



BUT I WANT TO LOSE A LOT OF MONEY!

aka: 7 Things You can do to Mess Up Your Marketing

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In the event that you're getting into business in order to have a loss on your Schedule C tax form, these seven suggestions are guaranteed to drop you in a lower tax bracket by churning through your cash faster than you can say "Going Out of Business!"

1. Forget who's most important to your business.

Do not pay attention to your customer; after all what do they know about what you do?

Work hard to develop the attitude, "I'd get so much more done if it wasn't for these stupid customers." Make sure all employees adopt the same philosophy. (This process will be expedited if you let them dress like slobs, ignore personal hygiene, be rude, and spend "floor time" on personal calls.) Make sure never to personally greet customers, opting instead to stay busy with other chores that could be completed later, such as stocking, filing, or paperwork.

To complete the impact, never spend money on training staff, pay them poorly, and berate them as often as possible. In that fashion, you'll have the employees with the poorest attitude; the least pay, and the lowest amount of training making the first impression on customers. It's a sure-fire formula to make sure customers realize they're not in charge.

Always, always, ignore customers as long as you can. On phone calls, leave them on hold for long periods without updating them and asking if they'd like you to call them back.

If you don't have something in stock or you don't know an answer to a question, do not try to find someone who does. Just give them a blunt, "NO!" or "I can't help you!" Then move on to something else, quickly and without wasting any more time. After all, if you don't have it, they don't need it, right?

2. Use the "Field of Dreams" marketing strategy

If it worked for Kevin Costner in that movie, it'll work for you! Just build your business; they'll come. Don't plan to spend anything on advertising and marketing, consider it an optional expense. Adopt the philosophy: "When business is good, I don't need to advertise. When it's bad, I can't afford it." So what if there's competition? Once people

find out you're in the marketplace, they'll drop all their habits, do a 180° turnaround, and break down doors to get to you.

Don't follow up with your customers or ask how they felt their transactions went. Never ask them to tell anyone else about you. On no account provide incentives for repeat business, high-dollar volume transactions, or referrals.

Sit in your office. Look at your inventory. Watch out the window. Have faith. Maybe someone will show up before the bankruptcy attorneys have finished their work.

3. Do not define a target market.

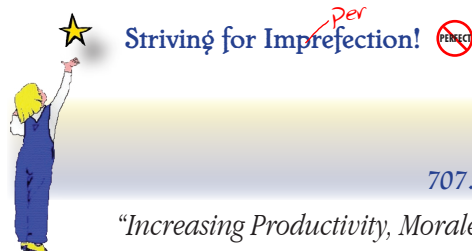
One of the very best ways to lose money is to adopt the philosophy, "My customer is anybody with money!" After all, there could be a four-year-old, multi-millionaire who needs what you've got and you wouldn't want to rule him out by not advertising in the *Forbes Top Pre-Pubescent Millionaire* edition, would you?

Don't ever think in terms of pesky demographics, people's personal buying habits, preconceptions, preferences or habits; that takes too much work. After all, you would then have to understand wants and needs and get into someone else's thought process. Ick! That's messy. You might even say it's an invasion of their privacy.

Be vague in who you're trying to reach; vagueness keeps everyone happy. Throw lots of money into marketing to anyone who has two dimes to rub together and any publication reaching an audience of more than one. One side benefit of such an approach is that every marketing and specialty company rep this side of the Atlantic will become your best friend! You'll be on the phone all day and all night, making lots of buddies and writing oodles of checks.

If you want to really want to follow this rule well, don't plan a budget. Wow! That's a sure-fire way to lose money. With a little luck, you'll be broke before the year's over!

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SCOTT "Q" MARCUS

707.442.6243 • scottq@scottqmarcus.com • www.scottqmarcus.com

"Increasing Productivity, Morale, and Happiness by Reducing Procrastination & Perfectionism"

4. Change your marketing message constantly and repeatedly.

If you stay consistent, people might actually remember what you sell. What happens if you decide to change? They would be so disappointed and you don't want that on your conscience. Moreover, randomness keeps people on their toes; it's exciting, they never know what to expect! As Oscar Wilde said, "Consistency is the last refuge of the unimaginative." Who wants to be unimaginative?

Ensure every marketing venue (mass media, internet, collateral material) puts out a completely dissimilar message. Use a wide variety of incessantly shifting color and designs. Keep altering your tag line and logo; better yet, don't even bother with those, they're way too confining. All they do is make you stay true to one thing and that is oh, so boring.

5. Make everything about YOU! (After all, it's YOUR business, not theirs.)

If you tailor your message to your customers, someone might actually want to shop with you. So, don't even think of doing that!

Make sure all advertising hammers how great YOU are. Set all policies to be convenient to YOU. Choose store hours that are easy for YOU. Have your staff use the best parking spots for themselves; besides, you're thinking about your customer's health by having them walk a long way to get into your store. They'll appreciate that as they're trudging through a muddy, rainy parking lot, only to reach the front door and find a sign that says, "Back in 10 minutes."

In setting policies and procedures, make certain they benefit YOU. After all, too many other stores spoil their customers into thinking they're important. Then they get enlarged egos and make demands on your time, cutting into YOUR day. Someone's got to keep them in their place, who better than you?

Most importantly, don't ever listen to your customers when they disagree with you. YOU are the expert. YOU are what matters. They're just a bunch of grumpy know-it-alls anyway. After all, if they were so smart, they would have started their own business, right? Remember: ME! ME! ME!

6. Inundate your customers with technicalities, lots of numbers, and onerous, excessive, conditions.

Emotions are for sissies. Who needs a bunch of air-headed, sensitive, softies clogging up your store emoting all over the place?

Hit 'em hard with lots of mind numbing, burdensome, arcane, complicated, fine print and numbers. Batter them over the head with facts, statistics, and survey results. Fast-talk your way through disclaimers and exceptions. Exaggerate what you'll do whenever possible: over promise and under-deliver. Remember the mantra: It's not a lie if you can weasel your way out of it!

Devise new methods to keep customers off-balance. In all your

marketing efforts, use gimmicks and hard-to-clarify terms so they feel guarded and unsure. Make each transaction as complex as possible. If some stupid ignoramus of a patron doesn't understand, argue about the terms and throw in lots of jargon and indecipherable acronyms and initials. Reference fictitious other people who didn't have a problem, so your customer feels incredibly ignorant, uniformed, and behind the times; that way, he'll give up.

Regularly change your terms, and when someone questions you, tell him or her they don't know what he or she is talking about, speaking in your most patronizing and condescending voice. Use every miniscule excuse to hold the line before finally giving in with a flamboyant show of disgust and resentment. Make sure the customer feels guilty.

For the coup de grâce, don't make pricing clear or easy to find. Leave items untagged and turn price tags so no one can see them without asking for help. To further cap off this strategy, under staff your business so customers cannot find assistance even if they need it. It goes without saying that if they do purchase something; make it extremely difficult to return it.

7. Keep doing what you've always done, regardless of how times change.

It worked in 1983; why wouldn't it work now? Marketing is marketing. After all, it doesn't take a brain surgeon to slap together an ad. People don't care how ads look or what they sound like. As for that Internet thing? Fuggedaboutit! It's just a passing fad.

Dig your heels in. Don't change. And goodness knows, whatever you do, don't listen to anyone else's ideas, or seek outside help. Consultants and reps are all just a bunch of over-priced blowhards trying to separate you from your money. Your cousin paints well and he's great at video games so he can design your on-line marketing – and all you need to do is give him a six-pack. You'll save a bundle!

Keep plodding away at the same ragged, fatigued, overused methods that countless others have tried before. Someday it just could work. Use threadbare, over worn, tired, hackneyed clichés whenever possible, such as: "We want to be your friend." "Drive a little, save a lot." Or "Come on in and say 'hi' to Fred." If you produce a TV ad, make sure to have your whole staff standing uncomfortably awkward on screen while waving to the camera. Wallpaper, vanilla, faded advertisements like that will be forgotten before they leave the screen, guaranteeing no one will remember you, and lowering the risk of you being labeled as "cutting edge" in any stretch of the imagination.

Remember, everything old is new again someday. All you have to do is wait until it comes around again and everyone will think you were on the front end all the time.