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**Small Business Marketing, According to Seinfeld**

**By Will Dylan**

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What could Seinfeld possibly have to do with marketing a small business? As it turns out, all small business owners could take a few lessons from the show that brought us such popular phrases as "Man Hands" and "master of your domain".

The Coffee Shop - Jerry, George, Kramer, and Elaine spent countless hours in the coffee shop, talking about "nothing." You should spend some time there as well, but instead of talking about your parents or your date last night, get together with other small business owners and talk about your respective business and marketing activities. Many of you already participate in local business clubs and organizations, but the feedback and shared ideas that are generated in an informal business chat over a coffee are often the most valuable. My "coffee shop group" consists of 3 small businesses owners from different industries. Between us, we generate great marketing ideas for each other or in my case, new topics for small business articles. You can easily gather a few small business owners together for this type of meeting. Just be sure they are not competitors!

The Short-Term Relationship - It seemed that every Thursday, Jerry was dating a different woman. In fact, outside of Elaine he rarely dated a woman for any length of time. Jerry understood that sometimes, you don't want to be tied down to a long-term relationship. The same rule applies to your small business marketing activities. Too many small businesses get drawn in to long-term advertising relationships by committing to a certain amount of advertising in exchange for a discount. Those who sell advertising try to convince business owners that you can't evaluate a particular form of advertising based on just a small sampling period, and thus a longer contract is required. This is simply not true. In the small business world, ads must at least pay for themselves before you agree to investigate any long-term advertising commitment. You're not building the next mega conglomerate (not yet, anyway), so ad money that doesn't produce a positive ROI is wasted money. Jerry understood that if the early part of the relationship wasn't perfect, the rest was bound to go downhill. Apply that rule to your marketing and advertising purchases and you'll maximize the effectiveness of your advertising. If it works on a sample basis, consider a long term plan. If it doesn't work in the short term, give them the

"it's not you, it's me" routine and move on.

The Superman Effect - Did you know that Superman appears or is mentioned in every Seinfeld episode? It's true, largely because Jerry kept a Superman figurine in his apartment that popped up in the background numerous times during each episode. For small business marketers, Jerry's Superman equates to your core business. With so many marketing opportunities to consider, it's easy to lose sight of your primary business in pursuit of new revenue streams. Unfortunately, this can often lead to the collapse of your business. Take a page out of Jerry's book, and be sure to keep your core business (your "Superman") a part of everything you do, even if it is only in the background. Every opportunity and every possible marketing strategy that you consider must relate back to your core product/service offering to ensure the continuity of your business. Don't allow yourself to become so sidetracked that you end up chasing marketing opportunities that detract from your current strengths. When evaluating a new business opportunity, ask yourself "How will this new marketing or business idea impact on my core business?" before you begin a new marketing venture.

The next time you are watching a Seinfeld Rerun, be sure to look for the hidden small business tips in each episode. You might find that it wasn't a show about nothing after all.

Will Dylan is the Author of Small Business Big Marketing and owner of

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## **Seinfeld Episode – The Chairs**

**By Alex Reidiboim and Martin Winer**

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Seinfeld  
The Chairs

Prologue:

Jerry: Coffee is a miraculous drink. Just think of the miraculous chain of events that had to take place to create this beverage. Somewhere, somebody had to figure out to take Coffee beans, burn them in a fire for several hours, grind up the remains and then run boiling water through them. Just think of it. Thousands of years ago in the Colombian mountains there must have been a massive volcanic eruption which burned million of acres of coffee beans. Then the massive earthquakes and fallout crushed the beans. After the eruption, it began to rain and water passed over the ashes. So, here you have it, a Colombian peasant, his family killed, his village destroyed, clamors up to the steaming hot river and takes a swig. Sure every possession he ever had is destroyed, but boy, he sure feels perky!

For the rest of the episode please visit:

<http://members.rogers.com/mwiner/seinfeld.htm>

This unaired Seinfeld script is an example of the comedic writing skills of Alex Reidiboim and Martin Winer. For any comedic writing needs, feel free to contact [alex.reidiboim@utoronto.ca](mailto:alex.reidiboim@utoronto.ca) or [martin\\_winer@hotmail.com](mailto:martin_winer@hotmail.com)

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