

# *SPECIAL ACTION REPORT*



## 10 Common Marketing Mistakes

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Note: This pdf contains interactive (fillable) fields

Marketing is one of those tricky areas where you can spend bulk money but end with little or nothing to show for it. Even well developed, meticulously thought out campaigns can falter.

But there are a number of fundamental marketing errors many people commit AND you're likely to be among them. These mistakes are costing you money. The only question is, how much!!!

To get an idea, gather together all your marketing materials – brochures, newspaper and magazine ads, sales letters, price lists... and check them against the marketing “no-no’s” set out below.

Get your whole team involved, and milk them for their ideas and suggestions.

Here goes ... The 10 most common marketing mistakes

## 1. Not having a clearly defined USP (Unique Selling Proposition)

Does all your marketing material have a USP?

Yes      No      Don't know

If you've answered “no” or “don't know”, ask yourself the following questions:

“Why should a prospect become my customer rather than a competitor's customers?”

“What is it that differentiates me from my competitors?”

That's your USP! A strong Unique Selling Proposition will help you stand head and shoulders above your competitors and allow you to prosper in today's competitive marketplace.

## 2. Selling features rather than benefits

Do you and your salespeople commit this often repeated fundamental mistake – sell features rather than benefits?

Yes      No      Don't know

Look, people don't buy features - they buy benefits!!! They buy a product/service based on W.I.I.F.M. (What's in it for me?) Telling them clearly how the features of your product/service will help make their life easier, more pleasurable, etc. (benefits) is what will get you the sale.

## 3. Not using headlines in print advertisements

Does your newspaper, magazine, Yellow Pages, sales letters, brochures ... have an attention-grabbing headline? – and I don't mean the name of your business!

Yes      No      Don't know

You've just a couple of seconds to grab a reader's attention, and the most effective way to do that is with a strong headline. It's what will draw the reader to read the rest of the advertisement.

Look at some newspaper and magazine ads. Which ones attract your attention? Note the way they've used an effective headline. Show your ad to a number of people to gauge their reaction before you run it.

#### **4. Not testing headlines, price points, packages, pitches, everything**

Do you make changes to your marketing material and test how effective those changes have been?

Yes      No

The only way you'll know what ad, what price, what offer most appeals to customers ... is by testing them. Run different ads in a newspaper over the same period or split your advertising between newspaper and direct mail, and then measure the results. Advertise your products/services at different price points to see which sells more.

Finding what works best can only be done by TESTING, TESTING, TESTING!!!

#### **5. Making it difficult to do business with you**

Do you and your staff have a customer-focus? Have product knowledge? Are you easy to find? Easy to do business with?

Yes      No      Don't know

Your phone number and location should be easy to find. Are they featured prominently on your marketing material? What about your signage?

At the frontline, the person answering your phone should do so promptly and in a friendly manner.

Your products need to be arranged so they are easy for your customers to find in your store. To check whether this is the case, put yourself in the customer's shoes for a few minutes each day and take a wander about your business.

#### **6. Not finding out what your customer's needs are**

Do you take the time to find out what your customer's needs are before you start selling to them?

Yes      No

If you've answered "no", you're quite likely wasting your time. Don't even try to guess what the customers' needs might be. ASK! How else will you be able to show your customers what benefits your product or service will provide to meet those needs?

#### **7. Not maintaining an up-to-date customer database**

Do you regularly up-date your customer database?

Yes      No

A well-maintained database will enable you to leverage the goodwill you've already built with your existing customers. You don't need me to tell you this, but it's far easier to do business with existing customers than to try capturing new ones.

Also you can use your database to ask your customers for referrals. How about surprising them with a card on their birthday? Call and ask what they like and disliked about doing business with you. What other things can you think of that will help develop a closer relationship with your customers by using your database? Write them down.

### **8. Not eliminating the risk**

Do you offer your customers a 'no questions asked' money-back guarantee?

Yes      No

Make it easy for customers to part with their hard-earned money by reducing their risk. Let them try your service at no cost.

If you're afraid people will take advantage of you, give the no risk guarantee a go for a month. It'll give you an extra incentive to maintain or improve your service.

### **9. Not educating your customers**

Do you tell your customers why they should buy from you?

Yes      No

For example, don't just tell your customer that your service is better. Explain to them WHY! Is it because your staff are better trained, you can provide better turnaround time, or your quality is unmatched?

Don't expect people to just take your word for it. Make these claims real for the customer by getting down to the nitty gritty by offering them credible reasons why they should do business with you.

### **10. Not knowing what works, and sticking with it**

Do you test the response to different types of ads, offers and media?

Yes      No

Test to find out which ads provide the most response and do a cost analysis of their effectiveness. What media pulls best? What offers get the best reaction? What type of ads get the best response?

When you find something that works, don't change it until you find something that works better. But, continue to TEST, TEST, TEST.

Now, how did you go with the questionnaire? If you've ticked "no" or "don't know" against any of these questions, write down what you are going to do about it. And set a date when you've completed it. Do it NOW!

Until you correct these fundamental marketing mistakes, you might as well just give away the money you have set aside for marketing.