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**Fundamental Strategic Marketing Mistakes to Avoid**

By Lee Traupel

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This is a pretty tough global economy and it is critical for a company to leverage every bit of their marketing resources. So, if this is the case, why are so many companies shooting themselves in the proverbial foot by breaking some of the most fundamental rules of marketing? It's a very simple question with complex answers – here are some of the pitfalls to avoid:

- 1) Believing a second rate web site communicates integrity: So many web sites are just plain funky looking (graphics, text, menus, etc.) – nice professional term, but it's descriptive of some of the dreck that passes for web site design. A company should not forget that perception is reality on the web and people aren't going to do business with a company that can't field a decent web site – end of story!
- 2) Deploying a marketing strategy that's all over the map: Is Yahoo a Search Engine, a Portal or a Hollywood Media company? They are the classic 3D hologram advertisement for a company that can't figure out what it wants to be when it grows up. A company must pick a marketing strategy and then stay the course – changing direction every time the wind shifts is not a good business strategy and creates more motion than action.
- 3) Forgetting real brand development: Branding became the ".com" rallying cry for every newby wet behind the ears with an Internet dream to become a billionaire by selling dog food on the web (I'll leave the sock puppet out of this) – we all know this didn't work. But that does not mean a company should ignore brand development – it's important to remember that a good brand is built one marketing process at a time; everything that a company publishes, develops or communicate is part of the brand building process, which in turn defines the company's market position.
- 4) Ignoring distribution channels by selling direct via an ecommerce web site: A company should not build and launch an ecommerce site and start selling direct to customers and forget about a distribution channel. It's imperative to give the customer the choice to buy direct from your company or locate a distribution channel partner via a look up capability on the site. And, if you really want to win the hearts

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and mind of a channel never sell below retail (SRP) – and afford the channel the opportunity to discount your product so they can compete effectively with you.

5) Making competitive analysis a low priority: Too many companies forget about their competitors after the business plan has been written. They don't take the time to review them on a periodic basis and try and figure out how to deliver goods and services differently, which in turn drives competitive advantage and a long-term sustainable business model.

6) Poorly thought out Investor Relations press release: Do companies actually think investors are just plain stupid and don't really read an IR (Investor Relations) directed Press Release carefully? Investors are typically very bottom line oriented – they want to know about revenue growth and real strategic partnership developments that help the company grow and not much else. Just throwing fluff out in the market and hoping this will drive investors to invest is just plain shortsighted stupidity.

7) Thinking any/all consultants know your business better than you: Reporters and consultants (including this one) have driven just as many companies into the ground with bad advice as much as they have helped them – companies must realize a consultant is typically not down in the trenches and they can make some bad calls – it's important to filter their advice.

8) Letting the inmates run the asylum – customers should help a company refine its product marketing strategy by working as partners. If engineering tells marketing "the customer doesn't really know what they want but we do" the red lights should start flashing danger – the company may be in serious peril and at the very least need new focus and direction for product marketing.

Lee Traupel has 20 plus years of marketing experience – he is the founder of Intelective Communications, Inc.

a marketing services company which provides

strategic and tactical marketing services exclusively to small to medium sized companies.

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**8 fundamental mistakes for ezine failure you must avoid.**

**By Chris Varsamis**

**8 fundamental mistakes for ezine failure you must avoid. by Chris Varsamis**

8 fundamental mistakes for ezine failure you must avoid.

It is true that sometimes in life there is a small line between failure and success. The same thing applies with ezines and newsletters. Some details we consider unimportant are the keys for the

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success  
of our publication or failure.

### 1) Careful with the from field.

Although many consider this as a detail it is the first thing a user will see. From who is the email. Use either your name or your business name. Avoid any kind of other phrases in that field .It will cost you a lot.

### 2) Subject line.

This is the second more important field in the email. Avoid hype in that area like "Earn 50.000\$ in 2 weeks" e.t.c. People are smarter than you think. You will never be believable. Emphasize to the purpose of your newsletter .Do not use more than 7 words in your subject line.

### 3) Call to buy in the first mailing.

That is a common mistake most ezine publishers do .They have sales pitch on the first time. Research has proved that you will gain your subscriber trust after 6 to 7 mailings according always to the content you offer.

### 4) Use death words which spam filters ban.

For God's sake, Do Not use words or phrases like free, make money, hello, your family, and other. Your newsletter will go directly to junk mail and will be erased without notice.

### 5) Avoid too much personalization.

Although personalization is important in order to create a friendly ambience do not overdo it. Some people will consider this as rudeness. Use their name only once in your mailings on the first line of your message, not more. Otherwise some of your subscribers will be insulted and unsubscribe in a second.

### 6) Use more verbs, not adjectives.

It has been proved by the best internet marketers and advertisement agencies that verbs are much stronger than adjectives. Especially the call to action verbs are so strong that could increase the response rate up to 700%! For example use the verbs, boost, explode instead of the increase. See how stronger they are?

### 7) Use auto responders not web pages.

Many people use on their mailings or other advertisement campaigns their web page mostly. That is

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big a mistake. The estimate shows that 30% max will subscribe from your web site. On the contrary if you promote your auto responder the percentage, goes from 80% to 100%!

8) Too much info in the submit form.

Another typical mistake. Some ezines require submitting more personal information such as: email, first and last name, area and other. The info you really need is the first name and the email. Everything more than that is considered by many internet users as violation of their personal info. That means less subscribers for your ezine.

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