

Marketing's #1 Rule

You can choose to read about all the marketing tactics you'd like, but the first step in a healthy business is the planning part of marketing. It's so easy to get caught up in the "marketing event of the week". But this isn't how effective marketing is carried out.

I used to work for an advertising company (imagine that!) who reacted to the latest marketing technique. One such technique at the time was email marketing. The results were spotty at best not necessary because of the technique but because of the this-is-going-to-get-us-all-the-business-we-want mentality.

You need a planned approach which involves goals, logical steps, a budget, and partners. Anything outside of this project management approach will be knee-jerk and over time, unsuccessful. The most effective companies manage each area of the business, and that includes marketing. For some reason, many owners feel as though marketing runs on itself. Perhaps this was true in days past where one could put a sign outside the office, take out a yellow page ad, and business would walk through the door.

But in today's world the competitive landscape is fierce. You must be good in all areas...quality, customer service, operations, accounting, management, and of course (and perhaps the most important area of all), marketing.

I would suggest the first step is to take out your business plan and develop a marketing plan that complements the vision (if you don't have either I would suggest that you start writing). Determine how you're doing first. This includes the business in addition to where you are in the industry as compared to others. This would involve some industry research. Then there are marketing planning steps that are essential.

First is to narrow and define the market you want to go for...in essence your target market. Starting with your ideal customer can help you to determine that. You must understand in order to be successful that you have to narrow your view down to those who value what you offer most. It's so easy to play into the helping-anybody syndrome, and it will pull your business down quickly. You've got to say 'no' and be disciplined about this. Next is to determine a core message that will appeal to that target market and to package your business in that way. You want everything boiled down to a simple and targeted message.

Finally, you need to determine the appropriate marketing tactics for you business (e.g. direct mail, seminars, signage, etc.). Once you have defined these, you'll need to set a budget and get help (ie. graphic designers, fulfillment house partner, etc.)

As you can see, an effective approach is a planned one...one that involves commitment and focus.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

Scott Campbell owns Impact Marketing, Inc out of Atlanta, GA. He installs a marketing system, called the "Ultimate Marketing System", into small businesses and practices in the Atlanta, GA area. Learn more about Impact Marketing and its solutions here at <http://www.impactyourcompany.com>.