

How a 7th grader taught me a valuable marketing lesson

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By Erik Lukas

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I was seeing my younger brother (we're quite a few years apart), as I'm prone to do. He's a great kid. When he smiles, you've gotta smile along with him. It's just impossible not to. But this is about one time he got on my nerves a little. Ok, a lot.

We were driving to the park to play tennis. I'm trying to teach him how to play so he'll be as good as me... err, better. Anyway, there we are, driving along. I'm flipping through the stations, looking for something good. I go past something he likes. He says, "Turn that back on."

At this point, the radio dial has stopped on a classic rock station, playing CCR, always a favorite of mine. They just rock! Well, because this is on, I say, "Sorry, but I wanna listen to this song for a minute."

Yes, I'm mean, cruel, whatever. But the song he wanted to listen to was some new whiney alternative band, which I don't particularly like (ok, that's an understatement).

He says, "I'm going to do this until you turn it back on – (high pitched voice) nah nah nah nah! nah nah nah nah! nah nah nah nah! nah nah nah nah! nah nah nah nah! "

This goes on the entire ride there. I turn my music up a little. But I can't give in now. I'm too stubborn and it will give the kid a bad message.

I weather the storm.

By the time we got to the park, which was about 15 minutes away, I'd heard him say "nah nah nah nah" about 7,300 times.

He informed me he was going to do it on the way home too, unless he got control of the radio. So I caved. I said he could have it.

We got out and walked towards the courts.

What's the marketing lesson, you ask? Repetition.

Repetition.

Repetition.

It's been proven in traditional media like direct mail that a consumer must be exposed numerous times to a sales message before a firm gets the optimal number of sales. In direct mail, it can go as high as the 7th mailing or more before you get the bulk of the orders.

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The online environment presents a different challenge. Online we must either get immediate action from a skeleton site with no further interaction, or create a more personal system with lots of contacts. An ezine is the perfect place to develop a rapport with your subscribers that allows you to cut down on this rule of repetition. Or, you can use it along with repetition, by repeatedly offering your newest product to your readers. But, please, if you're going to do this, reword your offer every time. This will be the most effective way to present your offer.

Now, of course, you don't want to irritate your visitors with your repetition like my younger brother did. You just want to get your message in front of them enough times that it actually gets their attention. And if you ever, ever run into me and say "nah nah nah nah" to me, I will not buy from you. I will clock you. But if you present your sales message to me repetitively in a professional, yet personal manner, I may become a paying customer.

A Study In Banjo Lessons

By Colin P

Ah, I remember the good old days when I had my first banjo lesson. Actually, it wasn't exactly my first lesson. I had been using the internet to improve my "skill" for a while, and I was slightly conceited since I thought I had some idea about what I was doing. I watched videos of a real expert playing the banjo while the tabs were available as well. I learned a few songs and techniques that sounded interesting, but that was about the extent of my knowledge.

When I had my first real lesson, it broke down all those illusions I had of being a decent player. I tried to show off, but as soon as his deep eyes met mine I missed a chord. It was my first time to ever play any instrument in front of anyone, and I didn't think I would get nervous. After all, I've always been a gifted public speaker. The only one in the room was my teacher, and I was having a terrible time.

I'm having a hard time seeing my future in banjo playing, especially since I can't even whack up the ginger to play something in front of my own teacher. He's a nice guy, and he can play the banjo like no other. He's already taught me several exercise I can use for my next lesson. It's also a great experience just to watch him play, since his skill far outweighs mine. I just hope I will sound at least slightly more decent the next time I have a lesson.

But if I always freeze up when I try to play at my lessons, I'm worried that my instructor will never be able to give me the help I truly need. It's impossible to get feedback and constructive criticism if everything I play is absolute garbage. I think I will start recording my lone practice and playing it back for him. Hopefully I won't freeze up just knowing that he will be listening to it soon...

For more banjo related information and entertainment topics, visit:

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