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5 Breakthrough Marketing Ideas

By Charlie Cook

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Do you ever get frustrated with your marketing? Are you putting in a lot of effort but not getting the results you want? Don't you wish you could just hit a switch and get a better response from your mailings, sales calls and web site?

You hear a lot about breakthroughs; is it all hype, or can you really create a breakthrough in your marketing and sales? I know that you can.

I spent last weekend skiing in Vermont with my spouse, nephew and his finance Sonia. We were all having a great time on the slopes, except Sonia. Sonia doesn't have as much experience as the rest of us and was struggling to keep up. Her problem wasn't one of effort. She was working much harder than the rest of us, fighting each turn and slowing her progress down the hill. In a few minutes, I showed her how to tip her skis to make easy, graceful S shaped turns that took advantage of the new shaped skis. After making a run or two, she was skiing twice as fast with less effort, and having more fun.

You too can experience a breakthrough in your skiing, golf swing or in your marketing. If you are like most business owners, you advertise, send out mailings, make sales calls and have a web site. This is what you do to market your business; the way you do these things will make the difference between success and failure.

What would constitute a breakthrough in your business? Like Sonia, you may be inadvertently working harder than you need to be to get the results you want. With a few changes to your marketing strategy and techniques you could be getting a lot more attention, generating more qualified leads and converting more prospects to clients and having more fun.

Here are five ideas to get your marketing headed for a breakthrough:

1. Focus on your target markets' primary concerns in your sales calls, your brochure, your ads and on your web pages. Your prospects' problems and wants brought you together; use this to keep

5 Breakthrough Marketing Ideas

prospects' attention.

2. Use questions to get the conversation going. Whether you're on the telephone, writing web page copy or writing an ad, ask your prospects questions to get them thinking about what they want and how you can help them.

3. Give something away that your prospects need. The more helpful information you give away to prospects, the more business you'll receive in return. Give away ideas they can use and help them understand when and how to use your products and services.

4. Build a mailing list of people who want more of your ideas and information. Use the list regularly to stay in touch and you'll increase your credibility the perceived value of your goods and services, and

your sales.

Other Breakthrough Ideas

–When people are at the point of purchase, prompt them to buy additional products and you can double your revenue.

–Call people who have bought your products after a couple of weeks to get feedback. There is a good chance they'll be interested in buying additional products or services.

Whether you want to become an expert at marketing, skiing or cooking, the key is to let go of methods that aren't working for you, and learn and apply the techniques used by the experts. Nine times out of ten, the problem is in getting the basics right. You can achieve a breakthrough in sales when you understand and apply these proven marketing principles and techniques.

Creating Breakthroughs

By Paul Lemberg

"The world we've made, as a result of the level of thinking we have done thus far, creates problems we cannot solve at the same level of thinking" – Albert Einstein

Runaway success is never based on incremental improvement. I know this is a very bold statement, but bold statements and even bolder results are what breakthroughs are all about. What about in your company – what would constitute a breakthrough? Would you like to increase overall productivity by 40%? Of course you would! But would you commit to it? What about expanding sales by 50% – in one quarter! Or cultivating a completely new distribution channel – in two months! Sound impossible? Breakthrough results always "seem" impossible at the time you commit to them. If they seemed reasonable, they wouldn't qualify as breakthroughs.

Breakthroughs share the following characteristics:

1) The results are not predictable based on your past performance. If you routinely increase revenues

5 Breakthrough Marketing Ideas

a handsome 20% per year, a 50% increase would be a breakthrough. Developing a new product or service in 3 months would be a breakthrough if it normally takes you six.

2) You commit to the results, in advance, without knowing how to accomplish them, and without a plan. This is the exact opposite of "let's study this" syndrome.

3) And finally, they define outcomes which are concrete and measurable, and lead to a new level of performance. By virtue of its accomplishment, a breakthrough will stretch and grow the capabilities of your company.

Critical Success Tip

The "secret" to producing breakthrough results is putting the cart before the horse. Standard organizational decision making says "What do we need, what are we capable of, and how can we use our capabilities to produce what we need?" Breakthrough thinking says "What are we committed to, we believe in the possibility of that commitment, and what can we do next?"

Think for a moment about creating a breakthrough in how you respond to client requests. Instead of "going back and thinking about it", breakthroughs require you to first commit to your client, then figure it out and take action. This may seem distasteful, even weird – our culture holds strong taboos against making promises we can't keep. And if you couple this with a common fear of failure...you will resist making bold promises and you will not produce breakthroughs.

Critical Success Tip

Try anything and fail faster! Don't worry about whether it's going to work or not. If it seems like it can work, if it might produce the results you want, do it! In fact, the more things you implement, the more unworkable approaches you discover and get out of the way, the quicker you are likely to find a solution which yields the breakthrough. Also, a willingness to implement wild, even crazy, nontraditional approaches can produce results in record time. Remember, we are not talking about

problems which need incremental solutions – you already know how to do these. Take the things you do that work, and make them better, or do more of them. But, as the author Rita Mae Brown wrote, "Insanity is when you keep doing the same things expecting different results". By definition, you don't know how to produce a breakthrough, so get busy and fail faster.

Bold Promises and Action

There are four steps to creating breakthroughs.

1) Ask yourself the question: "What important "thing" – which I currently think is impossible – would I commit to, right now, if I actually believed it would be possible to accomplish?"

2) Make a bold promise which commits you to the accomplishment of that "thing". Make sure your promise (your commitment) is specific, measurable, and has a completion date. Also – this is critical –

5 Breakthrough Marketing Ideas

go public with your commitment. Tell concerned people, like your entire organization, your investors, or your customers.

3) Invent ways to deliver on your commitment, and spring into action.

4) Keep going until you're done...a major breakthrough is just inches away.

Critical Success Tip

The magic to using the breakthrough technology is this: Make bold promises, publicly. Then, stay in action...do the next thing...find out if it worked...then do the next thing...find out if that worked, and so on. These steps are all driven by that crazy, breakthrough commitment you made. .

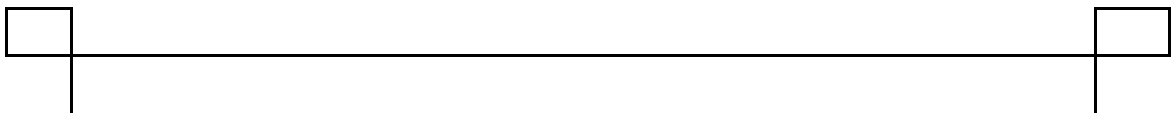
Business Coach and Strategist, Paul Lemberg is the President of Quantum

Growth Coaching, the world's only fully systemized business coaching

program designed to create More Profits and More Life™ for



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