

# 9 Critical Business to Business Marketing Mistakes that Even the Most Savvy Business Owners Make



There are so many marketing options to choose from but there are some that need to be at the core of a client getting marketing strategy.

Don't overlook these essential marketing actions that will have a big impact in how you grow and increase your revenues.

I've put together a checklist of mistakes you need to avoid – use it review your marketing actions.

## 1. Market and sell your results, outcomes and solutions

It's so easy to fall into the trap of explaining and marketing the minutiae of what you offer. Going into every detail of your product's capabilities, service delivery, how marvellous your company is and the length of time you've been in business for simply miss the point.

*People buy solutions, not your process.*

At the heart of your marketing there needs to be something that makes prospects sit up and think 'this is for me'. Explain how your services fix and sort out their problems. Share the results they can expect and the outcomes they are willing to pay for.

This approach answers the hidden questions they have, building confidence and trust.

## **2. Social media must wash its face**

It's certainly the hot topic and there seems to be an ever increasing number of social media experts out there, but I meet many business owners that don't get any significant return for the efforts.

Some businesses have thousands of followers and likes but don't get too many new customers. Often the problem is way most organisations handle social media. It's often seen as a sales tool to push and sell their services at every opportunity. People don't go on social media sites to shop; they look for information, conversation, discussions and fun.

At the core of your social media plan is how you can encourage participation with advice, tips, hints, insights to your work and the results it gets.

To translate social media engagement into leads and enquires you need to create a system that takes them off social media and gets them on your email list so you can nurture and build trust.

## **3. You are probably ignoring your existing customers**

Finding a steady flow of new customers is essential to secure your financial future, but forget your existing customers at your peril!

It's far easier and less costly to sell more products and services to existing customers than to someone you don't have a relationship with.

Of course, this depends on whether you have looked after your clients well in the past and if your services delivered what was promised.

Think about reactivating lapsed or inactive customers and find out why they have moved away.

Never assume that even your best customers are aware of all the products and services you offer. Remind customers of everything you offer and make sure they are first to know about new products and services

Think about how to develop an upsell and cross sell strategy.

An upsell is about getting the customer to spend more money by increasing the value of a sale. Cross-selling is about increasing your revenue by selling additional products and services.

#### **4. You don't have an offer**

Everything we do needs to generate a lead or enquiry.

Sometimes business owners are too quick to try to make a sale at the first point of contact and their first message is a 'buy me right now' offer. If the timing is wrong or people don't know enough about you or your services and decide not to purchase, that lead could be lost forever.

Don't confuse a lead generation offer with a 'buy now' offer.

Lead generation marketing offers are something of high value. It could be quality ideas, information and content that is relevant and designed to help them overcome their issues and challenges. Essentially, it needs to be something they would be keen to exchange their contact details for.

They are a method of starting a relationship with a prospect that you can nurture and eventually convert to business. They definitely shouldn't comprise any sort of offer, such as discounts or free products that wants them to buy immediately.

## 5. It's never a onetime event

This quote from David Ogilvy, the direct response guru, caught my eye many years ago and change the way I marketed my business.

Consider this:

I don't know who you are  
I don't know your company  
I don't know your company's product  
I don't know what your company stands for  
I don't know your company's customers  
I don't know your company's record  
I don't know your company's reputation  
Now – what was it you wanted to sell me?

When you are trying to build your business this quote sums up your challenge.

And one of the big mistakes I often see is business owners is treating marketing as a one-time event.

Your future clients are busy people and are constantly bombarded with advertising and marketing messages. They're unlikely to sit idly by, waiting for your marketing materials to arrive.

A single instance of marketing is not going to change your business in any shape or form. Your marketing message is battling to win the time, money and attention of your prospects which means it needs to be a continuous campaign.

You get better and more consistent results from a series of messages aimed at your ideal client through different channels. Don't overstretch your resources,

instead select a smaller number of ideal clients to receive a series of several messages rather than a larger number of prospects that you can only afford to send one message to.

A repetitive marketing campaign creates visibility, develops familiarity, builds trust and credibility and wins more conversions.

## **6. You don't have a call to action**

It is not enough that your prospective visitors just go to your website or read your marketing materials.

You want them to do something.

That's the job of a call to action. It's a key ingredient of any effective marketing campaign because it's the crucial part of your message that asks your visitors, prospects and customers to opt-in and become a lead or enquiry.

Quite literally, it is an instruction for them to take action.

That call to action needs to be tell them exactly what to do and this could be anything along the lines of an eBook, free trial of a product or service, complimentary session, sign up for a webinar, or an invitation to an event

Any lead generating marketing tools such as brochures, flyers, catalogues, your website and email campaigns, should all have a call to action included in order to generate leads.

The sad thing is that not many business implement effective calls to action.

## 7. Not setting your website up to generate leads

Many business owners miss out on new clients because their website is not set up to generate leads. Too often, website visitors become a one-time visitor and the opportunity of new business is lost.

Here are three crucial elements that your website needs to address:

- Your message – it needs to be relevant and all about how your services can solve their challenges, while demonstrating your understanding of their situation. Too often it's a message about the organisation and its processes
- Adding value for your visitors – think of your site as a resource. It's a great place to showcase your skills and give an insight into how your services can make a difference. Share useful (not salesy) content and valuable information that visitors need to know
- Understanding who your visitors are – a tried and tested way is to exchange your high value content for their contact details. What would they be interested to know more about? Can you share ideas, strategies in the form of eBooks, white papers, blog posts, articles, guides, demonstrations, trials, or consultations? What would entice them to opt in and request your information?

Ideally you need to have a variety of content that will appeal to visitors depending on their situations and typical problems. It's a great way to start a business relationship and helps educate your prospects as to why they need you.

## **8. Not having enough methods to get your message to your ideal clients**

There are dozens of ways to deliver your message to your ideal clients, but too many business owners rely on just one or two.

You will dramatically increase the level of new customers by using several channels to get your message out.

If you are unsure how to do that, profile your ideal client and figure out the best combination of methods to reach them. Being totally clear on your ideal client will direct you to the most effective routes you need to use.

Ask yourself the following questions.

How will social media work? Is direct mail relevant? How can you build an email list? Is networking relevant? How can I be referred and be introduced to them? What are they searching for online? Can I meet them at trade/industry exhibitions? Which events do they attend? Which trade associations do they belong to? Which publications do they read and which blogs do they follow?

Take time to think a little bigger and use multiple ways to reach your target market.

## **9. Trying to be a super smooth salesman**

Unless you operate online, one thing for certain is that you will need to meet your clients face to face to convert them.

That can be daunting for many service business owners because selling does not come naturally to many of us.

Sales conversion is a process that you need to work on and be comfortable with. Don't change your personality to be an in your face salesperson as it will backfire.

Think of selling as a conversation. You need to find out what their issues are and explain how you can be the person to give them the results they need. Ask plenty of questions and listen closely to their responses so you can understand what they need and let them see how you would be a good fit for them and their business.

Contrary to what you may think, people do not want to be pitched to. It can create huge barriers to them becoming a client. They are looking to understand your value and, by investing in your services, the outcomes that they will get.

So develop your process and start with the end in mind by putting yourself in your prospects' shoes. What would they want to know? Which questions will enable you to dig deeper and how do your services solve their problems?

A simple structure will give you confidence that you can close business in your own authentic style – just be yourself.

**If you recognise some of the mistakes I've described, don't worry! It's well worth your time to work on them because it will make a significant difference to how you can attract more clients and convert them into paying customers.**

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