to format a sentence for emphasis, take that as a warning that you should, instead, be rewriting that sentence until it works much better. Good writing can stand alone, without the crutch of formatting to make up for the deficiencies in the writer's craft.

Step 3: Now You Can Add the Final Touches

You can work on the formatting and layout of your advertisement once you have a good quality message ready. Look at colors, fonts, emphasis, design, and what are called 'power words' (e.g. free, buy now, click here...). Specifically for online advertisements and check the column widths, etc.

However, these finishing touches should be just that. Good copywriters write well, in the first place and then tweak it to make the copy work online. Mediocre copywriters normally forget about the right message and writing well. They just jump to the part about "power" words and formatting.

Like most forms of writing, copywriting is about connecting with your audience and expressing your message clearly. No short cuts, no secrets, just lots of hard work and a love for your work.

Gill E. Wagner at *Honest Selling* has a list of three steps you can follow, if you want to **write good copy fast**.

1. Whatever your subject is, turn it into a question that you will answer in your writing.
2. Before you begin to answer the question, write down three key words that demonstrate the point you want to make or the idea you want to convey.
3. When you start writing, start with one of your three key words and include both of the other words in your first paragraph.

Once you have the question and three key words, type as fast as you possibly can for five minutes without backspacing, correcting spelling or thinking about what you're writing, etc. Just blast it out and try to write as fast as you are thinking. If you do that for five minutes, you'll probably have answered the question and created some of the best copy you've ever written. Then simply check your spelling and grammar, put in the formatting and layout, and you're done!

THE SALES LETTER

“Life itself is a matter of salesmanship.”

Thomas J Watson

While we are discussing writing skills, let us also address another sales and marketing tool that you will need to write pretty often – ***the Sales Letter***.

The sales letter is designed to generate sales. It persuades the reader to place an order; to request additional information or to lend support to the product or service being offered. It is meant to influence readers to take specific action by making them an offer, not an announcement. The sales letter must be specific and must focus on the right audience. To sell it should appeal to the readers' needs and it must be informative.

Think about how you intend to market the product or service? Through the Internet, direct mail, Email, direct sales or print advertising? What is your advertising budget? Who is your prospective buyer? What would motivate a person to buy your products? Walk a mile in your prospect's shoes. Can you transform them from prospects to buyers? The answers to these questions will give you a good indication as to what people your sales letter should target.

Preparing your sales letter means you need to understand the product or service being offered, the market, and the readers' needs. There is no substitute for product or service knowledge. Any source of resources should be used for example ads, brochures, articles, books, reports, newsletters, newspapers and in-person interviews.

The job of the sales letter is to sell, *not to tell*. The sales letter alone does not always do the entire selling. Other pieces of support literature that amplify the

selling points, illustrate the product or service, or that provide technical information may be needed. If necessary supplement the letter with a brochure or product sheet and mention it in the body of the letter.

The primary elements of a sales letter are: *The image*, if used, is near the headline. It helps to catch the reader's eye. *The headline* is usually 3 - 30 words long. It grabs the reader's attention, and tells him what the sales letter is about. It makes a promise regarding what the item you are selling will do for your buyer. *The sub-headline* or lead paragraph is optional. Sometimes it's used to expand the headline. *The body* expands the theme, fills in details, offers proof, and shows how you plan to fulfill the promise you made in the headline. *The closing*, or call to action, urges the reader to take the next step.

Microsoft's Small Business Resources include *eleven tips to writing effective sales letter*. Let us take a look at these.

- I. **Build trust.** You can build trust by adding high-profile endorsements from associates or former clients and also by including testimonials.
- II. **Get to bona fides, quick.** Avoid being boring instead be unique and get to the point, don't just generalize.
- III. **Make it memorable.** You might include reasons for your customers to spend more time with the letter and therefore more time considering your offer. For example, a Real Estate Developer might include the most common mistakes that new developers make and how to avoid them.
- IV. **Emphasize good, professional design.** This says a lot about you and your business and it can be a great way to reflect your image instantly.
- V. **Include a call to action.** The whole point in having a sales letter is to get people to take action and buy or call for more information so it is essential that you include this.
- VI. **Include an incentive.** A lot of people buy products and services because of the terms or bonus products you offer so don't forget to make your customers an irresistible offer.

- VII. **Resist 'Mail Merge'**. "The best sales letters, especially when dealing with your own current list, are quite individualized," according to Shel Horowitz, author of *'Principled Profit: Marketing That Puts People First'*.
- VIII. **Forge relationships**. A lot of the times people buy from you because they like you so get use to forming great relationships as this is an easy way to gain repeat business.
- IX. **Test and Measure**. Send out a few different versions of your sales letter to small target groups this is an effective way to see what works.
- X. **Your letter should sound like you**. Match your language and sales letter to the way you generally do business.
- XI. **Mind your numbers**. Calculate the highest possible response you can handle before sending out your sales letters. Make sure the volume of your mail drop correlates to that expected response. The last thing you want is to create the perfect pitch and then be unable to fulfill all the orders that come flooding in.

A good sales letter should do its job however a lot of sales are not closed without **persistence** either. Generally it takes contacts with a prospect to make a sale. However, most people just tend to give up after just three or four attempts. So, how can you be persistent with your prospects without being pesky?

It is essential to recognize that your clients are busy people. And while they may want to discuss your solution, other priorities can crop up all the time. Your goal is to develop a "stay-in-touch" campaign and keep your name in the prospect's mind. This can include email, voice mail, letters and cards. Each point of contact should be brief but offer something of value. Learn to respect the decision-maker's time and recognize that they have multiple projects on the go at any given time.

A lot of the better sales people close sales long after the initial contact simply because they are persistent and execute solid strategies by staying in-touch.

Even though the standard number of contacts might be eight, you can rest assure that if you give up after three or four attempts, your competitor by just being more persistent will eventually get the business. All of these strategies help you in *getting your business out there*.

However, firstly you need to *have a business idea*, to take to the market! It is not always easy turning your ideas into fully profitable and successful businesses. There can be resistance to work on new ideas within businesses. This happens mainly because it takes a lot of work and a long time, to show tangible 'return on investment' from ideas. Many businesses today are disadvantaged because they fail to see results through innovation initiatives.

So, let us now look how you can ***turn your ideas into cash***.

Innovation is the complete process of developing ideas with the intention of achieving payback, and it covers *three phases* — *idea generation, commercialization, and realization*. The first phase results in an idea, and the last phase yields the cash payback.

Idea generation is not an easy process, and involves several issues that you need to address. Firstly you should do a thorough; exhaustive *patents check*, to see if there is somebody else already doing what you want to do.

Once you are positive you can legally go ahead, you need to do your *market research*. This is where you need to get an idea of the demand, possible sales, possible customer base, possible price levels etc. Speak to retailers and merchants or visit trade fairs and industry exhibitions to see what solutions people are looking for.

When you know how you are going to execute your idea, you should work on *prototypes*. You might need to start with a 'presentation' prototype, that doesn't necessarily work, but gives an image and idea of your product and its

functionality. Once you have received enough funding, you can then work on pre-production prototypes.

Don't forget to protect your *intellectual property*, by getting a patent, copyright, trademark, and/or other necessary registrations.

Next, spend time on a well thought out *business plan*, finding *financial backers* for the product development, project implementation, and initial marketing.

Lastly, the '*commercialization*' phase of your idea starts to begin. This covers product research, development, launch and the initial marketing. Your funding covers the four 'S' factors — start-up costs (pre-launch investment), speed (time to market), scale (time to volume), and support costs (post-launch investment).

It is the payback, the result of your idea and hard work, and fulfillment of your right to be rich!

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Even if you have 'writers block', resources, such as [ClipCopy Content Solution](#), [Easy Writing: A Practical Guide](#), [Turn Words Into Traffic](#), [Content Infinity](#) and [Article Directory Pro](#) are readily available that provide ready-made content for newsletters, websites or other publications.

The most important page on your website will be your sales letter page so you need to make sure that the 'copy' for this page is well written. Brett McFall has created the [Burpies](#) software to write a sales letter instantly, while Yanik Silver has great products like [Advanced Copywriting](#) and [Ultimate Copywriting Workshop](#). This product can help you to create simple yet effective headlines [Advertising Headline Templates That Make You Rich](#).

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