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100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Marketing in a Recession

By Jeffrey Dobkin

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Not everybody is in a recession.

Some firms are doing quite well, thank you. In this down economy selected entire industries are really flourishing: the mortgage industry for example, is booming, so is the security and protection industry; snack foods are up a few good points and the gift industry is particularly strong.

While people stay closer to home local shopping is doing well... like housewares, and home items. There's a big boom in stereo, and TVs; and local travel – especially places that are short drives – are up significantly. With the money people aren't spending on flying they are buying more stuff, and spending money closer to home. And everybody appreciates the fact that gas prices are the lowest in years.

Don't wait

More discretionary money is available from people who aren't traveling. That money is going to be spent somewhere.

Keep mailing

You'll have less competition.

Negotiate with your vendors

You can't squeeze blood out of a stone, but in this economy people are more likely to negotiate and barter terms, price, services and goods than when things are going well and everybody is getting list price. You never know until you ask – so ask.

Use Press Releases to supplement your ads

Double your exposure. The magazine publishers (and the magazine industry in general) are having tough times, too. They'll appreciate your advertising support – and are most likely to show their appreciation with editorial support via your press release.

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Limit Test Mailings

Stay with what works. Pare back on those wild ideas for tests you've had, and mail closer to home with tried and true markets you're pretty darn sure will pay off. Limit experimental tests to markets closer to those home-run markets you're mailing too, and keep mailing the ones that look most likely to pay off in the short run.

Test smaller quantities

You see a sign on a wall, "Wet Paint." So, the first thing you do is... you go over and touch it. Right? I thought so. Me too. Face it – testing is in your blood, you're a direct mailer at heart. You can't stop testing — and I wouldn't want you to. It's a necessary part of direct marketing: you need to explore new market segments to grow.

So while you can't stop testing, you can test more precisely. And you can test smaller numbers. If you've been testing cells of 5,000 records, drop down to 4,000. So the statistical analysis of the mailing results won't be as absolute, so what? You'll save money. It may be a little more work, but... guess what? It'll save you money. And it make take longer to get the exact results you need to predict a profitable rollout, but... you guessed it: it will cost you less, you'll save money.

By the way – if you run a small business; no, I mean a really small business, and mailings of 5,000 are a lot for you – as they are for many of my small business clients and friends, feel free to mail even smaller quantities. Face it, owners of SOHOs and VSBs (very small businesses) don't have \$2,500 to test a 5,000 name list. So heck, don't let that stop you: mail just a thousand pieces. You'll be able to tell if you are getting any sales – or any calls at all from the list. You'll know if this mailing paid for itself, and you'll know it fairly quickly. So what if it's not statistically sound – you'll learn enough to mail more or not mail more to that list. And isn't that what testing is all about?

Sell more subtly

Send a survey. Feel people out – see what they want, then offer them that. Surveys are usually welcome, and can yield quite surprising information when designed correctly.

Save on printing and literature costs

I almost always recommend throwing a loose qualifying net: designing ads and mailers to make everyone call, then later-on, sorting out the callers into an A, B, and C prospect list. In these tough times consider sending a smaller interim package of material to first level respondents instead of your \$8 wonder-pack mailer, and save on those literature costs. Don't worry – if they're interested – they'll call for more information.

As a bonus, your interim literature doesn't have to sell the product as hard. And believe me in good times and bad, yikes it's tough – from just a few sheets of paper – to make a person put a check in an envelope and wave to it, or drive someone to pick up the phone specifically to place an order.

With an interim mailer, you can just sell the phone call, which is much easier: "Just pick up the phone and call us toll FREE — We'll send you our four-color glossy brochure, and we'll include our full instructional manual along with it, so you can see exactly how easy it is to..." Then put a special phone number on it, and when this phone rings, forward it to Ivan Perry – your top superstar salesman who

closes 90% of his customers on the first phone call.

Mail to your own top 100

It's the first mailing I recommend to any of my new clients. Even if it's just a "Thank you for your business!" post card, mail something to your own list of your top 100 clients. You can never do too much for them. You know what other businesses call those folks, don't you? They call them prospects.

Mail to your other top 100

Mail to your top 100 prospects. You do have a top 100 prospect list, don't you?

Stop trying so hard to get orders.

Nobody likes a pushy salesperson. How about not concentrating so hard on getting sales, but on getting and keeping – customers. Not every letter I create for clients is a sales letter. Some just say a warm thank you. Some just touch the heart and create loyalty, or strengthen the bond between clients and their customers. Like Hallmark, just more personal. You can do this, too, in your letters.

Use letters as vehicles of personal communication

A well written and well designed letter is always welcomed by the recipient. You can reach the president of the MGM Grand Hotel, a State Representative, or a top executive of most any firm with just a plain old letter – what a great tool to accomplish almost any task. Don't forget to write the objective of your letter first, then draft the letter to your written stated objective.

Word Count: 1100

Jeffrey Dobkin, author of the incredible 400–page marketing manual, *How To Market A Product for Under \$500* (\$29.95), now has a second book, *Uncommon Marketing Techniques* (\$17.95) – 33 of his latest columns on small business marketing, exactly like the one you just read. Both books are available directly from the publisher – 800–234–IDEA. These books are completely filled with tips and techniques to make your marketing faster, cheaper, more effective – and fun. You never learned this stuff in college! Mr. Dobkin cuts right through the theoretical crap and demonstrates a wealth of practical how–to direct marketing techniques. He is also a speaker, a direct mail copywriter, and a marketing consultant. To place an order, or to speak with Mr. Dobkin call 610/642–1000. Fax 610/642–6832. Phone orders welcome – Visa, M/C, AMEX. From The Danielle Adams Publishing Company, Box 100, Merion Station, PA 19066. Or visit him at www.dobkin.com. Satisfaction Always Guaranteed.

Recession–Proof Customers Are Over the Hill – Ha!

By Gary Onks i

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With all the doom and gloom recession talk going around
wouldn't it be nice if your customers were recession–proof?

My goodness that sure sounds wonderful.

- * Could such customers really exist?
- * If they do exist, how would you find them?
- * Could there be enough of them to focus on and build a customer base from?
- * If so, would they have any interest in the products and services you offer?
- * Would they turn out to be a bunch of skinflints with no discretionary funds?

Oh, how very wonderful it would be if such folks did exist and could/would buy your goods. Why it would be a business paradise! What a sales dream come true!

Well, it's not a dream. Such customers do exist and they are eagerly waiting for you to call on them. Yes, they want your products and services. Where do these dream-come-true customers exist? Why, they are all around you. In fact you have been looking at them for years, but you haven't really seen them. They are called senior citizens.

Seniors are the biggest (over 81 million), fastest growing (1 every 7 seconds) and highest net worth (own 79% of all financial assets) consumer group that exists in America today.

The reasons that seniors are close to being recession-proof are:

- * They have stable, guaranteed incomes from their retirement packages, savings, investments, social security and their medicare/medicaid benefits.
- * Most have little if any debt, owning their homes and cars outright.
- * They carry small (if any) credit card balances.
- * Child care costs are zero since their children are grown.
- * Utility and tax burdens are extremely low for this group.
- * They are quite cash positive with large savings accounts and very secure investments.

Translation, lots more discretionary funds than any other group of

customers around. This all adds up to customers that are almost recession-proof with more money for wants.

Most seniors did without and/or denied themselves most luxury items while raising their children. Now they can afford to "slacken

the reins" quite a bit and enjoy themselves. Seniors can buy what they want, not just what they need. This is why these consumers are spending more freely; and if you catch their eye, they will buy your goods and services in order to "splurge a little" (a lot actually) recession or not.

Seniors buy everything that any other customer buys, and then some. The only real difference between these consumers and others is that they have had more birthdays. They are truly the "Millennium Marketplace." Companies that take notice of them, and then proceed to pay very special attention to them, will not only comfortably ride out any recession, they will reap a marketing bonanza of absolutely astounding proportions.

You can "Gain Market Share, If You Show Seniors You Care."



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