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Sales & Marketing Success in your small business

Tactics, Tools, and Strategies for Business Success

By Robert Mark Jakobsen

Robert Mark Jakobsen  
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Begin with the end in mind.  
- Stephen Covey

A thousand mile journey begins  
with one step.  
- Lao Tsu

Victory is always possible for the  
person who refuses to  
stop fighting.  
- Napoleon Hill

If you think you can or if you  
think you can't, either way you  
are right.  
- Anthony Robbins

# Sales & Marketing Success in your small business

## Tactics, Tools, and Strategies for Business Success

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My reason for writing this book is simply to help small business owners be successful in their endeavours.

I have included a large chapter on selling as this is my passion. It all started when I realised my webpage had moved from page 1 to page 2 in the Google index.

That really made me angry mostly because of the way that I found out about it. I had been checking up on my ranking and always found it on page 1 so I thought that everything was fine until I spoke to a friend who was unable to find me.

I then became aware of the fact that Google keeps a cookie on your PC to help you get the best search result possible that meant that I was on page 1 only on my computer - not on everybody else's computer.

Worst of all I had been minimising my Ad Words budget.

I realised that was the reason I did not get as many calls as I used to. I was furious and that was my tipping point to get heavily involved with internet marketing.

I did this by reading a lot of books and attending seminars.

In this book I have provided the most important and simple tips to get you optimum ratings.

You must be aware, however, that the rules of the game change every day but most of the things I have included here are ground rules that have been recognised to work.

I left out some of the more advanced concepts and any Black Hat SEO.

The result is solid advice that works.

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Robert facilitates sales training courses and speaks expertly on topics such as motivation, work satisfaction, sales and persuasion, Internet Marketing and new media.

As a hobby, Robert has also performed magic professionally for 14 years. Some say that this love and knowledge of the magical arts has transformed his career – but there is not magic involved here, as you will learn as you continue to read!!

Success is predictable.

- Brian Tracy

## Introduction

Firms need to outdo their competitors in satisfying customers. Firms need also to understand and respond to changes in competition, channel and regulators' behaviours. The firm that creates marketing tactics that fit together well and coordinates their implementation in the right order will do much better than the firm whose tactics and implementation are confused and disjointed.

The Product Life-cycle. Like a living organism, a product goes through a birth stage, growth stage, mature stage and decline stage. Firms should emphasise different marketing strategies and tactics at different stages.

Marketing s changes its focus from equilibrium management (why and how markets settle down) to disequilibrium management (why and how markets are constantly changing through the development of competitive products and production processes)

Marketing...you hear the word and instantly envision a flood of concepts and ideas. For instance, you might see paid advertisements, commercials, online ads, email campaigns, and more. Almost immediately after seeing all of the different tactics, your mind begins rushing through the different "tools" that you associate with marketing, and then your thoughts turn to the often dreaded "how".

- How do you do marketing?
- How do you pay for it?
- How can you choose the right approach?

This guide is going to introduce you to the best tactics to use in the modern world of business marketing. Because we just used the term "modern", it means that the main thrust or focus of the work is going to involve the Internet. We have to automatically assume that any sort of business is going to use the different online methods of communication because that is what modern consumers EXPECT.

## Understanding Consumer Expectations

Anyone involved in a modern business would be fooling themselves if they thought they could avoid using the Internet to find an audience of potential clients. You can take almost any service or product and see that it would require a website to reach potential clients and/or to convert them into paying customers. This means that most of your sales market optimization is going to have to rely on the Internet.

Let's use a simple example – a plumbing service. As a plumber, you might think it best to simply pay for yellow pages advertising or telephone directory listings in order to be easily found by your customers. The flaw with the approach is that roughly 85% of consumer searches for local services are done through the use of the Internet, rather than a phone book and that around 80% of those searches are followed up through “offline” actions such as telephoning the business listing.

What does this mean to you? Well, if you were that plumber and had paid only for telephone directory listings, you would lose out on a huge portion of your potential audience. If you had created an “SEO optimized” website, however, you would obtain most of the local calls because your listing or website would be first among the results returned by most search engines.

This means that you have to accept that using the Internet is the most typical “knee jerk” reaction for the modern consumer, and that most anticipate the presence of an informative website as well. In order to get to your customers you have to create a site and a plan for gaining access to the highest ranking in the search engines too, and that is what this book is going to teach you how to do.

## The Different Steps

Though this guide is going to introduce you to the ways in which a website can be SEO optimized, it is not going to focus in on only a few simple issues. Instead, we will look closely at the different online marketing tools available, including:

- Organic SEO versus Black Hat SEO;
- Paid advertising (PPC and Google Ads, among others);
- Display advertising;
- Word of mouth;
- Website video content;
- Blogs;
- Social media;
- Keywords and website content;
- Email marketing; and
- Articles, forums, and backlinks.

Each of these tactics is well known and “standard practice” in the modern world of the Internet and online business, and you will have no difficulty finding the resources necessary. (We have included an enormous directory of resources at the end of this guide, however, to ensure that you can access any of these somewhat essential tools.)

In order to ensure that you understand how each can be put to use, we will begin with a brief look at SEO and how you can use it to really enhance your hold on your particular market.

We will then look at the tactics on an individual basis, and explore the strongest tools to rely on. Lastly, will consider how to incorporate these marketing strategies into your business and get the rate of conversion or customer response that you need for success.

## Chapter One

### A Look at SEO

A keyword can be any word, found anywhere on your site! This includes nouns, verbs, and adjectives. A keyword can also be a collection of words or a phrase. When creating your keywords, you can use keyword modifiers to create different keyword combinations.

As you may or may not already know, SEO means “search engine optimization” or “search engine optimized”. Regardless of the terminology you associate with the acronym, it will always mean the same thing – creating a system that keeps your website at the uppermost ranks in the search engine results.

What is this system? It involves many different factors, with the most essential issue being the selection of the most appropriate “keywords”. These are the terms or words that people would most frequently enter into the “Search” box of a search engine, and which must be used to guide them towards your website.

Obviously, there are a huge number of words and/or phrases that might be used for almost any business. Need an example? Let’s say that your business focuses on selling pet products. Just begin thinking about the words that a consumer would use to find your merchandise – pets, pet food, pet toys, pet products, gifts for pets, pet beds, pet clothing, etc. The list could be endless, and this is where so many online businesses find it difficult to begin their SEO work.

Fortunately, there are many tools that can help. For instance, the world’s most popular search engine is Google, and it has a free tool called Google AdWords that will help you to begin identifying the different words closely associated with your business. You can then consider how “competitive” the terms are, and begin choosing those that are the most relevant but which are also not so fiercely

competitive.

What does competitive mean? If we use the pet supply example from above we would see that the word pets entered into the Google AdWords tool would generate a large number of matching concepts. Each of these would show how many times the word was used on a “global” basis each month, and also on a “local” one too. There is also a small bar chart that shows how “competitive” the word is in terms of others using it in their advertising, marketing, and SEO campaigns.

For example, the word “pets” alone is not all that competitive, but a phrase like “discount pet supplies” is. This would mean that if you tried to use it as your primary keywords for an SEO campaign, you would have a lot more difficulty than if you selected a less competitive phrase, but one that had the same number of monthly searches. For instance, “online pet store” would be less competitive and yet appear in searches at around the same levels.

It is usually best to stick with the least competitive keywords for content optimizing in order get the most visibility in the search engine results pages, or SERPs. Where you have to consider using the truly competitive terminology, however, is in the pieces that the “web crawlers” or “spiders” give the most weight or value.

This is the ideal time for us to explain to you how the search engines generate all of the results. After learning how this is done, you will be able to understand how best to incorporate social media, videos, images, and other materials into your sales marketing optimization work.

## Understanding Search Engine Results Pages

How does a search engine work? You open your favorite search engine and type in the terms that you need, hit the “Search” button and wait for results. It helps to know that consumers tend to conduct three types of searches:

- Informational – a search that indicates that a consumer is looking for specific information, such as “how to fix a lamp”;
- Transactional – a search for details that will help the consumer complete some sort of activity, such as “discount lamps in New York City”; and
- Navigational – a search that really has only one possible result because it is designed around a location. For example, “Bob’s Lamp Service in New York City” would point the searcher towards only one set of results.

This means that anyone who has a website, and who wants to direct the most “traffic” to that site, will have to understand how people actually go about using the search engines and how the search engines respond. For example, someone with a lamp repair service would benefit greatly from understanding the three types of searches described above. (You will begin to see why that is the case as we work our way through this section on SEO.)

So, if you use a search engine for any of the three most common types of searches by entering your terms, you will get a large list of results (SERPs) in a matter of moments. You need to know that the search engine isn’t combing the entire Internet in that few moments, but is instead using the different “indexes” that have been created by its proprietary “spiders” on a frequent basis.

## **Search Engines Make Indexes**

Here's how it works: The web spiders search every page available on the Internet (or on a select portion of the Internet) and harvest lists of words – this is the process that the term “crawling” or “web crawlers” is describing. The spiders don't act randomly; they go to a site that is housed on a server connected to the Internet, and the spider then scours all of the pages of content for lists of words, and begins noting where the words are found. This leads to the development of an index that gives the terms and where they are located a certain amount of value. The spider then follows any links in the site and this expands the indexing process.

We mentioned that “where” the words are located played a role in their significance. This is because the “language” used for any website is HTML, and this requires different “meta tags”, “titles”, and “descriptions” that are valuable to the spiders as well as the contents of the “text” in the body of the site.

All of this information is put into the search engine's indexes, and when someone enters a search for the related terms and data, it is the continually updated indexes that are used to generate the results.

## **How to Use the Details**

Have you started to recognize how you might use this web spider and web crawler system to your advantage? If you use good keywords in the body content of the site, and ensure that the most competitive terms appear in the places that search engines give significance, it is likely that you will get good search engine results. The trick is picking the terms (which we have already covered) and then using them to the fullest extent possible.

What this will mean to you, as the reader of this guide, is how to build a website that is packed with the kinds of tags, titles,



descriptions, etc. that will help to enhance and optimize your search engine results.

Okay, you might think, that sounds great, but what does this all REALLY mean? It means that you will first go ahead and develop lists of keywords. You will then use them in the different tactics and approaches we will itemize throughout the remainder of this book! It is that simple!

## **The Small Business and the Internet**

In the next chapters, we will learn how to use your keywords in the best places and the best ways to get results. Let's just take one last look at where the terms will appear as this is going to help you understand why such things as paid ads, organic SEO, videos, social media, blogs, backlinks, comments in forums, and articles can help your business.

The places where the search engines "read" the content include:

- The Title Tags – this is what appears along the top of the browser screen and gives a very brief explanation of the content;
- The Description Tags – these are great places for the use of the most competitive terms because they influence how the web crawlers "weigh" the page;
- The Keyword Tags – these allow you to provide all of the additional text for spiders to index with the rest of the body copy. These are excellent for reinforcing the competitive terms and giving them validity, which is something that indexes can actually comprehend and identify!

These are the areas in which you will pay attention to keyword usage when you are hoping to really optimize your sales market and

website traffic.

A word of warning, however, is that tagging popular topics within any of these areas when the content of the page is not related to them is a very destructive policy. This is because the spiders are now capable of correlating data and tags, and will instantly reject tags if they have no relation to the remaining words on the page! Thus, the website owner who uses “discount pet supplies” in the most prominent places on a page, and yet has content about fish tanks is going to see ZERO results from this effort because the web crawlers will not correlate the groups of words.

Now that you have a good and basic comprehension of the need for a website and online presence, and how SEO plays a tremendous part in it, we can move into the next steps of planning your strategy, assessing your market, and learning about some of the best tactics to use.

### **MUST Checklist for seo**

- Keyword in URL      First word is best, second is second best, etc.
- Keyword in Domain name      Same as in page-name-with-hyphens
- Keyword in Title tag
- Keyword in Description meta tag  
(Google no longer “relies” upon this tag, but will of ten use it)
- Keyword in Keyword metatag. Shows theme - less than 10 words. Every word in this tag MUST appear somewhere in the body text. If not, it can be penalized for irrelevance.  
No single word should appear more than twice. If not, it may be considered spam. Google purportedly no longer uses this tag, but others do.

- Keyword density in body text (Have the key word farces in text 3-5 times)
- Keyword in H1, H2 and H3
- Internal links pages- keywords? Link should contain keywords. The filename “linked to” should contain the keywords. Use hyphenated filenames, but not long ones - two or three hyphens only.
- Picture filenames should contain relevant keyword
- Internal links should contain relevant keyword
- Make a sitemap <http://www.sitemaps.org/>
- NO duplicate content on your website
- Help customers find you on Google Maps / Google Places
- Use Google Webmaster Tools It’s free.  
<http://google.com/webmasters/tools/>

### **Checklist before you submit your site to search engines:**

- Are all pages complete? (No “under construction” pages)
- Are all links valid? (No broken or dead links)
- Are all pages optimized?
- Are all pages search engine compatible?
- Have you used Robots.txt or Robots META Tag to prevent pages you want hidden (e.g. shopping cart) from being indexed?
- If your site is an e-commerce site, is your ordering process or shopping cart functional and tested for bugs?
- Are you prepared to handle a sudden influx of traffic and/or sales?
- Have you tested your site for usability? (Google “web site usability” for more information)

## **Add your URL to Google**

<http://www.google.com/addurl/?continue=/addurl>

Submitting Your Site to dmoz

<http://www.dmoz.org/help/submit.html>

Each day we must strive for  
constant and never ending  
improvement.

- Anthony Robbins

## Chapter Two

### Planning Your Strategy

After reading the first chapter, it is fairly reasonable to assume that you already have some ideas for your website. That's great, but hold off on rushing headlong into any of this until you have done some preliminary planning and assessing.

For example, if you already have a website you need to determine its level of functionality and to identify the places where it is succeeding the most and where it might be failing to meet your mission. You can begin doing this by applying a few of the SEO details we provided in the first chapter, such as using the best keywords in your content titles, descriptions of images, videos and more.

It also helps to really take the time to look at the website as if you were a visitor to it for the first time. Shortly, we will address this sort of self check-up, and the most useful tools for it. Before doing that, however, we need you to be sure that you fully comprehend your marketing and sales goals.

For instance, if marketing involves *the creation and execution of plans to promote, price, and distribute goods, services or ideas meant to meet the customers' goals*, you really have to *know what your customers want*. This is the only way to really SEE if your website is able to satisfy them.

### Sales and Market Assessment

How do you begin to perform an assessment of your sales market? You have to start the entire process by identifying your target market. This is the group or groups of consumers who would have an interest in your goods or services because they fill a "need" or a "want".

To identify your market then, you would have to discover why a customer would want to choose your product or service over another provider. This would begin with you making a clear list of your products' or services' features and benefits.

What is the difference between features and benefits? That is easy! Here's a quick example: a tube of toothpaste uses a chemical formula known for removing stains. That is a feature of the product, but this same paste also freshens breath, reduces plaque, and protects against cavities. These are all features. The benefits of using the paste would be that your teeth are brighter, your gums healthier, and your teeth protected.

Is it the features or the benefits that you should market? That's the big question for almost anyone considering how to optimize their market, and the answer is that it is usually the benefits that motivate a buyer.

So, you must identify all of the benefits of your product and use them to really motivate your potential customers to convert to paying clients. You can also use the benefits to recognize the largest segment of your market too.

For example, that toothpaste mentioned just a moment ago could be marketed to every possible consumer, but the segment of the market most likely to want its benefits would be those with stained teeth. This means that the manufacturer would have broken down the larger market into a smaller segment and then used strategies and marketing to reach the specific customer group.

Once you can create as accurate a target market as the one in the example above, you can begin to customize your efforts to reach that segment of the greater market. There are many ways to recognize the characteristics that can help to identify these segmented markets or target audiences, and it begins with identifying the three types of buyers for products and services:

- Consumers – individuals and households that will buy items or services for their own use and benefit;
- Industry – groups, individuals, and organizations that will buy items or services for their use in creating other products or to support their daily operations; and
- Resellers – these are the famous “middlemen” who purchase your goods and resell them for a profit.

It is obvious that not all services or products will be needed by all areas of the greater market, but it helps to know precisely which areas your customers will come from as you begin to create the materials necessary to communicate with them.

Does this mean that you can have different segments of a market? Yes, and this is why you will now need to identify the reasons that customers would choose your product or services over another provider.

These reasons are often referred to as a market’s characteristics, and they include:

- Geographic – these apply if your business dealings will depend upon a local, regional, national or international location;
- Demographic – these apply if your sales and marketing will depend or focus on a particular age, race, religion, gender, income level, family size, occupation, education level and marital status. Business customers also have demographic characteristics such as size, number of employees, type of products, and annual revenue;
- Psychographic – these apply if your sales and marketing will be based on the attitudes, beliefs and emotions of the target market. This can include things like desire for status, enhanced appearance and more. Business customers can have psychographic characteristics if they

view themselves as cutting edge; consider themselves socially responsible, stable and strong; or view themselves as innovative and creative;

- Behavioristic – these apply if your marketing depends on things like brand loyalty, frequency of purchases, buying habits, and more. This applies to both businesses and consumer markets.

Though you may find that a combination of characteristics will apply to your market segment, you still need to take the time to identify which will be most useful in your marketing. (We have supplied worksheets in the Resources section to help with this issue)

If you find this too challenging, we provide the following list of criteria to help you recognize what is most important to your anticipated market. These will help you to further identify what characteristics best apply to your sales and marketing tactics:

### **Characteristic Worksheet**

Please indicate where each of the factors ranks in terms of your anticipated target market, i.e. “what matters most to them”. You can then compare them to learn which characteristics (from above) best apply to your target audience, and this will guide you in formulating the strongest materials to communicate with them.



Factor	High	Medium	Low
Price			
Quality			
Brand Name			
Variety of Services			
Sales Staff			
Customer Service			
Special Offers			
Packaging			
Convenience of Use			
Convenience of Purchase			
Location			
Guarantees			
Store/Office Decor			
Payment Terms			

Once you understand the primary characteristics that apply to your target audience you know how to begin speaking to them. You must then do the additional research necessary to find them and the areas in which your most likely target audience exists. Not sure what that means, a good example of a clearly identified target market is below:

If you are a printing service offering work to “medium sized” corporations you have NOT identified your target audience. If, on the other hand, you are a printing service looking to work with companies earning around £5 million in annual revenue, in a 40km radius around the shop, and with a need for full colour runs of around 5k or more then you HAVE identified a true target audience.

This means that your target market has to be:

- Reachable;
- Measurable; and
- Sufficient in size to meet the needs of your business.

Any concentrated marketing is going to be more effective than a very broad campaign, and things can be improved if you also take the time to identify if you have competition in your chosen segment, and to learn how they are serving the market in question. Often it might mean that you find a way to specialize or tap into an underserved area of your market, but it can also mean that you simply create the most powerful marketing campaigns designed to overcome the competition as well.

### **Contacting the Target Market**

How is that done?

When you do any sort of sales and market assessment, you have to be sure that you know your “target” market, and how to get them to choose your business over any other for the goods or services offered. This means that you have to have already:

- Identified YOUR marketing goals;
- Determined the message necessary to attract your target market or markets;
- Made plans to get the results desired, and
- Been prepared to evaluate those plans for strengths and weaknesses.

You also have to know the types of marketing that apply to your market’s characteristics as well. These include “push” and “pull” marketing.

When it is the pull marketing, it means that you (as the seller) attempt to pull in the customer through the use of promotional tactics such as online forums or blogs, word of mouth, social media, website banners, and traditional advertising of all kinds.

When it is the push marketing, you are attempting to push the product to the potential buyer. Usually this is the most direct form of marketing and involves:

- Sales people searching for prospects through face to face or direct communication;
- Direct sales;
- Market research;
- Providing services for pre-existing products;
- Printed mailers;
- Telemarketing;
- Social Networking
- Fax and email campaigns; and
- Web sites (along with all of the associated online items such as blogs, forums, backlinks, and social networks)

Each of these marketing categories, however, is meant to communicate with the potential client. This means that the content of each method has to be customized with the message you mean to deliver.

**Measurement** You will have many methods of advertising in operation at one time, some will be a hit and some will miss. Reduce your marketing budget 50% by asking people “Where did you hear of us.” This will help you utilize the advertising means that is garnering you the most responses.

**Commitment** Determine a marketing plan and commit to it. The more repetition, the more it is remembered.

**Consistent** Do not be tempted to change your plan. People learn to trust you, your image, and your message.

## Making the Plans

Obviously, if you are intending to conduct any sort of marketing campaign, and to deliver a specific message to get the desired results, it will involve a lot of planning.

For example, you need what is known as “continuity” in the looks, terms, and messages delivered through any bit of marketing and this means that your blogs, website content, and printed advertisements have to all reflect the same message.

Some of the best tips for success are from the “pros” in the world of online marketing, and they include:

- Planning the direction or subjects of marketing blogs and articles well in advance through “brainstorming sessions”. This is done by coming up with at least twenty or more titles and concepts for any marketing content that will be used in each of the marketing pieces. This is essential for the establishment of true continuity;
- Creating “reserves” of posts and materials – whether it is a series of articles or blogs, comments, etc., try to get the writing done in advance. We recommend that you attempt to have from six to twelve weeks of posts “in the can” waiting to be posted at the right moment.  
This prevents the loss of momentum, but also ensures that the materials are useful, not repetitive, and meet your goals or mission. It also allows you tons of time to see how readers are reacting and to take action if necessary (something you might not have the time for if you were busy writing new blogs or content every week);
- Using website analytics (which we cover in the Check Yourself Out section below) in order to identify the most popular pages at your site and to learn the “pathways” that visitors follow to reach those pages;

- Repurposing the materials. Now that you have done the brainstorming, created the content, posted it to the various blogs, sites, forums, and ads you are using, you need to also use the analytics to see if it is responsible for traffic to your site. If it is, and that traffic is converting to paying customers, you need to “repurpose” that content. This means taking the slideshow that you used for a YouTube video and converting it into a multi-week blog segment, etc.; and
- Using aggregators for information about your industry. This is something that is going to help you as you come to the end of your collection of pre-written materials. For example, use something as basic as the Google news aggregator and search Twitter for relevant “hashtags” to find new ways of directly addressing your target audience. You will be surprised at how often the news and/or new terminology applies to almost any industry imaginable and how it can then be used to “brainstorm” for twenty NEW ideas and content.

With all of this planning done, we suggest that you next “check yourself out” and then create some response or action plans around your findings. The next section is going to walk you through the process of this very necessary and effective procedure.

## Check Yourself Out

What's the first step? Making sure that your site is not a "turn off" is a huge move in the right direction. We suggest the use of the following "tools" designed to identify the issues most commonly encountered by website visitors, and which might make them view the site in an unfavourable manner:

1. Finding browser glitches – remember that not everyone in the world is using the most "popular" browsers. This means it is a very good idea to visit one of the many websites offering free tools designed to check or test for "cross browser compatibility". These sites allow you to checkout a variety of "browser shots" from the "other" browsers in order to see how your site looks and how it functions for everyone who visits. For example, someone may not have the ability to browse with Flash functions, and this could make your site very unappealing to them. Simply looking at the site in different resolutions and perspectives will allow you to really optimize it for the largest audience;

2. Use those analytics! - Google Analytics makes it possible for you to understand how people navigate and make their way to a website. There are many other "visual" web analytics available too, and these might provide you with a different understanding of how your visitors do, or do not, interact with your site. For example, one tool provides "heat map" visibility that shows the "hot spots" on your site and another gives you access to open source software that lets you perform a lot of in-house tests too. All of these are going to show you the definitive "strong points" in the site;

3. Screen recording software - this is available from some of the web analytics sites, and this is a great tool that can save you money by allowing you to perform usability testing. For example, you can bring in a dozen or more volunteers to work as website testers, and the software will then record them performing common tasks on the your website. The recordings can then be re-played in order to see when or where a visitor loses interest or gets held up by a flawed protocol, etc.;

4. Noting any error notifications - this is probably one of the primary methods for checking out your site and addressing issues that “turn away” potential customers. For example, broken links, problems with the program, redirects to 404 and 500 error notifications, and failed application launches are all reasons that someone will usually leave a site never to return. It is easy enough to have notifications sent for each incident of this kind in order to identify and permanently eliminate the problems;

5. Looking at the FAQs or customer service complaints - this is a great way to identify the most common problems with the site, products, or services. When you hear what the people “on the ground” have to say about customer response, it can be quite illuminating. This is such a powerful tool that you may want to build some sort of automatic forwarding of each complaint, comment, post, etc. from the customers to the service department, and to your management team (or yourself if you are handling this independently); and

6. Hiring the experts – we have not yet mentioned that there are many companies that can do a thorough website assessment for you. Not only can they run the technical assessments that address easily repaired flaws (and institute systems to identify any that appear in the future) but many can help with design issues, “fluidity” of navigation, content, and even SEO campaigns. There are

also writing services with a huge amount of background in composing just the right content for your blogs, articles, pages, and more. It is always a good idea to consider consulting the experts if you don't believe you can tackle this sort of work on your own.

With the groundwork completed, you can now begin learning about the additional tools available to you for sales and market optimization. We'll begin with a look at advertising in the era of the Internet!

Explore advanced features with:

<http://www.google.com/trends>

<http://adlab.microsoft.com/Keyword-Research.aspx>

<http://sandbox.yahoo.com>

<http://seoquake.com>

<http://www.semrush.com>

<http://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com>

<http://www.alexa.com/site/linksin/URL>

<http://www.iwebtool.com> Backlink Checker



## Advertising: The New World of Advertising for Small Business

Advertising is nothing like it was only twenty years ago. At that time, most of the world's advertisements were in the form of print media such as newspaper and magazine ads, glossy flyers, and direct mailings. There were also a lot of radio ads, TV spots, and paid ads on billboards, in yellow page directories, and in things like programs and local publications.

Today all of that has changed and the modern small business professional has to consider their advertising first in terms of the Internet and only then in the old-fashioned methods mentioned above.

Why not just stick with the older system? You must meet the demands and expectations of the consumer market, and that means that you have to respect the preference for online communication, shopping, business, and socializing.

What sorts of ads should the modern small business owner consider? A brief list would include:

- Paid advertising (PPC and Google Ads, among others);
- Display advertising;
- Web banner ads;
- Website video content;
- Blogs;
- Social media;
- Mobile ads;
- Email marketing; and
- Articles, Forums, and backlinks.

While it might be tempting to go ahead and enlist in all of these tactics, it is not reasonable or realistic. Instead, a business owner has to identify their target market and its specific characteristics (which is what we did in the previous sections).

They will then know precisely which tools would be most effective in

communicating with their intended audience.

Content – Have killer content in your message. Talk directly to your customer with a clear direct message.

This does not mean that there are not some “universal” tools available. For example, the reliance on Google’s AdWords service, mobile marketing, social media, blogs, and websites is very common.

Let’s take a few moments to understand AdWords and mobile marketing before we move into the next section on actual sales techniques with some of the more popular advertising tactics.

## **AdWords**

Here’s how this wildly popular service works:

You create an advertisement and pay for Google’s AdWords service. They place your ad on relevant websites and searches. So, if you are a seller of pet supplies and another site sells pet related products (not in direct competition with your business) Google will know to post your ad there for the number of times you purchased. The website owner then gets revenue from Google for the use of their electronic “real estate”.

Basically, when a user clicks on the Google advertisement link, the publisher of the website on which the advertisement appears is credited with a sum of money and Google keeps the rest.

This is known as CPC or cost per click advertising, and it means that you choose the keywords for the ad and select the number of times it can appear. You then pay for the service only when someone actually clicks on the ad. This means it is a “win win” situation for advertisers and website owners because it can lead traffic to relevant sites and because it can create a nice stream of revenue as well.

There are a few ways that the modern business owner can really maximize their returns from the site, including:

- Content optimization – you already understand SEO, so be sure that your content uses keywords that are optimized to customer needs;
- Frequency – If you can afford to pay for more ad appearances, you are going to get more results. For example, if you can boost the daily budget you will see increased traffic; and
- Enhanced position – if you can optimize your text, increase the “click through rate”, and also accept a higher cost per click, you are far more likely to earn yourself a prominent place on the most relevant websites and search engine results.

Don't forget that online advertisers like Google can often provide you with additional methods of ad placement. For example, we have already mentioned web banners, but there are also paid ads in search engine results (which tend to appear before the actual results and which can generate enormous amounts of traffic) too.

We know that advertising of this kind is very direct, but mobile marketing can be even more targeted. This is because it is much more regulated than traditional online advertising.

Concentrated thoughts produce  
desired results.

- Zig Ziglar

## Mobile Marketing

The advent of SMS (short messaging service) has made it possible for advertisers to find an all-new way of communicating with their audience – through their mobile devices! The great thing about the use of SMS for email marketing is that the carriers who own and operate the networks are far more rigid about the ads they will run. There are also many groups that have well-established guidelines about the use of mobile networks for marketing purposes. Even with these limitations, however, the amount of mobile marketing is profound. For example, it is believed that hundreds of millions of SMS ads are sent out in Europe on a monthly basis.

The major appeal for the use of mobile tactics is that they have to be consensual. This means that the consumer must “opt in” before the advertiser can begin sending out their communications. The regulations also insist that customers can “opt out” whenever they like as well. This means advertisers are not wasting time or money and consumers are not getting ads that have no relevance or interest to them.

Another great thing about mobile marketing is that nearly all of the new units with colour screens are ready to begin sending and receiving the different “multimedia” messages that most mobile marketers are using. This means that an advertiser can use slideshows, text, videos, audio and images to communicate with their market.

How is it done? There are a few ways and they have to do with codes and mobile device capabilities. For example, the most common are:

**Mobile Short Codes** – for instance, the “text #5459 to cast your vote” is a way for advertisers to open the legal doorway for communicating back to the customer. In fact, millions of businesses view their options in mobile short code in the same manner as a domain name and this is the reason that they encourage their target market to send a text message during events, while shopping in

stores, and when viewing other media;

**Dedicated Phone Numbers** - used in place of short codes, all of the long numbers are widely available. This lets the business have a proprietary number (instead of sharing it) and allows them to operate at “non-premium” prices;

**Mobile Web Marketing** – you may not already know that a lot of websites have a second version; their mobile version. This allows them to be accessed via mobile browsers and for a lot of content to function with a mobile device. The primary search engines Google and Yahoo! both come as mobile versions too, and they allow their standard advertising to appear in this format. The Mobile Marketing Association and other groups have set standards for this sort of advertising in order to allow accurate reporting of CPC, PPC, and other usage figures;

**QR Codes** – you would easily recognize one of the blurry boxes of black “squiggles” that can be photographed or “read” by a mobile phone. These are QR (Quick Response) codes and are incredibly popular in both the online and offline world of marketing. It is a method by which a link is established between the device and an actual web page. This means that you could use them to allow your target market to open your web pages that have been optimized or re-written for mobile use. This is a way for creating instant customer engagement and to take advantage of their impulse to visit the site due to your pre-marketing appeal. For example, something made a customer use the QR code, and this means you have their interest and are more likely to make the sale or conversion. These are very traceable options and use “landing pages” that capture the data and figures necessary for determining if they are worth the expense/effort;

Use <http://2tag.nl/> Make your short QR code and share for mobile Free

**Bluetooth** – “proximity” marketing uses an SMS system to “broadcast” offers to all Bluetooth mobile users within a specific geographic location. Obviously, if you have discovered that your market has geographic characteristics this is an ideal way to use the information; and have a look at <http://www.bluebroadcast.com> <http://www.bluetooth.co.uk/>

**Games** – yes, many businesses are now using free downloads of fun little games to get paid advertising. This would mean that you can use your research to identify if your target market is likely to accept the downloads of the games. You can then have your promotional messages within the mobile game and which would direct the user to your mobile web pages.

Okay! This is a lot of information to “take in” and we suggest that you go back through the different options and consider which might be the best for you. You can then move into the next section, which gets a bit more specific in the ways to go about applying your expanding knowledge about sales and market optimization. It is in this next chapter that we begin to focus on the use of viral marketing, social media and videos on your website in order to dramatically increase the conversion rate at your site.

## Chapter Three

### Selling in your Small Business

By this point, you have come to understand how to optimize a website for the best search engine performance, how this applies to your business, how to identify your target market, and how to find the characteristics about that market that will help you to communicate with it in the most effective ways possible. That is a huge amount of information, but we still have a lot more to consider.

For example, we have yet to cover email marketing, paid searches, viral marketing, social media, videos, and your website. That too is a tremendous amount of information, but it isn't as complicated as you might think.

Let's consider how some of these techniques would work in terms of sales techniques.

### Sales Techniques

I believe the basic principles of salesmanship are:

1. Gain the prospect's attention
2. Arouse his interest
3. Convince him that it is intelligent for him to buy your goods or services
4. Arouse his desire to buy
5. Close the sale

But there's more to it than that and let's face it if you have your own small business you have to learn how to sell.

That's the reason for putting this comprehensive chapter on selling

in the book.

Sales is a hurt them heal them game.

First you find their pain then you make the pain big enough for them to want to act now and then you make the pain / loss go away. With the use of your product or service.

In order to sell the product/service you need to know exactly what the customer wants. The old adage “he could sell ice to Eskimos” is very rarely true! If the client has an abundance of ice, trying to sell him more ice is more than likely just wasting both your time and the clients!

However, if you take a moment to think about this, you could find some great opportunities here. Even in this rather early phase, you have identified the client’s needs, probably without actually recognizing it. If the client has an abundance of ice then he might need storage for that ice, or he might even need a heating system! Identifying the needs of the customer is absolutely vital. Often, the customer will not tell you what his needs are, so you need to be able to find them out for yourself.

This is where the homework comes in, along with the preparation that goes into making a successful sale.

## **Arranging the Meeting**

You already know a great deal about the company you are dealing with from your research, and this will give you the advantage for the initial sale meeting.

With the company’s background in mind, it’s time to sort out your agenda for the meeting. To begin with, think about what you are trying to achieve. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What is my primary goal?
- What do I know about the company?
- What is it that makes my product/service superior?



- Why does the client need this product or service?

When you have the answers to these questions, you have the basic structure for your meeting. One other question, however, is rarely thought of prior to that initial meeting, often with devastating consequences:

- What do I do if it starts to go wrong?

Ask yourself: what would I do in this situation?

Often, a sales pitch can rapidly deteriorate in these kinds of circumstances. You have built your entire presentation on one aspect and one goal, and when that goal is no longer beneficial to both parties, there is little chance of a sale.

A really good salesperson, however, would have anticipated this. Even if the needs of the company have recently changed in a way that you were unaware of, you can still make that all important sale. Before you go into the meeting, complete the exercise above where you set out your goals several times, each time with a different goal. This way, you have a number of different goals that can be achieved. Even if goal number one does not look like it has much chance of getting off the ground, you have other directions that you can take your presentation, maybe a fall back goal could be another meeting in the near future to discuss your customers needs and pains and how you can solve them.

- You have identified the company's needs
- You have adjusted your goals to account for this
- You have struck up a successful relationship
- Now what?

### **First Impressions**

Everyone knows that in all walks of life, you never get a second chance to make a first impression. When it comes to sales, this is never more appropriate.

There are a number of golden rules that apply when it comes to making that all-important first impression:

- Your mood will affect how you act. If you are tired, stressed, hung-over or just grouchy; no matter how hard you try to mask it, you can never hide it completely.
- Smiling is the most infectious thing in the world. A big cheesy grin can actually do more harm than good, but a soft genuine smile for everyone you meet can create a very good first impression.
- Just as it is possible to under dress for an important meeting, it is just as possible to overdress. The clothes that you wear should be appropriate for the business you're visiting. If you are visiting a car mechanics workshop, for example, a sharp suit and pressed tie is more likely to create a negative first impression than a good one. Similarly, a financial institution is far less likely to be impressed with an open shirt and rolled up sleeves!!
- Enthusiasm! You are enthusiastic for your product and the clients' business. Why hide it? If you can demonstrate belief in what you are selling, the customer will have a much easier time believing in it too.

1 - There are basically three elements in any face-to-face communication:

- Words
- Tone of voice
- Body language

2 - These three elements account differently for the meaning of the message:

- Words account for 7%
- Tone of voice accounts for 38% and
- Body language accounts for 55% of the message.

It seems that many people who quote Mehrabian's research seem unaware that this second conclusion was NOT a general observation relevant to all communications.

Mehrabian reached this second conclusion in the context of experiments dealing with communications of feelings and attitudes (i.e., like-dislike). Thus the often quoted disproportionate influence of tone of voice and body language is only really true when someone says they like/dislike something/someone but their tone of voice or body language implies the opposite.

Your body language reflects what you are currently thinking. It is often unconscious – more often than not we don't realise the signals that we are giving off. Similarly, we don't often consciously acknowledge the signals in others, but the unconscious side of our brain does notice, and often dictates how we react without us even thinking about it. Poker players spend years learning the body language of their opponents as it can be a valuable indicator of the way they are playing.

The comparison between a poker player and a salesperson is an obvious one:

Poker: The player watches his opponent for any "tells" that give him an indication of how the opponent will play. It can be something as small and simple as a smile or a raise of the eyebrow.

Sales: The salesperson watches the body language of his client to give him an indication of how his sales pitch is going across. Is the client defensive, agitated, closed or open?

On his website Mehrabian specifically states: "Please note that this and other equations regarding relative importance of verbal and nonverbal messages were derived from experiments dealing with communications of feelings and attitudes (i.e., like-dislike). Unless a communicator is talking about their feelings or attitudes, these

equations are not applicable.”

Some classic indicators to watch out for include:

- Arms folded: the client is closed, and probably not listening to what you are saying. He might have made up his mind already.
- Distracted behaviour: for example playing with a pen or fiddling with his tie. The client is unsure about you and could just be waiting for his turn to speak.
- Leaning forward: the client is listening carefully to what you are saying.
- Lack of eye-contact: The client is guarded, keeping his own counsel. He could also be very insecure about the meeting.
- Legs crossed, foot moving: the client is bored.
- Hand to cheek: the client is thinking intently.
- Rubbing hands: the client is eagerly anticipating something.
- Pinching bridge of nose: the client has evaluated or is evaluating your pitch negatively.
- Tapping fingers: the client is impatient
- Steep led fingers: the client wishes to exert his authority.
- Stroking chin: the client is trying to come to a decision.
- Biting nails: the client is insecure and nervous about some thing.

Most experiences salespeople will have come across these examples in sales meetings regularly. Think back to your last meeting- were there any examples of the client’s body language in that meeting? What was the outcome?

We constantly learn from our experiences; we evaluate them and ask ourselves what we could do next time in order to improve both ourselves and also our influence on those around us.

Read through the list of examples above again, only this time ask yourself the following questions:

Where have I seen that before?

What would my reaction be when I encounter that next time?

You might want to consider the following reactions:

**Arms folded across the chest:** If the client is being defensive, you might want to change tack a little. The client has decided that he does not really want to listen to you. Think about exactly what you are saying. Are you still on point? Is there something specific that you said that could have made the client defensive?

A good idea may be to let the client talk. Ask him what he thinks, let him give his opinion. He may feel more open if he feels his thoughts and ideas are playing a larger part in the discussion.

**Distracted behaviour:** If the client is waiting for his turn to speak, then let him! Research shows that people who are distracted in this way are not listening to you at all – it is much more likely that they are rehearsing what they want to say in their heads.

Let them do it!!

**Leaning forward:** If the client appears to be listening intently, then this is a good indicator that you are on the right track.

You might want to continue exactly as you are, or you might want to drop in some key points about your product or service whilst you have his attention. Alternatively, you might want to think about bringing your pitch to a motivational climax.

**Lack of eye-contact:** if the client is showing insecurity, then try and make him feel more secure. Compliments about his company might be a good idea.

Prove that you have respect and admiration for his work to make him feel more comfortable around you and more comfortable with the meeting.

**Legs crossed, foot movements:** If the client is bored, you need to change tack a little. Think of something exciting about what you are selling. You need to pique his interest, so it might be a good idea at this point to unveil any unique selling points your product or service may have. Alternatively, laying out the benefits for his company may bring him back into the play.

**Rubbing hands:** if the client appears to be actively anticipating something, find out what it is!

**Pinching bridge of nose:** This negative gesture is quite revealing. The client's current evaluation of you is not altogether favourable. Time to change your focus – what other selling points does your product have?

**Tapping fingers:** If the client is impatient, it probably means you are talking too much! Let them have a say, ask some open ended questions that will help you to gather more information on what they are currently thinking.

**Steepled fingers:** If the client wants to assert his authority, then by all means let them! Bear in mind, however, that you are still in control. He is only able to exert that authority because you have allowed him to!

**Stroking chin:** if you can see that the client is trying to come to a decision, you can push home your advantage. This is a good opportunity to reinforce your unique selling points, plus reiterate any previous statements that you noticed the client was interested in.

**Biting nails:** If the client is nervous, try and put him at ease. It is possible that you could be being a little intimidating. Think about whether you are trying to oversell your product. These are just a few examples of the types of body language we

see all around us every day. As we stated before, we cannot control other people, but we can influence the way they think and the way they act. If you can spot the signs in the body language, then you are in a much stronger position to be able to do this.

Now that you have a better understanding of body language and the way it affects not only your sales pitch and technique but also the customer, you can start to consider other ways of influencing those around you.

Because the actual words that we speak form only a very small part of our general communication, it doesn't mean we should dismiss them altogether. Words can be immensely powerful, and used alongside the correct tone of voice they can be integral to your sales pitch.

The body language of the client can be a great indicator of how things are progressing, but to get an even clearer idea, you should be looking to get the client to divulge information themselves.

## **The Long-term Relationship**

When you have applied all the skills you have learnt so far and you have nailed that initial sales meeting, it's time to start thinking about the longer-term relationship that you would like to have with the client.

The best salespeople don't go looking for new clients – the clients come to them. Imagine if you could get up every morning, look at your diary and see that every appointment you had that day had been booked by the clients themselves!

Repeat business is integral to any salesperson, and is why that initial meeting needs to be so heavily emphasized.

When you first make contact with a new company, it can often be difficult to know exactly who to contact. You may have a list of names and job descriptions, and you may well have identified exactly who you would like to speak to about your product. However, the truth of the matter is that (especially in larger corporations) getting through to the right person can be a bit tricky. How many times have you contacted a company only to find yourself further down the pyramid than you wanted to be?

Now ask yourself this:

How did I feel about that?

If the answer is “disappointed” or “frustrated” or any similar synonym, then you really need to think again.

Remember the communication table:

Body language = 55%

Tone of voice = 38%

Actual words = 7%

And remember how your body language can be unconsciously picked up on by the other person. If you felt disappointed or frustrated it is highly likely that you have transmitted these feelings to whoever you were dealing with. If you wanted to speak to the director and found yourself speaking to a secretary some way down the line, then how you spoke to that person could have had a knock-on effect.

For example:



You feel disappointed talking to the secretary.

She actually feels quite proud of her job, and therefore her first impressions of you are quite negative.

She then passes your message onto her superior. Her body language and tone of voice whilst delivering this message is quite negative, as she feels slighted by you.

Her boss picks up on this negative body language, and without even having met you, already has formed a negative first impression.

And so on and so on. By the time the director (who you wanted to speak to in the first place) gets to hear of you, the picture painted is not a particularly good one. Not only are you terribly unlikely to make a sale, but any repeat business you would have liked is also flying out through the window.

On the other hand, this can be reversed. If the secretary finds you amiable, pleasant and even complimentary, then the opposite starts to take place. When the Director eventually hears about you in this instance, the positivism has been similarly amplified, and you're off to a good start.

If the initial thought of you is negative, then changing the mind of the whole company can be a real uphill struggle.

In order to build up a long term relationship with a client, rapport must be struck between yourself and them. In any sales negotiation, rapport is a vital ingredient. There are a multitude of ways that you

can build up rapport with both an individual and a company.  
What exactly does rapport mean to you?

The dictionary definition is “a close and harmonious relationship in which there is common understanding”. The origin of the word ‘rapport’ is French, from ‘rapporteur’ – which means, appropriately enough, to ‘bring back’.

This is exactly what we are trying to achieve by building up a rapport – to bring the client back for more trade.

The quickest way to get rapport is to find something to have in common, remember when you are on holiday in a faraway country and meet someone from the same country as yourself.

Automatically you have something to talk about, where in the country you are from and the you will go down as far as possible to find commonality’s the further you are able to chunk down the stronger the rapport.

So to gain the quickest rapport find something you and the prospect have in common that includes everything from hobbies, sports, cars, children, etc.

In order to establish a good rapport with someone you need to understand where they are coming from and you need to be able to modify your own speech and behavioural patterns in order to make them feel like the relationship with you will be beneficial to themselves also.

Remember: you cannot control people, but you can influence them. Think about what you have learnt already – you know quite a lot about the company, you know about the person you are dealing with, and you have already postulated about what you consider his goals to be.

If your goal is generate continued business with this person (not just a one-off sale) then you need to establish that good working relationship.

### **Rapport:**

Reaching

Appropriate

People to

Purchase and

Order

Repeat

Trade

When you are meeting with someone for the first time, you obviously have no rapport with them. In order to get that rapport going, there are a number of ways in which you can modify your speech and behaviour. You know all about the body language side of things – and remember how important it is to keep yourself open at all times.

When you are talking to someone you just met – what do you do?

What are your primary feelings?

What is your body language telling them?

When it comes to establishing a rapport with someone, there are many ways to do this, and many of them take time, but it really doesn't need to be as complicated as that. There are a number of shortcuts that can help you find that way of opening communications and making negotiations easier.

The first is, of course, finding the common ground.

This could be something as simple as discovering you are both keen golfers, or even that you have the same hometown.

Look for visual clues that will give you the opportunity to open this avenue of rapport up. A close friend of mine

(who is an excellent salesman) once went into a client's office and

spotted a photograph on the client's desk. The photograph was of the client (who was the company director) holding a large fish that he had caught on holiday. Immediately, my friend began talking about fishing (a keen hobby of his).

My friend revealed that in that initial meeting they hardly spoke about sales at all, both men were extremely keen to divulge various fishing stories to each other! But my friend also revealed that since then he had done thousands of Euros worth of business with that company, mainly down to the high level of rapport he had managed to strike up with the client during that initial meeting – even though all they did was talk about fishing!

Another way of building up a rapport if you are struggling to find a subject of common ground is pacing. We often do it automatically – it's another of the unconscious actions that we perform without ever thinking of it. Pacing is simply copying the other person's movements or tone of voice: it can be done verbally or non-verbally. The purpose of this is to make the person we are speaking to feel more at ease and relaxed in our company.

A lot of people, you may find yourself included, do this quite naturally – but it is worth remembering as it can be a fantastic tool when you are dealing with people that you are looking to build a more long-term relationship with.

## Four w's and an h.

Yes, that's right – wwwwh! Of course, what we are referring to here is the famous old maxim: who, what, where, when and how.

What we actually mean is that these are key elements to any sales pitch, presentation or long-term relationship. Whatever stage you are at in your sales negotiations, there are paramount questions that you should be asking yourself, more or less constantly.

Not only do these questions help you focus completely on the task at hand, but many people find them incredibly useful tools when it comes to setting your goals or evaluating the goals of your client.

As I am sure you understand by now, what NLP is mainly all about is asking questions. By constantly questioning ourselves and our surroundings we are constantly striving to improve.

By questioning ourselves we discover new and exciting ways of doing things. Obviously, sometimes we get it wrong, but that is also part of the process: if we don't know how to do it badly, then how will we ever know how to do it right?

The wwwwh set of questions is simply a way of categorizing and simplifying this self-tutoring process.

In every circumstance, the answers to these questions will be different, so it's important to review them not just at the beginning of your presentation, but right through all the stages of a sale.

The type and the style of the question you will be asking depends entirely on which stage of the sale you are currently at:

- Contact Phase
- Information Phase
- Argument Phase
- Resolution/Closing Phase

## **Contact Phase**

Whether it is over the telephone, a face-to-face meet, or even a third-party introduction, this stage is the key to your future relationship with this client.

Remember all the focus discussions from earlier on first impressions, and ask yourself how your current feelings are affecting your body language and the perception you are transmitting to others.

## **Information Phase**

Put simply, this is where you gather all of the information that you can.

Think of it like an armoury, and you are equipping yourself for battle. You want to take as many weapons as you can, right? Information is power, and the more information you have at your disposal, the more powerful you can be.

When you are armed with this information, it is important to remember that there is still a lot of information that you need, and there will be a lot of things that you still don't know.

That is why the information phase is so vital – it's where you gather even more information. Upgrade your weaponry!!

The trick here is to realize that because there are so many things you don't know, you need to be asking open, non-specific questions that will encourage your client to divulge as much information as possible.

For example, you know that the sky is blue. You automatically assume that your client sees it the same way. But what if he sees it as yellow, or orange?

Obviously, this is a ridiculous line of argument, and asking your client what colour the sky is is probably not going to get you off on the right foot, but the principle is sound: by assuming your client holds the same views as you do you could be manufacturing some serious

misunderstandings further down the line.

You need to be asking relevant, open questions to make sure that you have a full arsenal, and also to ensure that both you and your client are on the same page.

## **Argument Phase**

Now you can put all the information you have gleaned so far into use!

However, the questions do not stop.

We must constantly keep evaluating ourselves, and this is never more vital than in the argument phase. Now you have to ask the biggest question of all:

How? How will I put everything I have learnt so far into making sure I achieve my primary goal/s?

By this time you will have learned a great deal about the company and the person you are dealing with, and the trick is to be able to identify which pieces of information are going to be the most valuable. More importantly, which pieces of information are going to yield the most gain for yourself?

The most important bits we refer to as 'hooks'. These are your key elements that will have the most impact on your client.

What hooks did you use in your last sales meeting?

Where you are aware that you were using them?

What hooks could you have used in your last sales meeting?

## Resolution Phase

Many salespeople see this stage as the most difficult, but it really doesn't need to be. If you have been able to ask the right questions and follow the correct formula to this point, the finalization of any sale should be relatively straightforward.

The main reason why many salespeople find this stage so difficult is because this is where the most problems arise. The client might change his mind, or throw an unexpected curveball into the mix. However, from the beginning of proceedings, you now will have been completely prepared for this.

Also, you have been carefully monitoring your client's use of words and body language throughout, so you are still armed with everything you need to make the sale go through.

Even at this late stage, you should still be evaluating your progress and asking yourself the same probing questions.

Remember: we can think ten times faster than we can talk.

This is a skill we all have: use it.

The questions you will be asking both yourself and your client will obviously differ with each stage you move into, but they should always be present.

The path to success is to take massive  
determined action.  
- Anthony Robbins



## **Closing the Sale**

This is often the most daunting part of any sales presentation, and I have known otherwise fantastic salespeople to make a lot of mistakes in this section.

It can often be difficult to know exactly what the client is thinking at any one time. All of the techniques I have discussed so far (eye movement, body language, tone of voice) are great indicators, but before you can move onto the actual closure of the sale you need to know precisely where the mind of the client is presently. A great way to do this is to ask an 'if' question. An if question can really open things up should you reach an impasse in your negotiations.

For example:

“Would you like to dance” becomes “if we should dance what music should the DJ play?”

“Would you like a drink” becomes “if I were to buy you a drink, what would it be?”

This works in sales meetings too. An if question will not give you a definitive answer, but it will give you a great indication of where you currently stand.

“If I was to offer you this, what would you say?”

“If you were to buy this product when would you like it to be delivered”

“If I was to show you how this worked, what would you think?”

In every sales meeting, just as in day-to-day life, problems arise. Sometimes you can anticipate them and plan for them, other times you can't. It sounds obvious to say that experience helps in these situations: if you have been in these situations before then you may

have an idea on how to deal with it.

However, if the experience is new, and a problem arises during a delicate negotiation, then it could well be a disaster for your sale. Experience, however, is not a necessary attribute in order to deal with problems or objections.

## **Objections**

Before you read on, think back to the last time you were in a situation where one such problem arose for you. What did you do? A lot of the time, problems arise that are not dealt with properly because the salesperson does not fully understand the objection. Take the examples below, for instance.

These are all common objections that arise throughout any sales meeting:

- It's too expensive for me
- I've already got a supplier for that
- I need some time to think about that
- My partner would need to see it
- I already have a supplier
- What would your reaction be?

All of these objections can be thrown in at any stage of any sales negotiation. The trick to dealing with the objection in this case is to understand exactly what the objection is.

Take the statements above, and ask yourself – what do they actually mean?

In truth, they could have more than one meaning.

The real objection is actually hidden – it could have pretty much any meaning at all. You can't really know what the objection is at the moment. What you need to do is to define that objection.

I have seen it so many times, when a salesperson loses the deal completely at this juncture: their body language immediately

becomes closed (an unconscious reaction) or they give a stock answer that makes the client close up.

In order to deal with the objection, you must know what the objection is.

People are much more willing to give up information if they are asked the right questions. When dealing with any of the objections above, make sure your body language is open, and your questions are open as well.

This way, you will soon learn exactly what the objections are. Your clients are not daft. They can easily spot any scripted or rehearsed lines that you may spout when they raise an objection. If what you say is different to your normal speech patterns, then they will pick up on it immediately. That's why simply learning textbook answers to objections will not work.

For example, if your natural speech when you make a presentation is very conversational and informal, and then you ask a very formal question, then it stands out like a sore thumb. Imagine someone in the royal family working on a market stall – the contrast can be spotted immediately.

We cannot tell you what to do in these situations- that are something that must be decided by you – but we can help you to find your own system – a system and a natural style that works well for you.

If you have read any books on problem solving in sales (and there are many out there), then you have probably got a standard answer to any objection in your mind. It may be something that you have learned by rote, or it may even be something that you have adapted to the way that you think.

## Formula dealing with objections.

Listen  
Repeat (when suitable)  
Pause  
Recognise  
BUT  
Sales argument

There is a very simple formula that I like to use when it comes to dealing with objections.

Taking the objection that it is “too expensive” as an example, it is easy to apply this formula to it. If the client declares that it is too expensive, simply repeat what he says in the form of a question: “expensive?”

What you are doing here is returning the objection straight back to the client – it’s a 180 degree switch of emphasis. It’s just like returning a good serve in tennis – your opponent is quite chuffed that he’s produced what he thinks is a good serve, but you have batted the ball straight back into his court. The emphasis is not on you to justify the expense, but rather on him to clarify his objection.

Also, it demonstrates beyond any doubt that you are listening to him, and are also prepared to consider any objections he may have. The next stage is the pause. Wait for the client to clarify his objections.

This will work for you in a number of ways – you can demonstrate your listening skills, and it will also give you a chance to discover exactly what the objection is about. Is it too expensive in its current format? Is it too expensive right now?

When you have that information, you can deal with it. If you don't have that information from the client, then it can be a barrier neither of you can get over.

The next stage is recognise – recognise the objection.

This means, quite simply, agree with the client. This may sound a little off pat, but you need to show your empathy with the client.

Once again, you are demonstrating that you are prepared to listen and to work around the objection. You are also creating an even better rapport with the customer by acknowledging things from his point of view.

For example: "I can understand why you think it is expensive."  
The word "but" can be detrimental to most sales negotiations, however, in this case it can actually be put to good use.

*The word "but" completely negates everything that is said before it,*

so here you can use it to your advantage: "I can see why you think it is expensive, but..."

The person listening to you will have to acknowledge that they have been heard, and you will be able to continue to sell.

A brilliant way of practising this is in the home, if there are any household tasks that you want to get out of.

For example, if your spouse asks you to empty the dishwasher:

1. Listen to your spouse when he/she says "empty the dishwasher".
2. Repeat: "Empty the dishwasher?"
3. Pause: "It's your turn to empty the dishwasher!"
4. Recognise: "I know it's my turn to empty the dishwasher, but

I have to do something else right now.”

In this case, the word “but” has completely negated the original objection. Try this, and you may never have to empty the dishwasher (or do the laundry/clean the bathroom/vacuum the living room) ever again!

Everything changes when you  
change.

- Jim Rohn

Creativity means believing you  
have greatness.

- Wayne Dwyer

## Use Your Network to get Leads

### Referrals Get Results

Referrals are among the most powerful and effective sources of leads. They make every cold call much warmer, and they give you a running start in building trust with the prospect.

I highly recommend BNI

From the BNI website:

### BNI Philosophy

The philosophy of this organization is built upon the idea of “Givers Gain®”: By giving business to others, you will get business in return. This is predicated on the age-old idea of “What goes around, comes around.”

### BNI Mission

The mission of BNI is to help members increase their business through a structured, positive, and professional “word-of-mouth” program that enables them to develop long-term, meaningful relationships with quality business professionals.

Belonging to BNI is like having dozens of sales people working for you.....because all of them carry several copies of your business cards around with them. When they meet someone who could use your products or services, they take out your card and recommend you.\* It’s as simple as that! It’s simple because it’s based on a proven concept by BNI Founder, Dr. Ivan Misner, called “Givers Gain®.” If I give you business you’ll give me business and we’ll both benefit as a result. Last year alone (2010), members of BNI passed 6.5 million referrals.....which generated over \$2.8 billion dollars (U.S.) worth of business for its members! BNI is a business and professional networking organization that allows only one person

per professional classification or specialty to join a chapter.  
Would you like to increase your business by 20%, 30%, 50% or as much as 100%?

You can see results like this! Many have. Some participants have added as many as 50 new clients in the first 2 years!!! Successful businesses depend on word-of-mouth. Word-of-mouth advertising is the best advertising there is. BNI provides a structured and supportive system of giving and receiving business. It does so by providing an environment in which you develop personal relationships with dozens of other qualified business professionals. By establishing this “formal” relationship with other people, you will have the opportunity to substantially increase your business.

<http://bni.com>

Also see <http://www.bnipodcast.com>

To give an example of how powerful The Official BNI Podcast is This I from Episode 209: “The Ten-Point Checklist”

Today we’re talking about a face-to-face word-of-mouth checklist of credibility-enhancing materials you need to have available.

1. Testimonial letters from satisfied clients
2. Photos (of yourself, your office, your products)
3. Logos of your key customers
4. List of memberships and affiliations
5. A question-and-answer sheet (FAQ)
6. Photos of awards or certificates you and your staff have earned
7. Articles that you’ve published or been mentioned in
8. Brochures, circulars, datasheets, product catalogues
9. Items that help you explain your business, e.g. annual report
10. Articles about trends affecting your business



You should have these materials available both in hard copy, to bring with you, and on your website.

What is LinkedIn?

From the LinkedIn website:

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network with over 100 million members and growing rapidly. LinkedIn connects you to your trusted contacts and helps you exchange knowledge, ideas, and opportunities with a broader network of professionals. LinkedIn gives you the keys to controlling your online identity. Have you Googled yourself lately? You never know what may come up. LinkedIn profiles rise to the top of search results, letting you control the first impression people get when searching for you online.

Stay in touch with colleagues and friends

In today's professional world, people change jobs and locations constantly. By connecting on LinkedIn, your address book will never go out of date. Your contacts update their profiles, keeping you current with their latest jobs, projects and contact info.

You'll stay in closer contact with great tools to communicate and collaborate.

Explore opportunities: Whether you're looking for a career opportunity, winning new clients or building your professional reputation, LinkedIn connects you to jobs, sales leads and ideal business partners. With our powerful search engine, company research tools and a jobs board that shows who you know at listed companies, LinkedIn is the place to turn for new opportunities.

You have a tremendous source of leads just waiting for you.

This network not only includes everyone you deal with in the context of your work, but also the qualified people whom you have met in all other activities in your life.

These are the people who know you and trust you, and most of them know at least one individual or company who could truly use what you are selling.

### Create a Company Pages on LinkedIn

Company Pages are a company's profile of record on LinkedIn and a powerful way to speak to millions of professionals through word-of-mouth recommendations and trusted testimonials. It's like a LinkedIn profile for a company.

For LinkedIn members, Company Pages are a great way to research companies you're interested in, follow them to stay updated, see what kind of people work there, and even review the products and services you use.

For companies, Company Pages present an opportunity to reveal the human side of your company. Provide a peek at the individuals behind your brand and highlight how members use your products. Your Company Page offers tools to bring your brand to life.

Display Ads on LinkedIn is a outstanding way to promote your small Business.

## Viral Marketing

Do you know how old-fashioned advertising worked? It was most successful when it was through “word of mouth”. For example, you notice that your neighbour’s laundry looks brilliantly white while it dries on the line. You ask if they have a special secret and they tell you it is their detergent. You try it and discover the same results, and you then tell your friends. This is a chain of communication that is “trustworthy” because it is one friend or acquaintance passing on the information to another.

Can it be accomplished in this day and age? Have you heard of Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter?

These are all modern methods for Word of Mouth or WOM. The blog, forum, and feedback options on the Internet are also forms of WOM too.

Interestingly enough, WOM is also very frequently referred to as Viral Marketing. It is “buzz” for lack of a better word, but it is buzz that must be created with authenticity. For example, most of the WOM or viral marketing campaigns that have failed have done so because they were attempting to create a lot of excitement or energy about something that just didn’t deserve it.

Modern consumers are not fools and they recognize hype the moment that they see it. So, a good way to generate positive WOM and/or effective viral marketing is to do one of two things:

- Make it worth their time – for example, if you ask people to “Tell a Friend” about your site, give them a reward. This is called “monetizing” or “incentivising” the deal, and it is very effective; or
- Make it inevitable – this is the trickier way of generating good WOM. It calls for two things:
  - o Providing the highest levels of customer service possible (exceeding expectations every single time); and

- o Creating a product or service that people are “inspired” to talk about.

You can get this WOM out into the world through a customer feedback area on your site, a forum, a blog with space for comments, etc.

Often it is the second kind of WOM that leads to the creation of what are known as “linkbacks”. We mentioned these when discussing SEO and site optimization, and they are something that web crawlers take into serious consideration.

For example, let’s say that someone has a blog about household products, and they try your brand of all-natural floor cleaner. If they blog about the excellent quality of the product and post a link to your homepage, the web crawlers find this and bump up the position of your website in the SERPs.

This leads others to your site, and this just continues to build your fan following. If you have been following a system for top-notch customer service along with that excellent product, you will begin to see how WOM is a super method for sales.

### **Other Steps**

WOM leads to the “organic SEO” we mentioned earlier in this guide. This is opposite to the falsified and destructive “black hat” SEO that too many sites use.

The organic SEO is going to come from positive WOM, backlinks, comments on blogs, keyword use in your site, forums, social media, and more. It is a very simple way to support your sales tactics because it lets you be viewed as a quality vendor and not someone trying to force the sale.

Often, this same negative light is cast on email marketing, but this

does not have to be the case either. Email marketing should only be done when you have a well-developed client list in place. This means that you will be using your existing database of paying clients to inform them of only the most essential information OR it means doing your very targeted research and purchasing a list based on your extremely rigid criteria.

Remember too that you will have pre-planned all of the content you will use in your communications and that the keywords, terms, images, and offers that appear on your website, in your blogs and social media, and in other paid advertising will appear in the email campaign too.

A good tip for this approach is to give a customer the option of “one click” opt out. This lets them tell you with a single click of their mouse that they have no interest, and this saves you a lot of money in the long run.

If money is an issue, you may want to hasten the returns of search engines by purchasing “Paid Search Results”. This puts your listing at the very top of the SERPs, even if your site isn’t actually the highest-ranking listing.

How does it work? It requires you to identify the keywords that are the strongest, and to pay a service such as Google to display the ad in all relevant results. This service does come with a premium fee, but it can create a huge amount of traffic almost immediately.

Clients will know that the listing has been purchased, but this rarely stops them from following the link to your site!

This is different than display ads, which are a great deal more specific. For example, any online display ads tend to appear on relevant sites, but not on websites belonging to the “competition”. We touched on these in the previous chapter when looking at

AdWords from Google. There is also AdSense (makes you money) through the same site, and dozens of others PPC and CPC options through various search engines and commercial sites.

These companies will have different policies and offers, and the best approach is to consider how relevant their networks are to your needs.

For example, if you pay for a banner ad through one company you will want to be sure that it is hitting the demographic, geographic or other market that you require. If that site doesn't network with appropriate vendors, you could be wasting money.

## **Blogs**

In addition to paid ads, you can also create sites that are ongoing advertisements, but which are wrapped up cleverly in useful information. This is also referred to as a "blog". Yes, a blog is not just for someone to rant about their political opinions, comment on life, or display a hobby! You can actually develop a good blog around your business, its services, and any products.

If you already have a blog then you are well on your way to using it as a tool for your marketing techniques. If not, it is relatively easy to find reliable hosts and providers of many kinds of blog tools (our List of Resources will provide you with many).

As you know, blogs began as very personal sites, today however, they have become extremely complex entities in which people interact like never before. Your blog will give your clients something to "follow" and will provides them with informational materials related to, but never a direct copy of, the content in the actual site.

What is the actual use of a blog? Blogs are a fantastic way to utilize your strongest keywords for SEO purposes, and they are also very effective for the establishment of powerful backlinks and link exchanges too.

You already know that keywords in your blog will help to increase the traffic headed to your website by increasing rank in the SERPs.

This works by allowing you to create content that is keyword rich and then to post links to this blog in all of your social networks too. What would this accomplish? The appearance of the keywords boosts SEO, and when they follow the link and repost the information to their website (via sharing), social networking sites (via “Like” or “Tweet”), or linking it through their own blogs increases your results too.

It is best to enhance the blog by the use of the different media too. This will let you insert more tags, titles and descriptions full of relevant keywords, and it will let you interact with potential customers in the way that they expect and desire.

For example, you can have a blog with links to all of their other blogs, embedded video and audio, loads of graphics, and links to other relevant or supporting blogs too. Each of these features will increase the performance of the blog and expand readership – meaning an ever-increasing audience for your product or service too!

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

A blog (a blend of the term web log) is a type of website or part of a website. Blogs are usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. Blog can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog. Most blogs are interactive, allowing visitors to leave comments and even message each other via widgets on the blogs and it is this interactivity that distinguishes them from other static websites.

Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject;

others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability of readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs.

Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (art blog), photographs (photoblog), videos (video blogging), music (MP3 blog), and audio (podcasting). Microblogging is another type of blogging, featuring very short posts.

## **Social Media**

How to Make a Company Profile and How to Promote It.

Social media is for socializing, right? No! Social media has dramatically altered the ways that business is done too! One major illustration of this is the way that a business is now interacting on a “personal” level with clients or potential customers.

It is also a very powerful tool for targeted marketing because it is actually using the old-fashioned WOM (word of mouth) to increase the size of the social network.

How? You “Like” a brand on Facebook, and this appears in the “News Stream” of every one of your connections. This means that it is likely to be very relevant to most of them.

They will investigate the matter and decide whether or not to “Like” the brand as well. If they do, it means that the company to whom that brand belongs now has another point of contact.

What is so interesting about this is that it creates a level of “trust” that just cannot be obtained in any other way. When you are “friends” with a massive corporation, it tends to shift the perspective on it, and when that company uses the social network to broadcast specials, news, or promotions via the network as opposed to a massive TV campaign, it is far more immediate and personal.



This is even more the case when a brand embeds a nice video into their news feed announcements because it allows viewers to respond instantly – whether it is favourably or not.

As a business owner, this means that social media can save you a huge amount of money. Rather than directing available funds towards traditional radio and TV spots, you can direct them towards social media efforts and other online activities that will get faster and more immediate results.

The social media phenomenon has also shortened the “distance” between the businesses and their audience.

Today it is possible to post a comment and get a response from a global company in a matter of moments! This is the same for a small business and their clients too. This means that spreading the word about new services, special promotional offers, and classic advertisements is best done through your developed social networks.

Even if you are not yet online, it takes a matter of moments to create an account, post your logo as the profile image, and “launch” the business. If you have employees, ask them to create pages and to get involved. This will personalize and humanize the business and begin attracting more and more network participants.

Larger networks also create a sense of trust and assurance because it is yet another form of WOM.

There is probably an equal amount of opportunities and challenges involved in social networking, however, because you do have to “stay on top” of things. This all connects back to the initial planning phase. It is essential that you include social media in your initial plans, however, because it is a massive marketing opportunity. Modern consumers expect a web presence, and most will be surprised if you don’t also have an array of social media links posted at your website too.

At <http://www.ning.com> you can **create your own social website**.  
Build a social destination to create a community.

### **A Last Note...**

We should take a moment here to mention the need to consider these little icons. For example, if you visit the “big names” in your industry it is likely that you will see icons for a huge number of sites somewhere on the blog or homepage of the website.

What are they and what are they about? The ability to bookmark or share content on popular social media sites is now a must for modern web sites, but it’s very important that these aren’t overlooked by visitors and clients. This means that it’s a good idea to use recognizable icons when linking to social media sites. They get attention and the logos are immediately recognizable.

Which to include? The basics would be an RSS button, REDDIT, Facebook, Delicious, Stumble Upon, Digg, Twitter, Email, Vimeo, YouTube, Flickr, Buzz, LinkedIn, Tumblr, and any others that you believe are relevant. But the best is <http://www.addthis.com>. Add This has more than 300 services and tools. Of course, there’s also deep Facebook and Twitter integration.

Supporting over 70 languages, Add This makes sharing easy no matter which language your visitors speak.

We must all suffer one of two  
things: The pain of discipline or  
the pain of regret and  
disappointment.  
- Jim Rohn

## Videos on Web Sites

It is impossible to believe, but most people will not read a website. Statistics, studies, measurements, and website assessments have shown that a lot of people will prefer to click on a video if it is positioned nearest the text.

Does this mean that your site content is going to waste? Not at all, it is increasing SEO results, and it is being read. It is simply that sites with videos are “watched” much more than having their contents read in full.

Regardless of your product or service, you should have at least one website video, but it is actually advisable to have a lot more. Why? Here are only a few of the benefits of website videos and photos:

- When properly tagged they can give you a substantial position on SERPs, even if your actual URL doesn't show up on the first two pages of search results. This is because the major search engines now post listings for “Images related to..” and “Videos” as well as the actual results;
- Establishes you as the “expert” in the industry or field;
- Creates an immediate impression of “high tech” and “cutting edge” regardless of the business or service;
- They can be “syndicated” or distributed to relevant sites that also allow the tags to be “counted” by the web crawlers, thereby increasing SEO results for the site to which they are linked;
- They can appear on social networks and blogs and serve as links to your main site; and
- They can work like advertisements but without being “forced” upon the viewer. This tends to create a lot more interest and responsiveness to the content. A good video can get a viewer to “act now”!

We mentioned photos, and these have to be addressed briefly too. Why? Modern consumers are very visual, and when a site is not full of images and graphics, it tends to be a “turn off” to visitors. Though there was a period when a site could use a solid background or one with a bit of texture and color, some blocks of text, and little else, that would not “float” with today’s audiences. Thus, excellent photography is an essential factor in your site design. Naturally, the next question would be something such as “what photographs should the site use?” This question is a bit challenging because it is impossible to understand the “perfect” images until you have done your market research, identified the needs of the clients, and learned about their “characteristics.” Once you have done that you would then design your website and begin identifying the right images.

One of the first things to know is that photographic placement is essential to good navigation. Once you understand the appropriate spots for images, you can choose the variety best suited to the subject or products. Do not go with shots that are visually appealing to you and not directly related to the business or content. For example, a lovely landscape is great, but if it is for your dental practice, it weakens the impact of the shot. Instead, scout around for good “stock” photography sites and buy only high-quality images related to your area of expertise.

(We have included many photo resources in the last chapter)

Another reason to use these stock sites is because they can provide you with the photographs that match the “concepts” you have identified as the primary message for the page or website, and you can then title, tag and describe them using the best keywords. Again, this boosts your SEO and improves ranking.

## Improving Conversion on Your Website

Now that you have mastered the “tools of the trade,” you can use them to get the most out of your website. This means making it as attractive to your audience as possible, filling it with the appropriate media and information, making it an SEO workhorse, and of course promoting the products or services you offer.

This takes all of that planning that you have already done, plus all of the ongoing work. We recommend creating a work schedule for website maintenance and updates and also planning frequent assessments to see where or how the site could be improved based on market, sales, and analytic reports.

The real key is to direct efforts towards the things that can make the site more effective. You know your market and what customers need, so build the site based on their patterns, preferences, and requirements. Basically, you must decide what the “bottom line” intention of your website is supposed to be, and then adhere to this pattern until you next assess the performance of the site.

You have to also use good navigation for your clients, and this is something that your analytics will uncover immediately. In the meantime, you should follow the advice of the “pros” and draft a structural illustration of the site to ensure that it “flows” smoothly.

This is usually something as simple as a chart that depicts the Home Page at the top with lines flowing down to the Content Pages, Products or Services Pages, FAQ, Contact, News, and About Pages. From these areas, there can also be as many lines as necessary to illustrate the pages connected to them, and any interrelated areas as well. Make sure they are logical and smooth transitions.

By doing all of your pre-planning for the content and the design of

the site, you will be able to understand the strongest locations for the different materials. This approach will also make it easier to keep the content up to date, current, and full of the different terms, keywords, or SEO materials that generate effective and easily converted traffic.

For example, if you plan to create “incentivized” WOM, you will know when and where the visitors will go as a result of that plan. You can use a good calendar to know when this program will start and how to keep the materials fresh and appealing.

It is this “ready to convert traffic” that is the ultimate goal of the site and all of its affiliated pieces. If you create a good foundation you will be sure to get the most out of the marketing as possible – and this means visitors that are easily and quickly transitioned into loyal and satisfied paying customers.

Live your imagination,  
not your history.  
- Stephen Covey

You don't have to be great to get  
started, but you have to get started  
to be great.  
- Les Brown

## Chapter Four

### Resource Guide

Here you will find all of the materials you need to implement the plans, strategies, techniques and suggestions made throughout the entire book.

#### **Target Market Characteristics Worksheets**

You learned that you must understand as much as possible about your market if you are to know how to communicate best with them and to meet their needs. These worksheets help you to clarify and really sharpen your understanding of your markets.

#### **Demographic Characteristics Worksheets**

Use the worksheets below to help you identify the different characteristics of any demographic markets. Descriptive words and “yes/no” answers apply.

#### **Consumer Markets**

- **Age**
- **Income**
- **Gender**
- **Profession**
- **Education**
- **Family Size**
- **Homeowner**
- **Marital Status**

## **Business Markets**

- **Geographic location**
- **Size of Company**
- **Annual revenue**
- **Number of Branches**
- **Number of Employees**
- **Industry**
- **Age of Company**

## **Psychographic Characteristics Worksheets**

Use the worksheets below to help you identify the different characteristics of any psychographic markets. Descriptive words and “yes/no” answers apply.

## **Consumer Markets**

- **Lifestyle**
- **Fun-Seeking**
- **Family Stage**
- **Trendy**
- **Hobbies**
- **Status Seeking**
- **Sports Enthusiasts**
- **Conservative**
- **Forms of Entertainment**
- **Socially Responsible**



## **Business Market**

- **Business Style**
- **Industry Leader**
- **Business Stage**
- **Innovative**
- **Employee Relations**
- **Conservative**
- **Trade Associations**
- **Socially Responsible**
- **Business Products/Stable**
- **Services Used**
- **Employee Friendly**
- **Publication Subscriptions**
- **Workforce Type**
- **Management Style**

## **Behavioristic Characteristics Worksheets**

Use the worksheets below to help you identify the different characteristics of any behavioristic markets. Descriptive words answers apply.

- **Reason/occasion for purchase?**
- 
- **Number of times they'll purchase?**
- 
- **Timetable of purchase, every week, month, quarter, etc.?**
- 
- **Amount of product/service purchased?**
- 
- **How long to make a decision to purchase?**
- 
- **Where customer purchases and/or uses product/service?**

## Resource List

### Blog Hosts

- [Blog Ladder.com](#)
- [Blog.com](#) – free blog hosting with unlimited bandwidth
- [Blogabond.com](#) –dedicated to travel blogs with map integration, and more
- [BlogCheese.com](#) – video blogging
- [Blogetery.com](#) – anti-spam, free sub-domain and more. WordPress Powered
- [Blogger.com](#) – starting site to get an introduction to blogging
- [Blogr.com](#) – blog, host photos and videos, and podcasts
- [BlogRox.com](#) – 50MB of free online space. WordPress Powered
- [Blogsome.com](#) – based in Ireland, offers large choice of themes. WordPress Powered
- [BlogSpirit.com](#) – European blogging site with a 30-day trial
- [Blogster.com](#) –free image hosting along with free blogs.
- [BlogYx.com](#) –site with extras such as chat boxes to let you interact with readers directly
- [Bloki.com](#) –blog site with options for collaboration
- [Bravenet.com](#) –blog hosting with RSS feeds and more
- [BusyThumbs.com](#) – site specifically for text messages and camera phone images
- [ClearBlogs.com](#) –blog hosting and templates, friends only posts, IP-Banning and more.
- [Edublogs.com](#) – blogs for educators. WordPress Powered
- [Etribes.com](#) – create all sorts of websites including a blog.
- [Freevlog](#) – free video blogging
- [GreatestJournal.com](#) –free voice posts, loads of photo hosting, and more.
- [InsaneJournal.com](#)

- JorunalFen.net – for “fandoms” and meant for those 18 and older.
- LiveJournal.com – multiple account types and one of the most popular services.
- Multiply.com –blogging and social networking, with photo galleries and more.
- Netcipia.com –blog for private or public display with a lot of storage.
- Open Diary.com –unlimited storage and posts, fee based
- ShoutPost.com – for making blogs designed for generating traffic
- SoulCast.com – anonymous blogging for controversial topics
- Squarespace.com –blog with numerous themes
- Terapad.com – blogs and other features, including an integrated store.
- Tooum.com – blog and forum which allows for seamless discussions between them
- Trippert.com – blogs about your travels
- Tumblr.com – blog platform for media-rich posts
- Ufem.com –site for women offering multiple themes and plugins
- Vox.com – geared towards the personal journal blogs
- Weebly.com – create a site and blog, free hosting
- Windows Live Spaces – free blogging with an MSN account - readers must have an account too
- Word Count Journal.com – very creative blogging format that allows you to write one word on the first day, two words on the second day and so on. At the end of the year you’ll have written 66,795 words
- WordPress.com - there are also a large number of “Word Press Powered” sites listed in this section
- Xanco.com –“moblogging” site for you to share all your mobile communications
- Xanga.com – part social network, part blogging, all free.

- Yahoo 360 – forms part of a Yahoo account
- Zoomshare.com – free blog hosting with 250MB of free storage.

## **Photos**

### **Photo Search**

- EveryStockPhoto –over 1 million free photos
- Google Image Search – one of the best ways to find images of any kind.
- PicSearch – millions of black and white or color photos.
- Pixsy –search that also provides “PixsyPower”, a custom video and photo search for your site
- StockPhotoFinder – a search engine specialized in finding stock photos.
- YotoFoto – a search engine indexing over a quarter million Creative Commons, Public Domain, GNU FDL, and various other “copyleft” images

### **Stock Photos**

- Alamy – millions of images
- Fotolia –cheap royalty-free image provider, with over 2 million photos in stock
- iStockPhoto – royalty-free images for low prices and photo quality is above average
- MorgueFile – free photos; no registration required to download
- PixelPerfectDigital – free stock photos
- StockXpert – cheap but quality royalty-free material
- SXC.hu – one of the biggest sites for completely free stock photography

## Online Photo Editors

- Cellsea – upload pictures from your PC or from an URL and make 15 different kinds of corrections
- Fauxto –online photo editor with an properties similar to Photoshop
- MyImager – upload images from your computer or from any where on the web, and edit them freely
- OnlinePhotoTool – edit pictures taken from your computer or the Internet
- Pixlr – edit your pictures and upload them to the most popular photo sharing sites
- Picnik –editor connected to many photo sharing sites
- Picture2Life – edit pictures from your hard drive, the Internet, or popular photo sharing sites
- Pixelmator –photo editing for Mac users
- Pixenate –photo editor with you can also integrate with your website and allow visitors to edit images
- Pixier.us – edit within your browser and save them in the most useful formats
- Preloadr –editor with image manipulation functions connected to a Flickr account
- SnipShot – edit photos online from several sources and then save them back to any location
- XmgImg- image hosting service with an interface for users to manage, edit, and share images online

**Photo Sharing** – this is a good tool for uploading and using photos in blogs, websites, and social media.

- BurstCast - space for you to upload images from a camera phone by MMS or by e-mail, right from the phone. Photos will be made public and shown on the home page
- Clickfriends – make your own digital photo essay, then share it with Facebook or MySpace sites
- ContakMe – upload unlimited photos and create albums
- DigitalRailroad – aimed at aiding professional photographers connect with their fans and find content providers and media companies who are looking to buy
- DPhoto – a photo sharing service that lets you share your photos with friends and family
- Flickr – world’s most popular photo sharing site for uploading photos from professional and unprofessional photographers
- Invitr – share your Flickr photos with non-Flickr members
- Mostrips – photo sharing site designed to create albums to be shared on mobile phones
- Photorgy –photo uploading/sharing tool which works with AIM
- Picasa – becoming almost as popular as Flickr for sharing images of professional and non-professional quality
- SlideShare – content sharing site where you host and display presentations. Great for professional work, photo sharing, power point presentations or graphics
- Snappages – provides space to save and organize photos, online communities, and events in one web page. Includes online storage, file sharing, and social media communication.
- Zoomandgo – travel photos, videos, or general advice to the Zoom and Go site, and they will reward you with cash
- Zoomr – Store, share, sort, sell, and search all your photos and those of other users. Post comments, create feedback, and even make sales.

- Zorpia – upload photos and share them on your profile

### **Free Photo Hosting**

- AllYouCanUpload- no limit to the image size and you can load three images at the same time
- FileHigh –free “account lets you upload up to three images simultaneously with maximum size 512 KB
- FreeImageHosting.net –host your images for free. Maximum file size is 3,000 KB.
- ImageHosting – upload multiple pictures at one time
- ImageShack – most popular image hosting service for loading images up to 1.5 MB and embedding in any web page
- ImageVenue – upload up to five images at once with a maximum file size of 1.5 MB
- ImgPlace – upload up to five images at one time with a maximum file of 1.5 MB
- Photobucket – among the most popular image hosting services around. Post images to social networking sites with 25 GB of monthly traffic and 1 GB of storage
- SmugMug – photo uploader, editor, and community portal all in one. Upload and share photos, store the photos with up to four backup copies of each
- TheImageHosting – upload multiple images at once and zipped image files
- TinyPic – upload pictures and videos and embed them any where
- VillagePhotos – upload files from browser and host them online
- XS.to – upload images and embed them anywhere

## **Alternative Photo Tools**

- Captioner – add captions to images
- Colr Pickr – search Flickr photos based on color
- Flappr –Flash-based Flickr interface
- Flickr Logo Maker – Turns any text into a Flickr-style logo.
- FlickrVision – displays Flickr updates from users on a Google Map
- PictureSandbox – searches the Flickr archive (as well as YouTube and other sites) based on the type of license; great tool for finding images you can use for a project
- Retrievr – delivers photos based on your drawings.

## **Mobile Photo Sharing**

- Fotochatter –enables you to share mobile pictures as well as receive them on your phone
- Radar – create photo chats by sending images to the site and getting instant feedback
- Shozu – mobile uploading to photo sites
- SnapZone – upload photos directly from a mobile via a wireless connection

## **Photo Mixing and Slideshows**

- Flektor –tools for adding transitions, text, stickers, effects and overlays into movies made out of your photos and online videos
- Mixercast – “mashup” your photos and movies into animated, interactive slide shows plus a library of stock photo, video and licensed music
- RockYou – free services, including slideshow creation, photo hosting, photo enhancement and more.
- Scrapblog – upload your photos from popular photo sharing websites and mix them with stickers, shapes, text and YouTube videos to create a digital scrapbook



- Slide – create slideshows easily and then embed them on your website or social networking profile
- Vuvox – create interactive slideshows using a range of effects, theme templates and designs

## Videos

### Video Hosting

- Dropshots –upload videos, share them and embed them
- Mydeo – store and stream videos online. Embed on any web site and send streaming video messages
- Pixilive – free images and video hosting for many popular sites
- Rapid – free video hosting
- Supload – hosts video clips and images
- TinyPic – hosts videos and images for free. Upload videos in the most popular formats and link to many popular sites
- Vidilife – upload and store videos online
- YourFileHost – upload anonymously and share with others
- ZippyVideos – upload and store video files in the most popular video formats

### Video Organization and Management

- Aggrega – create and organize your own music video channels
- Ajaxilicious –online movie site that enables management of movies and sharing them via RSS
- Cliproller - create custom video channels and add to your personal page
- CozmoTV – a site that allows you to create and organize channels of video already online

- Feedbeat – service that lets you create playlists with videos from different sources

## Video Sharing

- 5min – video sharing site for videos that can visually explain anything in five minutes
- Blip.tv - video sharing site for video podcasts. Easily upload all types and qualities of media and send them to feeds as well.
- Break –a video site for comedic content
- Brightcove – Search, click and watch. Thousands of channels
- BroadbandSports –mvideo sharing site for sports related videos
- ClipShack – upload video clips, make friends, keep a collection of your favorite videos and comment
- Coull.tv – view video and add interactive elements
- DailyMotion – video sharing with multiple search options
- GeeVee – video sharing site specifically for videos of game play
- Google Video – nothing else to say about this tool! USE IT!
- Grouper – create playlists and easily upload videos to MySpace
- Kewego – video sharing network to upload videos and view those by others
- Livevideo – site that lets you create personal channels
- Mediabum – sharing site focused on funny videos
- Metacafe – discover the top videos through a community that filters, reviews and rates new videos every day
- Ourmedia – upload audio, video, images, and text and share them with the world
- Revver – video sharing site with the possibility to earn money
- Stage6 – upload High Definition video
- Travelistic – video sharing site to post video content specific to travel

- Tube Battle – vote for the best videos
- UnCut – uploading and sharing community by AOL, allows embedding
- Veoh – publish your own videos
- Viddler – add tags and comments to video that will show up at specific times and enjoy Flickr and twitter integration
- Videosift – submit, vote, and comment on videos
- Vimeo – video sharing site with an emphasis on users
- VMIX – video sharing in which all content is screened
- Yahoo Video – similar to Google video
- YouTube – any video you can possibly consider is likely to appear here

### **Online Video Editors**

- BubblePly – video annotating service to add text bubbles synchronized with video
- Cuts – add sound effects, captions, loop the best parts and share
- Eyespot – add effects and transitions, or use some free video clips and music
- Fliptrack –free musical photo slideshow creation
- JumpCut –upload, edit and share your videos
- MixerCast –professional video, images, music, and networking
- Mojiti – choose videos from popular video sharing sites and then personalize them with annotations
- Motionbox – link to a very specific point or “segment” within any clip
- MovieMasher – video editor with effect.
- MuveeMix – upload a movie, mix with music, add cool effects, and share

- Photobucket – edit within browser using Flash, and remix photos and home videos with other elements
- StashSpace – upload, store and edit your videos online
- Veotag –display clickable text, in any audio or video file
- Vidavee Grafitti – add graphics and text to video
- VideoEgg – video editing platform which lets you create a social network
- Vmix – a community and hosting provider for videos

### **Online Video Converters**

- Hey Watch! –online video converter for file formats that works on portable multimedia devices
- Media Convert – media converter with a huge amount of options
- MediaConverter – video converter that can yield really good results.
- Movavi – another video converter that allows you to upload videos and convert them to formats you wish to use.
- Vixy – a simple converter that can only convert Flash apps from the web to several other video formats.
- Zamzar – converts all sorts of file formats, including several video formats.

### **Live Video Communications**

- Blogtv – do a live video show, and you can stream it live, as well as archive it for later use
- HeyCosmo –downloadable application that allows you to connect with other people in many ways
- Mogulus –an all in one broadcast solution for video where you can create, edit, and add things to broadcasts
- ooVoo – carry on video conversations with live video

- Operator11 – go live with your camera, create your own channels, and send video comments
- Stickam – best site for live video communications with multiple people
- Ustream – stream live video and embed the player in your own website.

## **Video Search**

- Altavista Video
- AOL Video
- Blinkx – perform searches within the most popular video networks and create TV channels that splice relevant content together
- ClipRoller – search across popular video sites, establish preferences and get content you like
- Google Video Search
- Pixsy – search engine that lets users search content across dozens of video sites
- PureVideo – search within the most popular video directories and video sharing sites
- ScoopVid – enables you to search for videos or browse through channels and categories
- Search For Video – search engine and video directory that displays results from hundreds of video channels
- SearchVideo – engine and directory created by AOL
- Truveo – search videos or browse by either channel or category
- TubeSurf – gathers results from popular video directories
- Yahoo! Video Search

## Miscellaneous Video Tools

- Broadbandsports –sports-related videos
- Bubble Guru –site for recording webcam video messages and getting them to your website
- CamTwist – (for Mac computers) add special effects to your video chats
- ClipSync – interact with other users while watching the same video
- ClipSyndicate – publish broadcast quality news on your web site
- CrowdRules – video answers to your questions
- Flikzor – send and receive video comments on your profile, blog and more
- Flixn – Record a video message in the web browser and share anywhere
- GabMail – enable users to send unlimited numbers of free video email messages
- Hellodeo – Record videos from your webcam and post them on any web page.
- StumbleUpon Video – a random video is presented to you, ask for random videos in categories too
- WebcamMax –add videos, screen, pictures, flash and effects to virtual or real webcams, and broadcast on all messengers

## Vidcasts and Vlogging

- BlogCheese – a simple way to create and share a video blog
- Digg Podcasts – a long list of popular podcasts
- Jabbits – social video blogging. Use your webcam to record your Post or Jab with an easy-to-use recorder.
- Revision3 – video podcasting network that’s home to many video podcasts
- Scriggity – news podcast, where viewers send in the news

## Podcasts

Shows for computers and mobile devices have become a popular option. It is a good medium for direct communication and marketing. Podcasters can even make income from their shows.

### Podcast Hosting, Sharing and Networking (Free)

- Blubrry – podcast network that lets you create a podcast and browse the podcasts of others
- Blubrry – create your podcast, browse through other podcasts, and create your personal playlist
- Castpost – hosting for audio and video clips
- Collectik – find, share and organize podcasts
- Evoca – create audio recordings from your computer, phone, or Skype, and share them with others or embed them on websites
- HeyCast – create video podcasts
- MyPodcast – podcast hosting offering unlimited storage, bandwidth, and free templates for your podcasts
- PCastBaby –podcast hosting service
- Pickstation – Digg for podcasts and music
- Podbean – podcast hosting and publishing
- PodcastPeople – enables you to post text, audio and video materials to your show
- Podomatic – create, find and share podcasts
- PodServe – a hosting space for your podcast and a directory of user-created podcasts
- ThePodcastNetwork – network of podcasts

## **Podcast Directories**

- DigitalPodcast
- Earkive – lets you listen to podcasts on your phone
- Grepr Podcasts – makes recommendations by finding patterns in interests and comparing the interests of others
- iAmplify – premium directory where you pay to download self-help podcasts
- MobilCast – directory of podcasts and radio shows
- Podcast.net – tens of thousands of podcasts.
- PodcastAlley – over 30,000 podcasts
- PodcastDirectory.com – directory of podcasts with a top list, a list of featured podcasts, and categories
- PodcastDirectory.org
- Podfeed.net – host and share your podcast, find podcasts, and read and write podcast reviews
- Yahoo Podcasts – explore podcasts, listen to them, subscribe, and create your own.

## **Podcast Advertising**

- Podango –free unlimited hosting for your podcast
- Podbridge –podcast metrics and advertising
- Podtrac – connects podcasters with advertisers

## **Live Podcasting**

- NowLive – social network that lets anyone create a live, inter active talk show.
- Talkshoe – create your own live talk show or interactive podcast
- Waxxi – live shows available as podcasts



## **Podcast Hosting (Premium)**

- Hipcast – create audio, video materials and podcasts and post them to your blog
- Libsyn – host your podcasts for a modest monthly fee
- PodcastSpot – free and premium podcast hosting
- SwitchPod – podcast hosting service

## **Podcast Search**

- Everyzing – audio and video search engine
- Pluggd – discover and share podcasts, search for specific parts, and use advanced search technology
- PodNova – podcast search and community.
- Podscope – audio and video search engine that searches the words spoken in podcasts

## **Podcast Forums**

- DigitalPodcast Forum – good forum for promoting your podcast
- Podcast Alley Forum – forum on everything related to podcasting
- World Podcast Forum – forum about podcasting

## **Podcast Creation Software (Offline)**

- Adobe Soundbooth – audio editing from Adobe. Windows and Mac. Fee based.
- Audacity – Free, open source software for recording and editing audio. Versions for Mac OS X, Windows, GNU/Linux and other operating systems
- Propaganda – Create professional podcasts. Windows only. Fee based.
- SnapKast – Podcast creation for Windows. Fee based.
- Wildvoice Podcast Studio – Record audio, add music and sound effects and upload. Windows only.

## **Podcast Creation Software (Online)**

- ClickCaster – create, broadcast and sell your very own radio shows and podcasts. You can record audio right from your browser or upload an existing MP3
- Gcast – record, mix and broadcast your podcasts. You can record messages by phone and upload MP3 files from your computer
- Hipcast – record high-quality audio right through the web browser or your phone.
- Odeo – most popular podcasting platform. Record audio within your browser, embed it anywhere, and create your own audio channels
- Podomatic – record video and audio online directly from your browser
- Wild Voice Shout Recorder – record audio files through an intuitive interface, edit them or add special effects.

## **Miscellaneous Podcasting Tools**

- Divicast – enhance your podcast with images and text
- Divvycast – where podcasting and music meet
- Enablr – make podcasts indexed and searchable.

## **Word explanation**

Backlinks are incoming links to a website or web page. Inbound links were originally important (prior to the emergence of search engines) as a primary means of web navigation; today their significance lies in search engine optimization (SEO). The number of backlinks is one indication of the popularity or importance of that website or page (for example, this is used by Google to determine the PageRank of a webpage). Outside of SEO, the backlinks of a webpage may be of significant personal, cultural or semantic interest: they indicate who is paying attention to that page.

In basic link terminology, a backlink is any link received by a web node (web page, directory, website, or top level domain) from another web node. Backlinks are also known as incoming links, inbound links, inlinks, and inward links.

## **Display advertising**

Display advertising also appears on the Internet, as a form of internet marketing. Display advertising appears on web pages in many forms, including web banners. These banners can consist of static or animated images, as well as interactive media that may include audio and video elements. Adobe Systems Flash or .gif are the preferred presentation formats for such interactive advertisements. The Interactive Advertising Bureau, an industry trade group, sets some standards for online shapes and sizes. Yahoo currently has the largest share of the U.S. market in online display advertising. As of February 28th, 2011 display advertising is a \$17 billion business globally.

Display advertising on the Internet is widely used for branding. This is why metrics like interaction time are becoming more relevant. However, this may change in the future as display advertising is becoming much more targeted to users, much like how search engine ads can be extremely relevant users based on what they are searching for. Display advertisers use cookie and browser history to determine demographics and interests of users and target

appropriate ads to those browsers.

Banner ad standards have changed over the years to larger sizes, in part due to increased resolution of standard monitors and browsers, in part to provide advertisers with more impact for their investment. The standards continue to evolve. Posters, fliers, transit cards, tents, scale models are examples of display advertising.

Banner ads can be targeted to internet browsers in many different ways in order to reach the advertiser's most relevant audience. Behavioral retargeting, demographic targeting, geographic targeting, and site based targeting are all common ways in which advertisers choose to target their banner ads.

#### References

1. Yahoo Pitch to Advertisers: We Sell Ginormous Ads
2. "Google CEO: Mobile Growing Faster Than "All Our Predictions"".
3. Mashable. February 28, 2011. <http://mashable.com/2011/02/28/schmidt-mobile-growth/>.

## **Small Business Marketing: MARKETING PLAN WORKSHEET**

The marketing plan is a problem-solving document. Skilled problem solvers recognize that a big problem is usually the combination of several smaller problems. The best approach is to solve each of the smaller problems first, thereby dividing the big problem into manageable pieces. Your marketing plan should take the same approach. It should be a guide on which to base decisions and should ensure that everyone in your organization is working together to achieve the same goals. A good marketing plan can prevent your organization from reacting to problems in a piecemeal manner and even help in anticipating problems. Before your marketing plan can be developed, research must give you the basic guidelines: for whom you are designing your product or service (market segmentation), and exactly what that product or service should mean to those in the marketplace (market positioning). Below are some guidelines to help you develop a marketing plan to support the strategy you have selected for your organization.

### **Market Segmentation**

Your marketing plan should recognize the various segments of the market for your product or service and indicate how to adjust your product to reach those distinct markets. Instead of marketing a product in one way to everyone, you must recognize that some segments are not only different, but better than others for your product. This approach can be helpful in penetrating markets that would be too broad and undefined without segmentation. No matter what you are making or selling, take the total market and divide it up like a pie chart. The divisions can be based on various criteria such as those listed below.

## **Demographics**

This is the study of the distribution, density and vital statistics of a population, and includes such characteristics as

- Sex.
- Age.
- Education.
- Geographic location.
- Home ownership versus rental.
- Marital status.
- Size of family unit.
- Total income of family unit.
- Ethnic or religious background.
- Job classification blue collar versus salaried or professional.

## **Psychographics**

This is the study

of how the human characteristics of consumers may have a bearing on their response to products, packaging, advertising and public relations efforts. Behavior may be measured as it involves an interplay among these broad sets of variables:

Predisposition - What is there about a person's past culture, heredity or upbringing that may influence his or her ability to consider purchasing one new product or service versus another?

Influences - What are the roles of social forces such as education, peer pressure or group acceptance in dictating a person's consumption patterns?

Product Attributes - What the product is or can be made to represent in the minds of consumers has a significant bearing on whether certain segments will accept the concept.

These attributes may be suggested by the marketer or perceived by the customer. Some typical ways of describing a product include:

- Price/value perception - Is the item worth the price being asked?
- Taste - Does it have the right amount of sweetness or lightness?
- Texture - Does it have the accepted consistency or feel?
- Quality - What can be said about the quality of the ingredients or lack of artificial ingredients?
- Benefits - How does the consumer feel after using the product?
- Trust - Can the consumer rely on this particular brand? What about the reputation of the manufacturer in standing behind the product?

## **Life-Style**

Statements consumers make about themselves through conspicuous consumption can be put to good use by research people who read the signals correctly. By studying behavioral variables, such as a person's use of time, services and products, researchers can identify some common factors that can predict future behavior.

## **Market Positioning**

You must realize that your product or service cannot be all things to all people. Very few items on the market today have universal appeal. Even when dealing in basic commodities like table salt or aspirin, marketing people have gone to all sorts of extremes to create brand awareness and product differentiation.

If your product or service is properly positioned, prospective purchasers or users should immediately recognize its unique benefits or advantages and be better able to assess it in comparison to your competition's offering.

Positioning is how you give your product or service brand identification.

Positioning involves analyzing each market segment as defined by your research activities and developing a distinct position for each segment. Ask yourself how you want to appear to that segment, or what you must do for that segment to ensure that it buys your product or service. This will dictate different media and advertising appeals for each segment. For example, you may sell the same product in a range of packages or sizes, or make cosmetic changes in the product, producing private labels or selecting separate distribution channels to reach the various segments.

Beer, for example, is sold on tap and in seven-ounce bottles, twelve-ounce cans and bottles, six-packs, twelve-packs, cases, and quart bottles and kegs of several sizes. The beer is the same but each package size may appeal to a separate market segment and have to be sold with a totally different appeal and through different retail outlets.

Remember that your marketing position can, and should, change to meet the current conditions of the market for your product.

The ability of your company to adjust will be enhanced greatly by an up-to-date knowledge of the marketplace gained through continual monitoring. By having good data about your customers, the segments they fit into and the buying motives of those segments, you can select the position that makes the most sense.

While there are many possible marketing positions, most would fit into one of the following categories:



**Positioning on specific product features** - A very common approach, especially for industrial products. If your product or service has some unique features that have obvious value this may be the way to go.

**Positioning on benefits** - Strongly related to positioning on product features. Generally, this is more effective because you can talk to your customers about what your product or service can do for them. The features may be nice, but unless customers can be made to understand why the product will benefit them, you may not get the sale.

**Positioning for a specific use** - Related to benefit positioning. Consider Campbell's positioning of soups for cooking. An interesting extension is mood positioning: "Have a Coke and a smile." This works best when you can teach your customers how to use your product or when you use a promotional medium that allows a demonstration.

**Positioning for user category** - A few examples: "You've Come a Long Way Baby," "The Pepsi Generation" and "Breakfast of Champions." Be sure you show your product being used by models with whom your customers can identify.

**Positioning against another product or a competing business** - A strategy that ranges from implicit to explicit comparison. Implicit comparisons can be quite pointed; for example, Avis never mentions Hertz, but the message is clear. Explicit comparisons can take two major forms. The first form makes a comparison with a direct competitor and is aimed at attracting customers from the compared brand, which is usually the category leader. The second type does not attempt to attract the customers of the compared product, but rather uses the comparison as a reference point.

Consider, for example, the positioning of the Volkswagen Dasher, which picks up speed faster than a Mercedes and has a bigger trunk

than a Rolls Royce.

This usually works to the advantage of the smaller business if you can capitalize on the tradition of cheering for the underdog.

You can gain stature by comparing yourself to a larger competitor just as long as your customers remain convinced that you are trying harder.

**Product class disassociation** - A less common type of positioning. It is particularly effective when used to introduce a new product that differs from traditional products.

Lead-free gasoline and tubeless tires were new product classes positioned against older products. Space-age technology may help you here. People have become accustomed to change and new products and are more willing to experiment than was true ten years ago.

Even so, some people are more adventuresome and trusting than others and more apt to try a revolutionary product.

The trick is to find out who are the potential brand switchers or experimenters and find out what it would take to get them to try your product.

The obvious disadvantage of dealing with those who try new products is that they may move on to another brand just as easily. Brand loyalty is great as long as it is to your brand.

**Hybrid bases** - Incorporates elements from several types of positioning. Given the variety of possible bases for positioning, small business owners should consider the possibility of a hybrid approach. This is particularly true in smaller towns where there aren't enough customers in any segment to justify the expense of separate marketing approaches.

## MARKETING PLAN WORKSHEET

This is the marketing plan of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### I. MARKET ANALYSIS

#### A. Target Market - Who are the customers?

1. We will be selling primarily to (check all that apply):

Percent of Business

- a. Private sector \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Wholesalers \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Retailers \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Government \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. We will be targeting customers by:

a. Product line/services. We will target specific lines

- \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Geographic area? Which areas? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Sales? We will target sales of \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Industry? Our target industry is \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. How much will our selected market spend on our type of product or service this coming year?

\_\_\_\_\_

## B. Competition

### 1. Who are our competitors?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Years in Business \_\_\_\_\_

Market Share \_\_\_\_\_

Price/Strategy \_\_\_\_\_

Product/Service \_\_\_\_\_

Features \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Years in Business \_\_\_\_\_

Market Share \_\_\_\_\_

Price/Strategy \_\_\_\_\_

Product/Service \_\_\_\_\_

Features \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. How competitive is the market?

High \_\_\_\_\_

Medium \_\_\_\_\_

Low \_\_\_\_\_

3. List below your strengths and weaknesses compared to your competition (consider such areas as location, size of resources, reputation, services, personnel, etc.):

Strengths

Weaknesses

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 1. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 4. _____ |

**C. Environment**

1. The following are some important economic factors that will affect our product or service (such as country growth, industry health, economic trends, taxes, rising energy prices, etc.):

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2. The following are some important legal factors that will affect our market:

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3. The following are some important government factors:

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4. The following are other environmental factors that will affect our market, but over which we have no control:

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## II. PRODUCT OR SERVICE ANALYSIS

### A. Description

1. Describe here what the product/service is and what it does:

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### B. Comparison

1. What advantages does our product/service have over those of the competition (consider such things as unique features, patents, expertise, special training, etc.)?

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2. What disadvantages does it have?

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## MARKETING STRATEGIES - MARKET MIX

### A. Image

1. First, what kind of image do we want to have (such as cheap but good, or exclusiveness, or customer-oriented or highest quality, or convenience, or speed, or ...)?

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### B. Features

1. List the features we will emphasize:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

### C. Pricing

1. We will be using the following pricing strategy:

- a. Markup on cost \_\_\_\_\_ What % Markup? \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Suggested price \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Competitive \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Below competition \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Premium price \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. Are our prices in line with our image?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

3. Do our prices cover costs and leave a margin of profit?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

#### D. Customer Services

1. List the customer services we provide:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

2. These are our sales/credit terms:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

3. The competition offers the following services:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

Live with passion.  
- Anthony Robbins