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Take Advantage of Slumps

By Jack Humphrey

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Many of us are experiencing slower sales than we would like in this time of obvious tension in the world. It happens when you are competing with wars, terrorism, falling markets, and other world events.

Competing is a misnomer. You cannot compete with these kinds of things unless you have a site dedicated to something along the lines of what people are giving most of their attention to during times like this.

I bet people with anti-terrorism pages, pro or con war sites, and myriad other topics related to our current state of affairs are about the only ones noticing a steep INCLINE in traffic right now.

So, how do we turn this seemingly helpless situation into something positive?

Well, the war is going to end someday. The market is going to soar. Buyer confidence is going to swing back. Are you going to be ready for it?

Think about all those things you had on your plate when sales were higher and customer service demands were preventing you from getting back-burner projects done.

Now is the perfect time to clean your slate of to-dos: Get that report written, update your autoresponder messages, create that killer, sales-boosting freebie you have had on

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your list to do. Do inventory, reply to emails you have been putting off (what a RELIEF to clean your inbox!), pay your bills, organize your taxes and business receipts, back up your computer, get rid of the junk you've collected online that you are not going to use, ever.

There are tons of things we all put away for a rainy "day" such as this. Before you know it, if you procrastinate too much or spend too much time worrying about your current sales slump, the recovery is going to be going full-force and you will be back to your "Too busy for the little things" life again!

Has something been bothering you about your sales letter? Take this time to fix it up or have someone take a look and make recommendations.

Have you been eager to set up a couple different bonuses and re-order and test different sales letters? What a pain! But now you have the time to get your split-test set up for when the buyers come marching back to your site and the tire-kickers go back to wherever they usually surf.

How about the \$12,000 worth of marketing materials you own that are taking up gigs on your hard drive? Might be a good time to get away from the monitor, print some of the best stuff out, and study with a real highlighter and paper for a change.

You have NO IDEA how much you missed in the last ebook you bought! If you are like most people – you skimmed for the best stuff and missed a whole heap of things you might just be able to put into action in time for the pendulum of sales to swing back your way.

The point is, when you get into a slump you need to take the time to take stock of your assets that you can pull out and turn the slump into an advantage.

I bet if you get out of your daily routine tomorrow and start looking around your hard drive at all the unfinished business, ebooks, reports, articles (How many articles can you write before the war is over? Make it a challenge!). You will find yourself happily getting caught up and ready for the wave of sales that will happen when the current

turmoil is over.

Start fresh with a good spring cleaning of your business. You will hit the ground running when action picks up again. You will feel SO refreshed, and ready for action as a lean, mean, selling machine!

Down in the Slumps

By Karen E. Hipp

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Down in the Slumps

(Karen E. Hipp, Author, Do-It-Yourself Marketing)

Every business experiences times of heavy sales volume and slow sales volume. Most people call slow sales as being in a business "slump."

Some business slumps are easy to recognize. A downturn in the economy, seasonable business, weather conditions. For most businesses, a slump happens without warning and for no reason apparent.

Sometimes you're in the slumps when you're spending the most time, money and effort on selling strategies. This is usually when I get a phone call from prospective clients. Owners start to panic. They cut their advertising budget, advertise in unknown territories, add or delete services, develop new price structures. This is what I call "crises marketing" and must be avoided at all costs. Particularly for a small business that is struggling to grow.

You can avoid your own "panic attack" by developing simple procedures that can be implemented quickly.

The first thing to do is to accept it as part of a normal business pattern. It shouldn't be signaling the end of your business. Don't go off the deep end, but don't sit there waiting for your sales to come back either. Try taking the following steps:

What Do You Think Is Causing The Slump?

Look for something specific like:

A change in your advertising or promotional activity. Are you spending less on advertising? Trying not yet proven media advertising? Changed the way your ads look? Put out a new campaign? Changed your ad copy?

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Have you raised prices?

Has new competition opened or rolled out their own new advertising campaign?

Has your competitor lowered its price points?

Has a major news event had a negative impact on your industry?

If you can pinpoint the reason for the slump, then you can take action to reverse it. If you can't quite grasp it, try some of the following ideas.

When There Is No Obvious Reason For The Slump

Here are four actions that I recommend to my clients:

*Develop a special offer for existing customers/clients. Use a short deadline to give them a "call to action" to take advantage right away or the product/service will be gone.

*I suggested this to a client of mine that owns a massage therapy studio. We sent out inexpensive postcards that the client did on his computer. We only gave customers 5 days to call to make their appointment but they would save 20% massage therapy. There also was a cut off date of two weeks that they must make their appointment in. His business rose 26% during the promotion put much needed quick cash in the bank.

*Just make sure it's an inexpensive and fast way to communicate the promotion. Also try faxes and even phone calls.

*Advice recent prospects who did not take advantage of you product or service of the same special offer using the fast communications methods listed above.

*Ask your best customers for help. Explain that business is a bit slow and that you want to use this time to approach potential new customers. Ask them for referrals.

*Temporarily increase (yes increase) your advertising dollars where you have had the most success and it is seen right away. Like website, E-zines and E-newsletters, radio spots and newspaper.

www.downanddirtymarketing.com

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