

Free Marketing Advice – Really!

What is marketing?

- Positioning / repositioning of products is marketing
- All company communication – written, spoken, and visual – is marketing
- How your company answers the phone and receives visitors is marketing

Marketing itself is very broad.

We will focus on marketing via advertising and promotion using:

- Logo and Tagline Development
- Stationary Development (B-to-B) OR Signage Development (B-to-C)
- Collateral Pieces
- Direct Response
- Print Advertisements
- Interactive Marketing
- Internet Marketing
- Public Relations
- Broadcast Media
- Outdoor
- Miscellaneous / Additional Efforts

Through it all, keep in mind our step-by-step approach to marketing and planning

- Know your market
- Identify your competition
- Plan your budget
- Develop, follow, and update your marketing plan within your budget
- Identify and communicate the advantages of your service or product
- Develop and employ a consistent image

Good reads:

SELLING THE INVISIBLE: A Field Guide to Modern Marketing
By Harry Beckwith

YOUR MARKETING SUCKS
By Mark Stevens

Other Marketing Efforts

These are not discussed in the following pages but should be considered as part of your overall marketing strategy:

- Networking
- Joining and participating in Groups or Business Associations that are relevant to your business and/or would be frequented by your prospects
- Positioning yourself as an expert for speaking engagements and as a resource for the press
- Attending or sponsoring community events, or hosting events at your location
- Yellow page advertising

Step-by-Step Approach to Marketing and Planning

Know Your Market

- Who would use your product or service?
- What are their demographics? (This will help you choose appropriate marketing vehicles as well as help you with the timing of those efforts.)
- Are you in a broad market or a niche market?

Identify Your Competition

- What are they doing right?
- More importantly, what are they doing wrong? (Their inadequacies are weaknesses on which you can capitalize.)

Plan Your Budget, Track Your Expenses

- Create an operating budget that includes annual marketing expenses.
- Action items and cost may include:
- Develop a marketing plan
- Develop your brand: Brand items are the foundation of your identity
- Logo
- Tagline
- Correspondence materials
- Design or update your collateral
- Print your pieces
- Create and place advertisements
- Produce and implement a direct response campaign
- Promote your Grand Opening or promote your existing service/product consistently
- Develop your website, register your domain or maintain and promote your existing site
- Promote your website via search engines, links, pay per click ads and email campaigns
- Plan and implement public relations efforts
- Retain a small portion of the budget for miscellaneous marketing opportunities that arise

Develop, Follow, and Update Your Marketing Plan Within Your Budget

- Decide which media you should use, depending on:
- Where your target audience is
- What their buying habits are
- When they buy your product or service
- Where you can get the most quality exposure for the money
- Concentrate your efforts to one target group at a time; you want to hit the same group using multiple marketing vehicles, rather than sprinkling your efforts thinly among many groups

Build Your Image and Follow Your Marketing Plan

Communicate the Advantages of Your Service or Product

- Separate yourself – do not copy what your competition is doing
- Be original, find your differential

Develop a Consistent Image

- Name your business clearly and appropriately
- Use a tagline (a benefit statement or a lucid description of your company's offering(s))
- Allow for a change in business growth or direction; avoid names that imply a geographic, product, or service "limitation"

Logo and Tagline Development

Tips for Readability, Economy, and Longevity

- Logo must work in black & white and in color – never rely on a screen (percentage of color) to uphold your logo
- To be cost effective, limit ink colors to two (unless more are needed due to industry standards or sophistication of audience or competition)
- Name and tagline should not be overshadowed by graphic
- Tagline should speak to your market (highlighting benefit) or highlight exactly what you do (highlighting the service or product)
- Make sure your final logo is supplied to you in a file format that you can use elsewhere. Typically, .tif, .eps, .wmf, or .bmp formats are acceptable.
- If marketing on the Internet, (which you should!), consider "RGB" values of the color(s) you are choosing

Stationary Development (B-to-B) OR Signage Development (B-to-C)

Tips for Stationary

- Do not alter your logo in any way when applying to stationary
- Consider all pieces and print them all at once (It's more economical!)
- Letterhead
- Envelopes
- Labels
- Business cards
- Do not "cheap out" on the stock – it shows

Tips for Signage

- Consider placement on road or sidewalk
- Keep as close to eye level as possible
- Check local zoning requirements

Marketing Vehicles to Consider

Collateral Pieces

Tips for Development

- Do not develop a "tri-fold"; they scream "We just started!" Folding in half will cost the same to produce, if not less, and will look more unique. You will need to buy additional envelopes (as other configurations will not fit in your #10s). However, the great impact and enhanced image greatly outweigh the slight increase in envelope cost.
- Have your copy written by a professional. Content is as important as visuals.
- Keep copy brief and concise
- Use color and eye-catching graphics where appropriate
- One piece may not suit all purposes – consider developing a "disposable" as well as a "flagship" piece

Direct Response

Tips on Sizes and Frequency

- Maximum size for postcard rate is 6 x 4.25, if larger (up to 6 x 10.5 allowed) postcard mails at letter rate
- Quality of mail list is key: demographic accuracy as well as contact names and addresses
- Never mail once! If you cannot afford to mail at least two times and perform follow-up calls, or send out “three hits,” you may be disappointed in your return.
- The most effective direct mail is audience specific – consider implementing variable data
- Be cautious with the quantities and scheduling of your drops

Print Advertisements

Tip on Frequency vs. Return

If you cannot afford to keep a constant presence bi-monthly or during an event or season, do not expect much return on your investment. Consider budgeting for other vehicles instead.

WHERE TO RUN

- Industry specific publications
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Newsletters

FREQUENCY

- Determine necessary frequency (Audience, season, budget, or other factors may drive this answer. Refer back to “Know Your Market.”)

Internet

Tip for Websites

Search engine optimization, quick load times, and content are all very important. You are expected to have an Internet presence. If you do not own a domain name (preferably your company name), purchase one and develop your site! Also remember to use your domain name in your e-mail address.

Internet Marketing Media to Consider

- Professional website (A must!)
- Pay per click listings
- Banner ads (Do not spend much here, as their effectiveness has diminished.)
- E-mail marketing (Build an “opt-in” list for e-mail effectiveness and to avoid being blacklisted as a “spammer.”)
- Listings
- Links from other sites and listings
- Networking or industry groups to which you belong may have member offerings

Outdoor

- Billboards
- Transit
- Taxis
- Buses
- Bus stops
- Train Station Platforms

Broadcast Media

- Television/Cable
- Radio

Miscellaneous / Additional Efforts

- Movie theatre screens
- Mall kiosks
- Posters
- Sponsorships
- Events

Public Relations

Supporting Your Marketing Efforts with Public Relations

Develop Your Contact List (All Media Groups)

Tips for Pitching

- Present your story, slant, and information according to the publication's readership
- You may want to develop multiple lists – not all releases are appropriate for all publications
- Client and prospect “read” list (usually dailies, weeklies, business or consumer publications)
- Industry “read” list (business specific and peer publications)
- Radio and Television/Cable
- Internet news sources or “YouTube”-type resources
- For each publication, make sure you send to the appropriate section and editor

Know Your Publications and the Appropriate Reporters

- Try to maintain contact when appropriate, but do not nuisance-call or e-mail them
- Keep your contact list current, updating names, titles, and e-mail addresses

Respect Deadlines

Tips for Timing of Release

- Approximate lead time prior to an event or date-sensitive release is three weeks
- Know and be mindful of each publication's deadlines
- Send press releases within the time frame they recommend – not too far ahead, not too late

Always Be Available

- If contacted, never say unavailable, even if your ultimate response has to be “no comment.”
- Always follow up coverage with a thank-you (same goes for prospect meetings)

