

PITFALLS OF MARKETING

Making mistakes in marketing can be costly both in terms of hard dollar expenditure and your time, as well as having an adverse effect on your brand. Below are some of the common errors entrepreneurs and small business owners make when marketing their services and products and how you can avoid them.

Mistake no. 1. Aiming your products and services at everyone. This is a universal blunder that entrepreneurs and small enterprise owners make, especially when starting a business for the first time. The fact is that most businesses regardless of how big or small they are do not have the budget to market to everyone. By narrowing your target audience you actually increase the opportunity for people to buy your offering because you can focus all your efforts, time and money in engaging your target audience. This helps your brand to become more appealing and draw in more clients to your business.

Mistake no. 2. Marketing the features of your services or product rather than the benefits and more importantly the emotional benefits. I see a lot of businesses make this mistake all the time. Lots of companies tell potential clients what's in their products or how their services work. For example, they tell you how it's better than the competition, provide you with free goodies or bonus products when you sign up, tell you that the selling price has been drastically reduced for a limited period of time or that they carried out a survey and tell you the results speak for themselves. But very few people tell their potential clients why they are passionate about their business and why their products and services mean so much to them. Too many people fail to tell the story of clients who have already purchased their products or services and explain why their offering was so beneficial.

Mistake no. 3. Thinking that advertising alone will bring in clients. The AIDA model (awareness, interest, desire, action) is often discussed when considering advertising. On a daily basis we are exposed to over 3,000 adverts and 99% of them have no impact at all and they just fade into the background because there is so much 'noise' going on. To get noticed you have to consistently advertise, one off adverts rarely work, and 'consistently' means every other month in a monthly publication or bi-weekly in a weekly publication. Advertising is a long-term strategy not a quick fix and ideally it would be used in conjunction with other promotional tools.

Mistake no 4. Having no idea of what your client's customer wants. If you know what your client's customers want you can then promote those benefits to your client as it helps them understand the positive impact it will have on their clients.

Mistake no 5. Failure to listen to your clients and by listening I mean active listening. Sitting down with your client and spending valuable quality time understanding what their challenges are, asking powerful questions to really unearth the issues and needs of your client. In other words, being present in the moment. When you listen to you client only then can you add the type of value that turns into business benefits.