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8 Common Marketing Mistakes

By Charlie Cook

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by: **Charlie Cook**

Advertising can be one of the fastest ways to market and grow your business or it can be one of the quickest ways to go out of business. With the right ad you can attract clients to your business and increase your profits. With the wrong ad you can spend your way into bankruptcy.

To grow your business you need to attract the attention of your prospects, advertising can help you do so if used correctly. Unfortunately, many small businesses owners waste thousands of dollars on advertising efforts that only achieve minimal results.

If you want to get the most from the money you spend to promote your products and services, make sure to avoid these common mistakes.

Focusing on Your Products and Services

If you want to get the attention of your prospects, speak to their needs and wants. Your prospects' primary concern isn't that you've been in business for 25 years; it is do you know the problem they want to solve. Use your ad to identify at least one common problem of your prospects and the benefit of using your product or service.

Having a Weak Marketing Message

All too often you hear ads and it takes some thought to figure out what they are even promoting. Make sure your advertisement includes a 7–10 word description of whom you serve and the problems you solve so people who read or hear your ad know how you can help them.

Using the Wrong Words

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A word here, a phrase there can change your response rate by hundreds of percent. When you spend money on advertising, first test a number of versions of your copy to identify the one that works best. Just by revising her ad copy so it was client and problem centered, I helped one small business owner achieve her best month in sales ever.

Missing Motivation

Most ads miss the mark in moving prospects to action. If you want to prompt prospects to visit your web site or your store or to contact you, include an offer that motivates them to do so.

Lacking in Frequency

Some people make spur of the moment buying decisions, but most need to become familiar with your services and products, and this takes time. If you want your advertising to work, you need to ensure that your prospects see or hear it regularly.

Web Sites that Don't Move Prospects to Action

Many small business owners direct prospects to a web site where they have more extensive content covering available services and products. I constantly get calls from people who have been successful at attracting prospects to their web site, but generate few sales.

Once prospects get to your web site make sure the content and visual organization moves them to take the action you want them to. Whether it is providing them with ample opportunities to fill in your service inquiry form, or including a subset of your product catalog in your web page navigation bars, help prospects move to client and customer status.

Lack of Follow Up

Sometimes making a sale requires sending a note or picking up the phone and calling your prospects. If you have an effective lead generation strategy, prospects will provide you with their contact information and the problem they want solved. Use the web, email, and the phone to follow up and close the sale.

Lack of Tracking

If you are making more from your advertising than you are spending, you're ahead. Frequently small business owners can't tell you which of their efforts helped bring in the business. Track each of your ad campaigns and you'll know where to spend your money in the future, what to modify and what to eliminate. Do you know how many sales and how much money you made as a result of each of your advertising campaigns? Are you making any of the above common marketing mistakes? What elements of your marketing should you change?

Put your marketing house in order. Fix your strategy and your materials. If you don't know what to change or how to change it, use experts to help you with strategy, copyrighting, design, PR, and media

placement.

Avoid these common marketing mistakes and you'll find ore people contacting you about your products and services and that your making more than your spending on your advertising.

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The author, Charlie Cook, helps independent professionals and small business owners attract more clients and be more successful. Sign up to receive the F*ree Marketing Guide and the 'More Business' newsletter, full of practical tips you can use at

Are You Using the Right Form of Energy?

By Al Hanzal

As we near the end of summer, here is a question I have for you, "Are you using the right form of energy to grow your business?" Are you having trouble growing your small business as fast as you want? Are you making all the right moves and still the business just inches forward? Read this article and see if you are using the right form of energy to grow your small business?

Head Energy

My consulting experiences have taught me there are two types of business energy. I call the first type "head energy". This is the energy that comes from wanting to do better or more with your small business. You want more profits. You want more customers. You want better marketing.

Head energy is very powerful. It can inspire. It can achieve dreams. It can drive you forward.

Head energy also has limitations. Head energy promises fulfillment in the future. Before the future arrives you must sustain yourself along the way. If you fail to sustain the head energy, your hopes and aspirations tumble down. They become "the good idea that was never achieved!"

Gut Energy

I call the second type of small business energy "gut energy". This energy involves your current business worries; your current business mistakes; the business issues that need fixing right now. What is decreasing your profits now? What is preventing you from having more customers now? What are your current marketing mistakes?

I call this gut energy because it sits right in your gut, churning away. This is extremely powerful energy because it is so immediate. It is right now! It calls for immediate attention. Fix the situation now!

Gut energy is not as glamorous as head energy. It is always more fun to dream about your future than

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to do the hard work of fixing your current mistakes. But when you want to see immediate improvements in your business, turn to your gut energy.

9 Common Small Business Mistakes

Here I list the 9 most common small business mistakes. Ask yourself if you are making mistakes in any of these areas. If so, you have the opportunity to find powerful energy to move your business forward. Lack of cash flow Poor planning Forgetting your customer Selling versus marketing Lacking needed expertise Misunderstanding credit Becoming an advertising victim Poor customer shopping experiences Making yourself the center of your business

If you find yourself wondering how you can use your mistakes to grow your business, you may want to request my free report, 9 Mistakes That Can Kill Your Small Business. In the report, I provide more

details about each of these business mistakes and ways to fix them. You can achieve powerful results in fixing your business mistakes. The report will help you find ways to use this energy to grow your business faster.

To obtain this free report, 9 Mistakes That Can Kill Your Small Business, send an email to with the subject line, Free Report. The report will be sent to you via email with the report attached.

Conclusion

Head energy is a necessary part of every small business operation. It provides the vision you need for the future. For quick and immediate improvements, do not over look the gut energy you will find in fixing your current business mistakes. Your gut energy will offer a wonderful opportunity for growing your business in a fast and easy way.

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Using simple, low cost techniques, Al Hanzal has been helping small business owners improve their profits.

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