

Marketing mistakes flashcard



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The 10 Greatest Marketing Mistakes And How To Avoid Them!

by Millard W. Grubb

Its a certain fact that business these days is more competitive than its ever been. To stay alive these days, you just cant just offer a quality product at a fair price. These days, you have to know how to market effectively.

Unfortunately, most businesses have no idea of how to get the most out of every marketing dollar that they spend. You should demand that ou get the best results from every dime you drop into marketing! Most companies spend more time planning their company Christmas party than they do creating powerful, persuasive, marketing communications.

Now this can stop. Herein are the 10 greatest marketing mistakes and how you can avoid them. Before I get into it, let me tell you why I put this together.

As I consult with current clients, bring on new clients, and market for more, I am learning more and more. Its come to my attention time and time again, when I bring on a new client I find that they are making almost the exact same mistakes as another of my clients was, in a totally unrelated field!

These marketing mistakes arent confined to a singular industry. These mistakes Ive found across the board. I have worked with computer software companies, food companies, cable sales companies, real estate brokers, financial consultants, and many more. All of these companies had most, if not all of these 10 greatest marketing mistakes present in their operations.

If one or two of these mistakes don't apply to you, then you should congratulate yourself! You must already be on the road to marketing success! Here they are in no particular order:

Mistake # 1: Your business focuses on itself, and not on your prospects and customers needs.

Does this seem too obvious? Look through your yellow pages. Pick them up right now and glance through. Answer this question: Are most of the ads telling you what benefits you get if you if you become a customer? Or are the ads telling you about the vendors, where they are, how wonderful they are, what they do, how great their quality is, how great their service is, and all about them?

95% of the ads are totally focused on the business and not on what the business can do for YOU, the prospect!

Take a look at the ads in the newspapers, on the TV, and listen to the radio. You'll find the same thing happening there, consistently, every day. This type of selfish advertising falls into the terribly wasteful category of institutional advertising.

Institutional advertising produces, at best, deferred results. At worst, institutional advertising is ineffective, unproductive, and a wasteful expense that accomplishes no profitable purpose whatsoever.

You know when its institutional advertising because institutional advertising tells you how great the company is, or how old and stable they are, or some other frilly, fancy, cutesy and other non-compelling foolishness.

Your selfishness is what kills most of your marketing. From brochures to flyers, and sales letters to advertisements, your marketing message should let your prospects know that you are concerned **ONLY WITH WHAT THEY WANT!**

Anything about you should always come last. Your clients, customers, patrons, patients...whatever you choose to call them, should always come first.

Any marketing documents you create should start out by focusing on the prospects wants. Every sentence should show that you understand the prospects wants.

Until your marketing efforts focus on the prospects wants, your marketing is handicapped.

Mistake # 2: Failure To Test

Very few companies ever test any aspect of their marketing, and compare it to something else. They bet their destiny on arbitrary, subjective decisions and conjecture. This is unfortunate for a number of reasons.

First, we don't have the right or the power to predetermine what the marketplace wants and what the best price, package or approach will be.

Rather, we have the obligation and the power to put every important marketing question to a vote by the only people whose ballot counts: customers and prospects.

How do we put a marketing question to a vote? By testing one sales thrust against another, one price against another, one ad concept against another, one headline against another, one TV or radio commercial against another, one follow-up or up-sell overture against another. I could go on and on.

The point is — and this is not guesswork —when you test one approach against another and carefully analyze and tabulate the results, you will be amazed that one approach always substantially out pulls all the others by a tremendous margin. You'll also be amazed at how many more sales or how much larger the average orders you can realize from the same effort.

The purpose of testing is to demand maximum performance from every marketing effort.

If each of your field salespeople averages 15 calls a day, doesn't it make sense to find the one sales pitch or package that lets them close twice as many sales and increases their average order by 40%-100% with the same amount of effort?

You can easily achieve immediate increases in sales and profits merely by testing.

Tomorrow, have your salesmen try different pitches, different hot-button focuses, different packages, differently specially priced offers, different bumps or upgrades, different follow-up offers, etc.

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Each day review the specific performance of each test approach, then analyze the data.

If a specific new twist on your basic sales approach out-closes the old approach by 25-50%, doesn't it make sense for every salesman to start using this new approach?

Test every sales variable. Any positive or negative data can help you to dramatically manipulate the effectiveness of your sales efforts.

But don't stop at merely finding those approaches, offers, prices, or packages that outperform the others. Once you identify the most successful combination, your work has just begun. Now you should find out how high is high!

Keep experimenting to come up with even better approaches that out pull your current control.

Your control is the concept, approach, offer, or sales pitch which has consistently proven, through comparative testing, to be the best performer.

Until you establish your control concepts, techniques, and approaches, you cant possibly maximize your marketing.

Once you find control concepts or approaches, keep testing to see if you can improve on their performance, thereby replacing one control with a better one.

Test your prices. Different prices often outperform one another on the same product by an enormous margin.

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\$19 has outpulled \$25 by 300%.

\$195 has outpulled \$245 by huge margins.

\$295 has outpulled \$195 on certain offers, which netted a cool \$100 more per sale!

Why does one price outpull another? I don't know. Probably for a lot of reasons: psychological image of value, perception of quality, etc. Every situation is unique, so I implore you to test several different prices. You'll be amazed at the difference in profit and total orders one price will produce over another.

Testing applies not merely to prices, but to every aspect of marketing.

If you run ads in newspapers or magazines, test different approaches, different headlines, different hot-button emphasis, different packages, different rationales, different pricing, and different bonuses on top of the basic offer.

Test different directives to the reader or listener on how to respond and what action to take.

Test positioning in the front, back, right, or left-hand side of the page. Test where your commercials run.

Make specific offers and analyze the number of responses, traffic, prospects, and resulting sales for each specific ad. Then compute the cost-per-prospect, cost-per-sale, the average sale-per-prospect, average conversion-per-prospect, and the average-profit-per-sale against your control. This reveals

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the obvious winner, the control that you will keep running until a better control beats it.

Remember, salaried salesmen cost you the same fixed amount, whether they make one sale a day, three sales a day or more. An ad costs you the same amount of space, production time, or air time whether it produces 100 prospects, 1, 000 prospects, or 10, 000 prospects.

Therefore, it stands to reason that you should test different ad approaches and find those that outpull all the others, then use those approaches to maximize your investment.

The suggested order of testing is:

- 1) Headline
- 2) Price
- 3) Offer

You must have a strong headline always!

Your headline is an ad for the ad. If people are not drawn into the copy by a strong, compelling headline, then you have wasted your effort. A headline is not just there to attract attention. It must talk in terms of benefits to the prospect along with a promised solution to a problem.

Test everything starting right now.

Mistake #3: You Fail To Determine Specifically Who Your Market Is And What Their Wants And Needs Are.

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Ninety percent of the businesses out there never precisely determine who their market is, and what the markets desire, needs, wants, and passions are.

This is a grave mistake.

The successful marketer can tell you precisely who hes marketing to, and what they want in a product or service. He can tell you the age of his best prospect, who this person is, where this person is, educational and income levels and other critical information. You must know who, then you can find out the why.

Why does your customer buy from you? What do your customers want or need most in the products or services you offer? You need to focus on discovering what the why is so that you can focus your marketing efforts to show your prospects that you can meet the why in the most satisfactory fashion.

Think about it...How can you expect to adequately fill someones needs if you never take the time to get involved and understand them? Yet few companies ever bother to seek to meet their customers needs.

Companies that are a success with their marketing understand their customers needs and attempt to satisfy those needs better than the competition.

If you want to own your market, find out what your customers real wants are. Discover their desires. Search out their passions and needs. Once you have this information you will be armed to corner your market.

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Mistake #4: You Fail To Capture Your Customers & Prospects Names And Addresses.

Of all the marketing mistakes to make, I feel that this has caused the loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars every month more than any other. Yet it is by far the simplest mistake to correct!

Why a company would spend hundreds and thousands of dollars to get a customer in the door and then let them walk out without getting their name and address and any other information from them is beyond me! I don't know why, but 90% of the businesses in America don't ever bother to keep track of their loyal customers, let alone any prospects!

Your mailing list, or customer database is your biggest source of lifetime profits!

Here's why you should keep track of every customer and every prospect:

- 1) According to Fortune Magazine, it costs 5 times as much to generate a new customer than to resell an existing customer. Existing customers are almost as good as money in the bank!
- 2) Your existing customers already trust you and know you. They've bought from you and (hopefully) have had a positive experience with you. Sales resistance is low.
- 3) They know you'll deliver on your promises, because you've delivered before with energy and promptness (haven't you?).

All you need to do is develop a systematic way of keeping track of them, and asking them to buy from you more often. Computer databases are easy to come by, and more affordable than ever. If you don't want to bother with computers, that's OK. Just make up and hand-write on a customer index card, that has your customer's name, address, and phone number on it. A simple 3 X 5 card would do nicely. You should also include vital information like: what they've bought in the past, what they'd like to buy from you, etc. A list like this opens the door to developing a profitable, long-term relationship.

Do you see how valuable this list becomes? When I consult with a business, one of the first things I do is ask if they have a customer list. If they do, then I know I can increase sales dramatically in just a few short weeks.

To make a list profitable, recent studies show that you should contact them once every 21 days. A minimum of once a month.

Here are some ideas for staying in touch:

- 1) Sponsor some kind of information-based event. A workshop, seminar, luncheon with guest speaker, etc. Anything that would be of interest to your customers and prospects.
- 2) Send a postcard announcing a private sale with special discounts or added services exclusively for your loyal customers.
- 3) If you work with businesses, send them information that will help them become more successful (for example, a copy of this report) along with a personal note...I thought you might benefit from this.

4) Send a postcard with problem-solving tips on it for easy, quick reference.

By collecting names, addresses and phone numbers of your customers and prospects, you will be in a position to increase the profits earned from each customer anywhere from 35-200%.

Mistake #5: You Dont Try To Sell Your Customers Something Else On The Back End.

Your hottest prospect is someone that has just bought from you. This is your best opportunity for another immediate sell. The key to successfully doing this is having products that offer solutions to problems that your prospects have. Related problems and related solutions equals increased opportunity for sales.

How simple it would be for the cashiers at the local discount store to suggest another product that may help solve the customers problem. All they have to do is notice how related the products are that the customer is currently buying, and be knowledgeable enough about what the store has to offer to be able to suggest another product that could help the customers problem become solved.

The buyer that just bought from you offers you a prime opportunity to sell again. Your products must be good, however, and you must prove to him that your back-end product will also solve his problem.

Here again we are talking about knowing your prospects wants and desires. Your job isnt over once youve sold your customer his first product. You and

your people should constantly be striving to ascertain what problems your prospects have, and then proposing the appropriate solution to it.

If you are focusing on what your customer wants, and are offering them another solution to a related problem, he will not be resistant as you try to up-sell him. He will be grateful for your desire to solve his problems.

Just remember: your customers are never hotter than when they first order. Immediately acknowledge their first purchase and tell them how appreciative you are. And then, offer them something else so they'll have the chance to solve more of their problems and to spend even more money with you!

You should look for logical product or service extensions to offer your customers. Using the back-end will turn one-shot sales into repeat customers. Ironically, most businesses rarely try to sell their current or previous customers anything again. You should do it constantly.

Mistake #6: You Fail To Make Doing Business With You Convenient, Easy, Appealing, And You're Not Ready To Sell When Your Prospects Are Ready To Buy.

Most businesses almost make it difficult for a prospect or customer to buy from them.

Most businesses do business from 9 to 5. That's fine. BUT, you must be prepared to do business when your prospects are ready to do business. With technologies that are now available, there's no excuse for business not to have a 24 hour phone service center. Even a simple answering machine can work wonders in this area if utilized as a marketing and sales tool.

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You must be fanatical about servicing your customers and causing positive impact on your prospects. You must focus on their needs consistently. Think of how you want to be treated when you do business with someone.

I mean...really think how you'd like to be treated. Then, treat your customers in that way.

Most businesses never walk a mile in their prospects' moccasins. Why else would they make doing business with them so difficult?

If someone walks into your store, how well versed are the sales clerks? How much time have you spent in preparing dialogs, questions and advice for your people to ask or offer to customers?

If someone calls your company and your switchboard operator is their first contact, can your operator make a motivating, compelling response to the customer or prospect's requests?

How willing are you or your people to answer questions and render truly informative advice, even if it sometimes may not directly result in an immediate sale?

How easy is it for your customers to find things in your store?

How well do you keep customers updated on the status of their orders, or back orders?

These are questions that you must answer on a regular basis so that you can keep on top of the flaws your prospects and customers see every time they do business with you.

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By making it easy, appealing, and convenient to do business with you, you will attract more customers, and more customers will consistently return to your business.

Mistake #7: You Are Not Persistent And Willing To Stick It Out Until Youve Contacted Your Prospect Enough Times To Warrant Dropping Him, Constantly Testing And Trying New Approaches Until You Find The Hot Button That Sells.

Too many businesses rely entirely too much on the hoped success of one advertisement or one direct mailing. Marketing success is not an event...it is a process. Processes take time. Therefore you should never put your faith in one ad, one mailing campaign, or one TV spot.

You must commit to connecting with your prospects a minimum of 7 times in 18 months. If you are not willing to pay that price, then you shouldnt even start to promote to those prospects.

You need to decide that you are willing to connect with your prospects time and time again and hit them with the same benefit packed points over and over again – from every conceivable angle – in a determined attempt to motivate your prospects to take action!

Remember that any single marketing event will not ordinarily produce outstanding results, not now-a-days anyway. It used to be true that a guy could make a fortune off of one ad, one promotion. But today, its just not going to happen very often, and you should NEVER plan on it.

You must know precisely who you are marketing to, what their desires are, and you must resolve to connect with them again and again and again, until

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they either prove that they are not a prospect, or until they see that you have the best solution for their pressing problems.

Marketing requires persistency to say the least. You must work at it on a daily basis. Some days will be downright discouraging for you. But, you cannot give up. If you have done your homework, and you realize that you have the solution to your prospects problems, if you have focused precisely on your target, then you must not let discouragement get in your way.

It can keep you from succeeding.

If your prospects are not responding then you need to refine your approach. You need to refine who you are trying to connect with. You may need to approach them from several different angles to find the approach that works the best...indeed, you will need to test constantly, always trying to improve your take.

In short, you must persist so that your prospects never have the opportunity to forget who you are, and what you can do for them.

The only way to discover your prospects hot-buttons are to test and to test continually. You see, you cant predetermine what your marketplace wants, what the best price is, the best selling packaging, or the best approach.

As a marketer, you have the obligation to find out from your market what it is that they want. The way to find out what they want is to test one marketing approach against another, one ad concept against another, one headline against another, one TV or radio commercial against another, one price against another, and the list goes on and on! Testing is an ongoing

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process. You should always be trying to out do your best results. Because you never know when results are at their best!

The point is that you cannot guess what your market will buy. It is something to be discovered by testing one approach against another, and by carefully analyzing and tabulating the results. Once you do this, you will be amazed to find that one approach always substantially outpulls all the others by a tremendous margin.

You must demand maximum return from every marketing dollar you spend. Testing is what tells you where to demand more. Remember, an ad costs you the same amount of space, production time, or air time whether it produces 10 prospects, 100 prospects or 1, 000 prospects. It only makes sense that you should test different ad approaches to maximize your investment. You must not sleep at night until you know youre getting better results than last week.

Testing takes persistence. It will pay-off big if you do it.

As I mentioned earlier, marketing is NEVER an event, it is always a process.

Keep this in mind when you consider selling something to your market.

Mistake #8: You Have No Marketing Plan To Guide Your Business To Financial Success.

On dozens of occasions I consult with businesses and discover the morbid fact that 90% are flying by the seat of their pants, with no direction for tomorrow, no idea how much theyre going to make in the next 365 days, and no written plan whatsoever. Let me say this as strongly as I can...

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Your business will never succeed on any type of a large scale unless you commit to writing a plan that guides you to success.

This is a fact that all too many businesses will never accept, to their own demise. If you don't have a marketing plan, you'll never reach any truly substantial objectives.

If you're without a plan, grab a piece of paper and pencil right now, and let me help you get off to a good start. Your plan must include the following:

- 1) A specific, clear, precise, dollar objective for each year, for each of your products or services. Break this dollar amount down into how many widgets you must sell to reach that amount. Next, figure out how many sales that means you need to make. Next, figure out how many prospects you must connect with in order to sell XXX amount of widgets, based on your past experience. If you have no past experience, use a 20% closing ratio to figure with.
- 2) A specific dollar amount for each month, for each of your products or services. Do the same things as above, except figure the totals on a monthly basis.
- 3) An objective evaluation of all of the different marketing alternatives that will help you reach your monthly and yearly goals.
- 4) An exact indication of which marketing alternatives you have decided to use, why, in what ways, and how often, and how much these alternatives will cost you in money, time and materials.

5) Techniques to use that will help you capture and keep track of your customers and prospects.

6) Techniques to use to help you sell the back-end to a new customer.

Mind you, these are the bare bones basics that you need in your plan. With this information alone, you'll probably perform head and shoulders above your competition. If you want to take the plan further, make sure you include precise deadlines for each step. Then take each of these steps and break them down into the action steps that you can take on a daily basis to reach your monthly and yearly goals. The key words here are daily basis.

Marketing should be a daily activity for you, like eating and drinking.

It's not a difficult thing to draw up a simple marketing plan like this. I think the problem is that most companies feel like they have to have graphs and charts and demographic specifications and all of this other mumbo-jumbo that just confuses people. That stuff is NOT going to motivate you or help you follow a path to success.

Realize the power of this simple, easy to do marketing plan. It's so easy! And it will bring you success!

Without a specific marketing plan ON PAPER, you cannot expect your business to have massive successes. Yes, you do need to put it on paper.

Why?

On paper you have focus. If you keep your ideas in your mind, you'll lose focus on your objectives. Believe me I know, I've made that mistake before. Get your plan on paper.

Even though it's on paper, doesn't mean you can't change it. Be flexible. Understand that as your business grows and succeeds, you'll want to update your marketing plan. I re-evaluate my plan on a weekly basis. I ask myself:

- a) Is this plan taking me where I want to go?
- b) Is there any part of the plan that isn't focused on the desired end objective?
- c) What can I do to update my plan to gain more focus on my end objective?

Questions like these on a weekly basis will help you reach your objectives quicker, and in a smoother way. Remember, without a written plan, your success is highly unlikely.

Mistake # 9: You Don't Have Any Idea How To Write Or Produce Persuasive Marketing Documents That Get Your Prospects To Buy NOW, Or To Get Your Customers To Buy Again.

If your car was having a problem, and you knew NOTHING about cars, (except where to put the gas in) would you open the hood and try to fix it?
NO!

Why then, do so many businesses try to write their own advertisements, their own brochures, their own flyers, and other marketing communication when they don't know how to do it?

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It doesn't make sense. If you don't know what you are doing then you shouldn't be doing it, or else you'll mess things up worse than they were before!

The real problem comes, however, when someone thinks they know what they're doing when in fact, their efforts are usually self-centered and unfocused on the needs and wants of their prospects and customers.

Larger companies have entire design and marketing departments that do nothing but put together and create their marketing documents. Though, in my opinion, most of these Madison Avenue Types do terrible, institutional advertising...I feel that everyone can always learn how to communicate better with their prospects.

No one has all the answers, but I do believe that a company is better off to hire an outside consultant to come in and do the job right. Maybe I only feel this way because I am such a consultant, but...I think it's better because the consultant can look at things (usually) from a prospect's point of view easier than an insider from the company can.

Because the majority of companies don't know how to put together a persuasive marketing piece, most marketing documents:

- 1) Focus on the seller, instead of the buyer and the benefits that the buyer gets.
- 2) Are terribly boring, dull, and uninteresting.
- 3) Don't excite the prospect to want to take action NOW!

- 4) Dont ask for any action from the prospect.
- 5) Dont tell the prospect whats in it for him if he acts right away.
- 6) Assume that the prospect is as interested in the product or service as the seller is.
- 7) Brag on and on about product and service features, when all the prospect really cares about is the benefits hell get from the product or service.
- 8) Try to be creative and clever, thinking that clever sells when actually clever does nothing to motivate a prospect to buy NOW.
- 9) Try to be professional and worry about their image. When really, the only thing that matters is relentlessly focusing on your prospects desires. You must focus on the benefits that your prospect is wanting you to tell him about. You need to worry about delivering on your promises, improving your product or service...and forget about the professional image.

These are just a few of the problems that youll see every day around you when you look at typical marketing communications going on.

Its terrible. Its a waste of paper, money, time, energy and other valuable resources. Dont fall prey to this game. Find yourself a professional copywriter and designer that can deliver what your prospect wants. Your investment in a good copywriter will be worth more than anything else youd ever spend your marketing on.

Mistake #10: You Dont Determine What It Is About You That Makes A Client Want To Buy From You Because He Cant Get What Youre Offering Anywhere Else. (Establishing Your Unique Selling Proposition)

What advantage is there for your prospects or customers to do business with you? What makes you unique? Your unique selling proposition(USP) is the unique advantage you hold out in all of your marketing, advertising and sales efforts. Its something that a customer usually cant get anywhere else.

Its the philosophical foundation of your business, and its essence should pervade everything you do.

The formulation of your USP(unique selling proposition) depends on the specific market niche you have already carved, or wish to carve out.

Your USP may be that: you only sell the highest grade products in the industry.

Your USP may be that: you sell your products at the lowest mark-up in the industry.

Your USP may be that: you maintain 24-hour, 7-days-a-week service for your customers.

Your USP may be that: you maintain 5 times more service personnel than anyone else in your industry, so you can respond in three hours instead of three days.

Your USP may be that: you provide more information, education, and service than anyone else.

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Your USP may be that: you have everything in stock at all time — no out-of-stock, waiting, or back orders.

Most companies are me-too companies. They look just like everyone else. They sell like everyone else. They carry the same products as everyone else. They develop nothing to make them unique that creates a desire in the prospect to have that special uniqueness.

Too many companies are just out there to sell. You need to commit to becoming a company that's dedicated to solving a client's problem. As the great marketing guru Jeffrey Lant states, Don't sell. Solve!

Perhaps that could be your USP!

The USP can carve you out a market so quick you won't believe it! So, figure out what your USP is and start promoting its benefits to your customers and prospects today!

Bonus Tip: Once You Understand The Mistakes In This Report, Don't Go Back To Doing Your Business And Marketing The Same Old, Unprofitable Way.

Change is difficult. Change can be tough. When you try to be different, do things differently, or make waves, people get uncomfortable. Undoubtedly, some of the ideas in this report will warrant a change or two in your business.

Please...change! It will not only mean a heck-of-a-lot more money to you, it will also mean increased satisfaction in knowing that you are running a business that is focused on the customer, and wants to serve.

Dont try to overhaul your business if you are making a lot of these mistakes. Instead, after youve read these ideas, pick out JUST ONE that you need to work on the most. Focus your energy on changing just one at a time. Put up notes to remind you of key concepts. Reread the section over and over again. Call me to ask for further advice. Whatever you do, decide to make the changes thatll better your business along.

Once you think youve got the first change down, determine your next step. Decide what you want to change next. Focus on it, and change.

The toughest thing about change is when it involves other people. Theyre in a comfort zone that theyve gotten used to. Now youre gonna come along and suggest change. Motivating your people to change will be the toughest part. But dont give up. Be strong. Be the example of a successful marketer. With or without your people, you can make your business a success.

CONCLUSION

The marketing mistakes in this report are real. They cause the loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars every year for business. Now that you have the answers, Ill expect to see your revenues go up higher than theyve ever been!

It really can happen for you!