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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
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Maslow's Marketing Filter

By Darrin F. Coe, MA

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One of the basics of all marketing and advertising training is a teaching of "Maslow's needs pyramid". This pyramid shows the different motivators and needs in a person's life and how they are built one upon the other. Supposedly this is presented to help the marketing student understand consumer motivation and thinking. The problem is I've never seen it applied, in the text books. It's presented as the foundation of human motivation and then it's dropped.

I'd like to present to you a way to use Maslow's needs pyramid so that you can get inside the consumer's mind and develop an understanding of what's truly motivating them as they consider purchasing your product or service.

Maslow's needs pyramid present human needs such that each need is pursued and met before the next level of needs can be considered; they build upon one another. The needs from most basic to most complex are:

- physiological needs: food, shelter, sex
- safety needs: clothing, weapons, defense of self
- social needs: social acceptance
- esteem needs: acceptance of self by self
- fulfillment needs: a feeling of having and fulfilling a purpose

So the question is, "How do we use this paradigm to get inside the consumer's head?"

Let's consider a personal fitness training service. Here's how it works at the most basic level. Place yourself in the position of the consumer and think as if you are considering hiring a personal fitness trainer.

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1. How will personal fitness training impact my acquisition and use of food? Of shelter? Of sexual behavior? (Now you see why sex is used in marketing so many products - we react to it instinctually)
2. How will personal fitness training impact my personal safety?
- you'll be in better shape and can run faster from a mugger, perhaps.
3. How will personal fitness training positively impact my standing in society? In my social circle?
Access to different social circles?
4. How will personal fitness training positively impact how I think about myself?
5. Will personal fitness training have an impact on my personal sense of fulfillment?

I understand that most consumers, will ask themselves these types of questions without really thinking about them. The answers you develop as you purposely ask yourselves these types of questions will give you insight in the processes a consumer may consider or be susceptible to as they are considering purchasing personal fitness training services.

This process will also help you define ways to market that will get consumers to consider your personal fitness training service if they are not. Using Maslow's needs pyramid helps you target your marketing. It is the foundation of :

Getting Attention
Developing Interest
Creating Desire
Facilitating Commitment
Motivating to Action

If you can use Maslow's needs pyramid to get inside the head of the consumer by running it through a filter of questions like the one's I've presented above you'll have a tangible marketing advantage because you now can respond to your consumer's internal dialogue.

Using this type of filtering process can also help you create need in those that have not yet developed an interest in your product or service. Simply put yourself in the consumer's place and present you're marketing to them in such a way as to answer or resolve each need in the hierarchy.

Maslow's needs pyramid is a powerful tool that is taught to every marketing and advertising student in the world but it must be understood and applied if it's to actually be useful. Try using Maslow's marketing filter the next time you are considering a marketing campaign. It'll help you get a better grip on what the consumer is thinking and feeling.

Darrin F. Coe, MA is a mental health clinician, weekly columnist, wealth building advocate, and author of "Micro Loans: Finance Your Dreams" available at <http://dcoe1.tripod.com/microfinance>
For more great business and marketing information you can sign up for the "Darrin Coe Ezine" at

<http://dcoe1.tripod.com>

The Hierarchy Of Marketing

By Ana Ventura

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Think back to your days as a college freshman,... so many classes, so many options. If you ever took a psychology class, you might remember a guy by the name of Abraham Maslow.

Maslow was a psychologist that came up with a theory dealing with the hierarchy of human needs. No, marketing is not essential to human survival, and chances are your product or service is not either. However, whatever you are offering, it will fall into one of the categories Maslow has listed in his hierarchy of needs. And if you know which need you should appeal to, it will be that much easier to market to your prospects.

The first level on Maslow's hierarchy deals with physiological needs. These are the most basic necessities that humans require to survive. Food, water, shelter, and oxygen all fall into this category, along with sleep, activity and other inevitable human functions.

If your product or service has to do with a basic need, your main problem is getting the customer to buy from you instead of your competitors. Everybody needs food, so why would potential customers be more inclined to buy lunch at your restaurant instead of the taco shack across the street? Perhaps you have lower prices, better quality, faster service, or a more comfortable environment than they do. It is important to stress that what YOU offer holds certain advantages over the customers' other choices.

The next stage of human need deals with safety and security. Turn the TV on for five minutes, and see how many ads about insurance, retirement plans, or home alarm systems play during the commercial break. How would the use of your product initiate feelings of safety and stability in your customers' lives? Stress these factors as your main selling points.

The third tier of Maslow's hierarchy is the love and belonging step. We have all felt the desire to be closer to our families,

to have more friends, or to find a significant other.

Appealing to these desires is useful if you run a personals web page or own a club. Tell your prospects about the great

interactions they will have if they try your service, and use testimonials from customers past. Hearing about great results from former clients is a great way to get new buyers.

Maslow's next area of human need deals with esteem. One area of esteem needs calls for recognition from others, status, attention, and recognition. The other area hits a little closer to the self, involving self respect, confidence, competence, independence and achievement.

I am reminded of a shampoo commercial in which the lead actress walks through an office building with the admiring eyes of many workers following her around. At the end, she walks into a board meeting and states that she doesn't even work for the company, and all the attention must be the result of her shampoo.

The last tier of Maslow's hierarchy is called the self actualization level. Ever heard the army slogan "Be all that you can be"? This is an appeal to the self actualization needs of human beings. Approaching people at this level of the hierarchy involves inviting them to live up to their full potential as a hard working, motivated member of society.

Appealing to the needs of your customers can be a great way to grab the attention of your customers, as long as you remember to be responsible about it. Who knew incorporating psychology into your marketing plan could be such a great way to grab customers?



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