

Secrets of Power Marketing: Promote Brand You

Your Guide to Personal Marketing

"If you build a better mouse trap - the world will beat a path to your door."

Do you still believe that old expression? Let's try another one. "Go to school, get a good job, and the company will look after you." The first statement is from Emerson - the second you might have heard from your parents. Both are no longer true. Please don't blame your parents or Emerson for their dated wisdom. Things change.



Don't get me wrong. You still have to be good at what you do. But today it is more important "how" you are perceived by others especially your customers, employer, or colleagues. And it is your responsibility to influence how you are perceived.

Your prospects want to know. Can you be trusted? Are you competent? Are you worth the money? They will most often decide the answer to those questions based on how they feel about you and how well you conveyed those messages to them.

It sounds unfair, but that's life, get on with it. You have the power to influence how you are perceived. Are you willing to accept responsibility for your messages?

Marketing is not the same as selling. Marketing is everything that you do (or don't do) that helps you sell (or hinders you). You cannot 'not market'. Marketing is about sending messages and everything you do or don't do sends a message about you. Don't answer your phone, and that sends a message. Put out a sloppy brochure and that sends a message. And marketing doesn't stop when you get the job. Employers and clients are always watching you.

Systems beat talent

If you are lucky enough to have a talent for marketing - that could be an obstacle. Those who rely solely on their talents get into trouble because talent runs both hot and cold. Sometimes you are good and sometimes you are not. It is far better to follow a system. With a system you will be consistent and you will improve your skills over time. Marketing is a skill set and Secrets of Power Marketing outlines a system that the

'untalented marketer' can follow with success.

Harness these five strategies to influence your market.

Perceptions

Be aware of and manage the **perceptions** others have of you. Create positive first impressions every time - with your smile, handshake, business card and appearance. Listen to your voice mail message with a critical ear and impatient mindset. Then improve it to project a positive experience for your caller. Review periodically. Enhance your credibility as an expert through public speaking and writing.

Deliver value and make clients and prospects aware of all that you give. Emphasizing the perceived value is an effective marketing tool. Remember: Total value = Real value + Perceived value. You must deliver real value to get into the game, but perceived value determines how people buy.

Relationships

Build and nurture stronger business relationships. Connect with others through common background, likes, hobbies, family activities, culture, etc. Say thank you often. Say it with hand written notes, postcards, email, by phone, with a book, with a gift or with official recognition.

Plant your marketing seeds - then cultivate with care, persistence and patience. It takes time. Networking is like cultivating bamboo. You water and rake for 6 years before it shows any sign of growth and in that 6th year the growth is explosive. Build your networks by helping others. Harness your suppliers and colleagues to spread your message.

Visit your association events. Join your professional association. Get involved with your alumni association as soon as you can. The contacts you build with your class mates and alumni who attended your school in entirely different decades can be lucrative.

Associate with others who improve your credibility - associates, partners, mentors, community leaders and business executives. Remember, we judge you by who you hang around with, so associate with winners.

Media

Work with the **Media**. Cultivate relationships with your media contacts. Stay in touch. Thank them for any exposure and send them sweets, (yes you read that right). Send news releases regularly. When you work with a club, association or charity be the one who sends information to the media. That will condition the media to seeing you as a source.

Write articles that offer value to the readers and get your name, number and photo printed. Write to the editor, a columnist or reporter. Of all the forms of mass media, print is the best because you can photo copy it for those you want to impress.

Use your web site and email as marketing tools. Make your email signature a mini sign board and offer email newsletters.

To meet influential people become a reporter. Volunteer to write an article for your association newsletter, the community paper or company newsletter. You gain the opportunity to approach those who might not normally spend time with you. You could also work with the cable TV or community radio (most colleges and universities have one).

Leverage

Leverage the resources you have to make them appear bigger. You never have enough money or credibility so use what you have to get more. Get more impact out of the intangible resources you have - instead of worrying about the tangibles you lack. The intangible resources you have include time, confidence, skills, credibility and knowledge. The tangible resources that may be in short supply include money, equipment, customers, information, staff and quality.

Focus. Do more of less. Then position yourself as number one in your defined market. Don't do everything. Be very specific about where you specialize.

Reuse, recycle and repackage ideas, products, or methods from your competitors, from other industries or from long ago. Break through the unwritten rules that are holding you back. Do it with style and make a big splash. Southwest Airlines follow all the safety rules (they have the best safety record) but they break all the other rules. They are a fun airline to fly, their employees are nuts. They are also the only airline to make a profit for the past 25 years.

Get happy clients or past employers to do more for you - by writing testimonials that you copy and distribute, with your portfolio, in your newsletter or on your website. You can help draft the letter for them. Don't worry they want to help you and will only sign something that they can live with.

Database

Build and maintain your **Database** of contacts. Use a computer based contact manager like ACT or Maximizer. Collect information about your clients and prospects that may help you market and sell to them. Assign categories to track and work them with the appropriate effort.

Protect your database. Back up often and plan for Murphy to visit your computer. Schedule your cold calls and your follow-up calls at separate times and stick to your

schedule. Leverage your database by sharing, trading or getting other companies to send to your list. Start your contact as high in the prospect company as you can - the CEO or president. Maintain contact with more than one person at companies of important prospects and clients because people move and change jobs.

Personal Marketing Wrap up

You might choose to use only a few of these strategies. It works best when you coordinate all your marketing efforts. That leads to maximum impact and higher success for you. Most importantly it must be systematic. Be consistent and persistent. Make your personal marketing activity a habit. Then you will discover that not only “you cannot - not market” you will market with power.

AP © George Torok is co-author of "Secrets of Power Marketing: Promote Brand You". To arrange your keynote speech or training program call 905-335-1997 or visit <http://www.torok.com/>

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