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**Don't Be a Tom, Dick or Harry**

**By Karen E. Hipp**

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Don't Be a Tom, Dick or Harry

(Karen E. Hipp, Author, Do-It-Yourself Marketing)

You've followed all the "rules". You took out a few ads to promote your company, ran the ad frequently and gave it time to turn into sales. Yet, here you are left with advertising bills to pay, and not much to show for it.

What went wrong? Maybe you were a Tom, Dick or Harry.

That means that the actual ad itself that was produced by you, the newspaper, your graphic artist etc. looked like every other ad you see in print. "But, you say, I was just doing what everyone else does." Exactly. Hopefully you don't have a product quite like everyone else so why should your advertising look like everyone else?

Just like your product, your advertising must "stand out" from the crowd to get noticed.

I'm not making this up. But when I was working for a large company, I was responsible for the "creation" of the ads. The size, headline, overall look, etc. We placed a lot of ads. Sometimes up to 5 times a week in our local paper. One day as I was skimming through the paper looking for our ad, I couldn't find it. Irate because someone at the paper must have screwed up, I called my account executive. She started going through that morning's paper on her desk and 15 seconds later said,

"Here it is, on page 4."

Yup. There it was. Sheepishly, I apologized to my account rep and gently put down the phone.

I couldn't find our own ad! And it was big! If I couldn't find it, I'm certain there were many others who didn't either. Ok, there were two possible scenarios.

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I had seen the ad in the paper so much, that it became invisible to me.

The ad never really did stand out.

Neither one of these scenarios is good. I asked people who had never seen our paper to find our ad. No problem. So that left #1.

\*I had been using this same ad format for over a year, changing copy here and there.

\*It became too stale. Everyone's like "Yeah there's that ad againÉwhatever." Of course you know what

I changed ASAP.

Now about the way the ad looks and sounds. Let's start with the copy. The copy should be written as if you were having a conversation with someone. Not full of stiff sentences and things that mean a lot to you, but to no one else. What do they think after they read your ad? Does anything urge them to take action? Maybe they even laughed (in a good way). Good humor is easily remembered.

Spend your money on creative to come up with the concept and design the ad. A lot and I mean a lot of heads of companies or owners think they know how to do this.

Wrong. You know the product you are selling. You don't know art direction or concept. You do know your product, so tell the art director or agency about the product and what market(s) you are trying to reach. They are the professionals, so trust that they know what they're doing.

If you are concerned about the cost of such services, then run your ad 8 times instead of the 10 you planned. Branding your company and your product is worth the extra cash. First impressions do count.

You have to treat advertising like overhead. Just like shipping materials and postage. It's all part of the cost of your product, so it must have a respectable position in your overall budget. Not "what's left-over."

Now you are armed with the tools so you won't be like "Tom, Dick or Harry."

Move advertising to the right place on your balance sheet and don't follow the crowd.

Six months from now, you'll be glad you did.

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Karen@Hippmarketing.com

Karen E. Hipp is a nationally recognized marketing consultant and the author of the ebook "Do-It-Yourself Marketing." Karen has been honored with "Marketing Director of the year in two separate industries and has won 54 Addy Awards. Karen's business, Hipp Marketing, focuses on small to medium sized businesses that need marketing help.

## **Truth and Lies**

**By Jim Murdoch**

How low can one get? The number of encounters I have had in the few months as a network marketer with liars is astounding. Why do people need to stoop to lying in their attempt to succeed? Do they really believe that they will attract customers by using deceptive means. Hey friends, I've got news for you! You are the ones who have been deceived!

When I placed a single ad with the URL of my newly created autoresponder, I started to receive all sorts of strange emails to that autoresponder address. All of them said they had seen my business ad and bla bla bla. Liars! All I advertised was my autoresponder! So what was going on?

Well, I have a confession to make. About seven years ago, when I first discovered the Internet, and got my first taste of spam, I fell for it, and became a spammer myself. But not for long, as my ISP was quick to disconnect me, before I even knew what "Spam" was. Well I soon woke up.

What I had done, following instructions of course, was to download a program which "harvested" other emails from web pages on the Net. Then I had also downloaded and used a bulk emailer. Apart from getting temporarily disconnected I also received some nasty replies. And guess what? My second attempt, which was an attempt to avoid unsolicited email sending, I used the addresses of people who had spammed me. Some of them even wrote nasty replies complaining. Hypocrites!

That was an end to my early attempts as a Networker. I gave that up quick, especially after reading about Spam and realizing how unwanted it is. I also realized that bulk email is not the way to market. Recently I have come across the term "Safe lists". A Safe List is supposed to be a list of email addresses from people who have requested information on a business opportunity. But just how safe are these lists?

Here is how I imagine it. John requests from Mary information about her business. Mary sells John's email address as part of a safe list to Tom, Dick and Harry. John now gets emails from Mary, Tom, Dick and Harry, three of which he did not request. Hence John was spammed, and Mary gets paid. Tom, Dick and Harry get a nasty spam complaint from their ISP who disconnects their account. Thanks Mary.

Amazingly 90% or more of the email coming into my mailbox is spam from people selling bulk email software, or offering some other get rich scheme. They are still using harvesting software (this is how they got my auto-responder address) and the bulk email software (this is how they emailed me) they just paid for. Sadly these are mostly the victims of the master culprits who get these poor suckers to buy into their program. Guess who gets rich, and who doesn't?

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Do you see the untruthfulness in this kind of marketing? Let's not call it that, it is spamming. They first of all steal the email addresses. Next they sent emails to these addresses totally unsolicited. Consequently they get disconnected. But they seem to expect that. I get many emails from the same people using different email addresses to send from each time. Some, I think, even use false

addresses. So the criminal intentions are there.

Here is my message to these criminal spammers: Why waste your time and money on these fruitless efforts? Why go to all that trouble just to get a bad reputation? Get into a real profit making program. There are many legitimate companies helping many people make a reasonable income. If you put all the hard work you are wasting on these deceptive programs into one of these legitimate programs, you will not only make for yourself an income, you will also have satisfaction.

If you, dear reader, are contemplating using any of those enticing offers of bulk email or email harvesting – don't do it! Losing money and ISP credibility isn't worth it. How can you build a solid base if your customers don't trust you? Trust is what your customers are putting in you, and trustworthiness is what you should give them. Tell them the truth, be honest and they will love you for it. And they are sure to come back and bring others with them.

Jim Murdoch is new to network marketing. Read what he has to say about "Why you need your own home business" in his autoresponder:

. His web site is at

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