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Leadership-Management-Team Building-Well Being-Environment

*Making a Difference*TM



Strategic Marketing Plan

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Example: SWOT Analysis

Strengths

1. Hardware (Machinery)
2. Leadership
3. Capabilities
4. Competitive advantages
5. USP's (unique selling points)
6. Experience, knowledge, data
7. Geographical Location
8. Price, value
9. Accreditations, qualifications, certifications
10. Philosophy and values
11. Competitors' vulnerabilities
12. DIC partnership
13. HSBC recognition
14. Resources, Assets

Weaknesses

1. Software (People)
2. Cultural, attitudinal, behavioural
3. Management
4. Morale, commitment
5. Management cover, succession
6. Lean Management
7. Weather (Extremely hot summer)
8. Gaps in capabilities
9. Processes and systems etc
10. IT developments – Internet marketing

Opportunities

1. Training and Development Academy to bridge the Human gap to reach world-class standards
2. SOP's
3. Best Practices
4. Kaizen
5. Communication, responsibility and Accountability
6. Awareness
7. Processes, systems, IT, Media Communications
8. Marketing - reach, distribution,
9. Innovative aspects
10. Financial reserves, likely returns
11. Market developments
12. Industry or lifestyle trends
13. Technology development and innovation
14. Global influences
15. New markets, vertical, horizontal
16. Niche target markets
17. Geographical, export, import
18. New USP's
19. Tactics: eg, surprise, major contracts
20. Business and product development
21. Information and research
22. Partnerships, agencies, distribution
23. Volumes, production, economies

Threats

1. Quality
2. Lack of competitive strength
3. Reputation, presence and reach
4. Financials
5. Own known vulnerabilities
6. Timescales, deadlines and pressures
7. Cashflow, start-up cash-drain
8. Continuity, supply chain robustness
9. Effects on core activities,
10. Distraction
11. Reliability of data, plan
12. Predictability
13. Political effects
14. Legislative effects
15. Environmental effects
16. Competitor intentions - various
17. Market demand
18. New technologies, services, ideas
19. Vital contracts and partners
20. Sustaining internal capabilities
21. Obstacles faced
22. Insurmountable weaknesses
23. Loss of key staff
24. Sustainable financial backing
25. Economy - home, abroad

What a Difference a Decade makes to Marketing:

Imagine that you could continue to market successfully the same way for ten years. Do you like that thought? Well delete that daydream because it just isn't so. Welcome to marketing 2008. It's more threatening, more promising and more exciting. Buckle your seatbelt, take your motion sickness pill and be prepared to be amazing. Because that is what you need to compete today.

Still the Same

Of course some things remained the same. Let's establish our foundation before we venture into the swirl of the Time Tunnel.

The fundamentals are the same. That's what makes them fundamentals. Marketing is still closely intertwined with selling and the purpose of marketing is to help you sell more. Marketing and selling are both strategies to help you make a profit. In fact marketing was and is a fundamental responsibility running through every function of your business.

"Marketing is so basic that it cannot be considered a separate function. It is the whole business seen from the point of view of its final result, that is, from the client's point of view."

Peter Drucker

Strange that even though management guru, Peter Drucker, offered that advice more than a decade ago - many organizations ignored his wisdom. That's why we still see marketing departments and sales departments with little cohesion and cooperation. Why? Perhaps too many marketers see themselves as artists or statisticians while they see sales representatives as slimy. And the sales department labels marketing as a bunch of flakes who don't know about the real world.

The purpose of marketing is to do one or more of the following three things:

- 1. Grab attention**
- 2. Demonstrate value**
- 3. Build relationships**

The world is still round - or is it now flat? How is the "How" of those fundamentals changing?

Grab Attention

Grabbing attention has always been a prime concern for marketers. Your message needed to defeat the noise of all the other marketers.

In 1998, if you had a huge marketing budget, the place to be was TV and the grand dame was the Super Bowl game at \$1.3M for a 30 second spot. Of course ad production costs were extra. The top three ads that year were for Tabasco, Pontiac and Doritos. Do you wonder how many Doritos they needed to sell to pay for that ad? Oh yeah, Denver triumphed over Green Bay.

The Super Bowl is still the place for marketers with multimillion dollar budgets costing \$2.6M for 30 seconds in 2007. But the holy grail of marketing today might more likely be to appear number one on a Google search. You don't need millions to triumph.

Demonstrate Value

Value was once demonstrated with celebrity endorsements, quality awards and longevity in the business.

Today client testimonials carry more weight than celebrities. Quality awards and certifications are so common that they have become ho-hum. Depending on your industry, a long time in business could be three years. We're more interested in the results that you achieved for your recent clients. If you want to demonstrate value be sure to offer a free trial or money back guarantee - without the weasel word clauses.

Build Relationships

Relationship building is more important today. Prove to your clients why they should buy from you - every time. Brand loyalty was once given blindly to sellers. Loyalty didn't die. It shifted. Loyalty is now bestowed more on our friends and family which is why client testimonials become more convincing. And why networking is so much more powerful.

Changes and Trends

Some trends have been going on for longer than the past decade - but they are easier to notice now. We realize that both selling and marketing are more science than art. Sales representatives are no longer allowed to wing it. Of course both sales and marketing staff were being well trained by successful companies before 1998. But the integration of these activities is more evident in today's training and daily activity. Today you are also more likely to see the large corporations training their sales reps with marketing skills and integrating marketing folks into the front lines. To be competitive small and medium business must convert all staff into marketers. And it will take more than a memo!

Technology

Technology in the form of computers, software and mobile devices has had a huge impact on how we market. The tsunami of influence is the Internet which has presented marketers with new challenges and incredible opportunities.

Mobile Devices

The proliferation of cell phones and Blackberries mean that clients expect to reach you anywhere and any time. In order to compete it seems that you need to be more available and respond faster than your competition. Be careful because that mentality can lead to the worship of instant satisfaction which results in more mistakes, distracted professionals and grumpy people. Too many are adapting their process to suit the tool - instead of using tools to improve the process. Warning Will Robinson!

Database Marketing

The fifth chapter in Secrets of Power Marketing is about using your database. In 1998 small business had access to PC based contact managers including ACT, Maximizer and Goldmine. Today you need to build on those fundamentals with a CRM (client relationship manager) system and integrate your data between your computer, mobile device, email and website forms.

Networking

Building Relationships is explained in the second chapter of Secrets of Power Marketing. Because of our increased emphasis on building relationships networking activity has exploded both offline and online. We see this in the growth of specialized networking groups and events. Business Networking International (BNI) a lead sharing group has over 5,000 chapters in 36 countries. Online enhancements include social networking websites like Facebook.com, MySpace.com and Bebo.com plus the business oriented service Linkedin.com. For more networking tips visit NetworkingExposed.com.

Email

In 1998 folks were exploring the use of email through internet providers AOL and CompuServe. Coincidentally the number one movie of 1998 was "You've Got Mail". Today not having email would be like not having a fax machine in 1998. But today it isn't enough just to have email. You must have an email address with a professional domain. Using a free email address is acceptable for your personal life - but not for business. If you are still using Yahoo, MSN, Gmail or AOL for business you are looking amateurish - or stuck in 1998.

Websites

My first website www.Torok.com launched in 1999 when very few small businesses had websites. In those days you were special if you "had" a website. Websites looked like your printed brochure - hence the name "brochure sites".

It is no longer remarkable to have a website. In fact you must have a website and it must be remarkable just to compete. It's as necessary as a phone or business card even if you don't sell on the Internet. Why? Because clients want to check your site before they call or visit you. Your website needs to grab them, identify what you sell in the first five seconds - or they will leave your website. Then you need to engage them, offer them what they seek, do it quickly and capture their contact information for your database. Read my article "Is your website working hard enough for you?" originally published in the April 2006 issue of Enterprise magazine. Today the question is not "Should you have a website?" The question is "How many websites should you have?"

Informing your clients

A decade ago the way to train, educate and inform your clients was to hold seminars or mail them a printed newsletter. Both still work but are expensive compared to the new alternatives. Today you might inform them with an opt-in email newsletter, articles and FAQs on your website, posting on your blog, and holding teleseminars and/or webinars. Today everyone on the Internet can be a publisher via their own websites, blogs, article sites and forums. You need to be out-communicating your competition. You might expect your competition to compete with your message but also watch for damaging exposure from disgruntled clients or employees.

Marketing Research

Gathering Market Intelligence is easier for you, your competition and your clients. You might want to reread that last sentence and think about the implications. Take advantage of the opportunity. Using search engines you can learn about your competition and their offerings. Use "Google Alerts" to stay informed of daily mentions on websites, blogs and news sites of your name, your product name, your industry and your competition. If you are not yet receiving these Google Alerts - you might be missing news about what others are saying about you and your industry. Go to Google and register for this free service. Ignorance is no excuse.

Test opinion by visiting groups and forums on major sites such as Google and Yahoo or on industry websites. Conduct polls on your website or hold a survey with SurveyMonkey.com.

Client Service

Lots of opportunity here. We still seem to be struggling with customer service. Some shine while others annoy. I experienced a good example of good customer service today when I bought a coffee from Starbucks. I ordered my "small regular coffee". I refuse to speak their language - no 'tall latté" for me. The staff still smile at me, deliver what I want and thank me as they give me my change. Compare that to the hordes of sales staff that seem to expect you to thank them for giving them your money. And they don't thank you for your business. So I pay the \$1.75 for the Starbucks coffee and feel good because of the friendly service. I don't get that consistently from Tim Hortons.

Advertising

The traditional mass marketing avenues - print, radio, TV and signage are suffering from a lot of competition from Internet marketing. Take note of how many TV ads attempt to drive viewers to websites. When you are advertising with those traditional media be sure to enquire about how they will support you on the web. Get them to republish your ad or listing on their website with a live link to your website. At a recent presentation I noticed that the front of the lectern not only displayed the name of the facility but their website address as well. Today any marketing you do must be integrated across the delivery channels.

Media Exposure

Don't give up on the traditional media for your advertising or media exposure. Chapter three of Secrets of Power Marketing explains how to get and leverage your media exposure. Use Google Alerts to stay on top of breaking news and media opportunities. A decade ago you could fax or mail your news release. Today all editors are reachable by email for "letters to the editor" (read "Dear Editor" in the January 2007 issue of Enterprise) and news releases. Use online new release services. PRBuzz.com is a free service. Or register with PRLeads.com to be informed of media needs for experts. There is no excuse for you and your business not to be featured in the media regularly.

Ebay

There's a new sheriff in town. As a marketer you better be aware of the biggest consumer market in the world - Ebay. Every day Ebay transacts over \$100 M. Over 730,000 people earn their primary or secondary income on Ebay. It went public in 1998 and this 10 year old has grown. You can't ignore an elephant that big. It might move into your market or perhaps it already has. This is entirely new territory for marketers - so new that my best advice at this time is to watch it, study it and be prepared to jump on opportunities. When was the last time you searched Ebay for your product? Or threats to your product, your market or your clients?

Search Engine Marketing

This is a completely new side to marketing that did not exist a decade ago. If you want your website to be found by people you must rank high in the search engines - specifically Google, Yahoo and MSN. The two approaches are pay-per-click and natural listings. Pay-per-click means that you buy a paid ranking and you pay when someone clicks on your ad. It is a simple way to pay for leads. Or you apply Search Engine Optimization (SEO) to make your website naturally show up high in the search engines.

As you can see it is an exciting time for marketing. There are both new threats and opportunities. Are you reviewing your marketing strategy and tactics to better prepare yourself for the year ahead? Are you equipped to be amazing?

Tips:

Keeping up with what words are in and out isn't hard. Yet, with all the other more important things on our to-do list, it doesn't get remembered easily.

1. Any archaic, stilted words, such as: hitherto, whereby, thereby, herein, therein, thereof, heretofore.
2. "Kindly advise." As opposed to not kindly advising.
3. "Whereas." Instead use "where" or "while."
4. "Pursuant to." This is too informal for 2004. The express expired in the 1980s.
5. "As per your request." As per any other way...dah? Shorten to, "as requested" or "as your requested."
6. "As of today, we are in receipt of" or "we are in receipt of." Instead, "Today we received."
7. "Please don't hesitate to call." Again a term that went out in the 1980s. Update it with, "feel free to call."
8. "When time permits." This is great language for a poem but not sales information. The adjective "time" doesn't have anything to do with permit. It needs to match people. Only people use time.
9. "Enclosed please find." Honestly, I don't know when this one expired, yet it did, so don't use it.
10. "Of even date." This one I thought went out in the 1950s and I couldn't believe my eyes when I received not one but two sales letter with it included last week. So, I thought I would put this one for those that missed it back then.

Bonus: Yet and so -- use them conservatively and only for impact. They are on their way out as well.
Read more: <http://www.zeromillion.com/marketing/successful-sales-communication.html#ixzz0EWLNjVPj&B>

Marketing 101

It's a phenomenon that happens to most people in business for themselves after a few years. When solo-entrepreneurs first get started in marketing their business, they have gusto, they have energy, and many take a no-excuses approach to getting clients. They're WILLING to do what it takes, and they do it often (most of them).

But after a few years, they begin to rest on their laurels, they get lazy, and after a while, they stop doing what they used to do to get clients. Some stop networking; some stop doing free intro classes, either in person or over the phone; some no longer do as much speaking as they used to. They've slowed down their marketing, and then they wonder what's happened to their pipeline: it's empty.

Oh, and I hear a whole bunch of excuses as to why they're no longer doing these things, too. There's always a YEAH-BUT... "I don't FEEL like doing that anymore," or "I've already done that, it won't work again," or even "I'm tired, I don't want to work that hard." Some even begin to wonder if they should stay self-employed, ready to give up.

As a result of the excuses, the well continues to dry up and they find themselves digging the well when they're thirsty (Not fun: it creates sleepless nights and financial troubles.) Then, the fear sets in and they scramble for NEW things to do. Ever done that?

It seems they want to reinvent the wheel. They're looking for new ways of doing things and this creates a sometimes frenetic, frantic approach to getting clients. I believe this ties into the "Bright Shiny Object Syndrome" we talked about recently, always looking for something new to do, something exciting, while leaving behind the proven stuff.

However, what I've learned over the years is, doing something new doesn't always create results as quickly. The systems aren't as easy to put in place and there's always a learning curve for new stuff. What clients are surprised to hear is that, instead of creating BRAND new strategies, sometimes, we begin by going back to doing the tried-and-true, proven things that worked very well for us in the past.

Why reinvent the wheel when you can go back and do the simple things that are proven to work?

Your Client Attraction Assignment:

My thoughts on this: You either have EXCUSES or you have RESULTS.

So, my questions for you are:

- What have you been UNWILLING to do recently to get clients that USED to work for you?
- Have you stopped doing something that you did regularly in the beginning?
- Where have you gotten lazy?
- What used to work for you in the early days?
- Are you doing this now?
- Are you WILLING to do this now?

If now's the time for you to ramp up your client load, then stop everything and take a look at your Marketing Pie. Which slices of the pie are you implementing regularly? Are you not being consistent with your marketing?

It's time to go back to the basics. And, it's time to recommit. The funny thing is, when you recommit and you start doing these things again, they WORK. And what happens is, you start getting clients, more mo'ney starts pouring in, and you begin to LIKE doing these things again. Marketing becomes FUN again. Your whole demeanor changes. And, you instantly become more Client Attractive as a result. THEN, once the foundation is in, you can start adding in all the new stuff. Try it. It always works for me and my clients. Read more: <http://www.zeromillion.com/business/more%20clients-%20lazy-%20marketing-Fabienne-Fredrickson.html#ixzz0EWN2L3St&B>

Power Marketing Tips 01: Warning - marketing can be fun

Marketing can be fun - but don't be fooled by that aspect. You don't market because it is fun. You market to grow your business.

Marketing can be fun or it can be boring. In either case it is the results that count not your enjoyment level. You should enjoy your business but don't judge the value of your business investments by your enjoyment. Creating new ideas and holding special events can be fun. However the boring side of marketing might pay off more for you in the long run. Evaluate your marketing investments by examining your return on investment.

Base your marketing on systems

Marketing systems will pay off greater than marketing madness. Systems are a means to an end. The system is not the end. Therefore create the system, refine the system and automate the system - but focus on the end. Follow your marketing systems diligently. Don't be tempted to improvize.

A system is composed of three things:

1. It is based on a principle.
2. It is a process.
3. It must be persistent and consistent.

Systems are not feel-good whims. They are planned, methodical and regular.

Apply this three-step process to summarize your marketing systems:

Every time (event) happens you do (action).

You do this because (principle).

The results are _____

To ensure that the boring things happen consistently you can automate using technology, delegate to staff or outsource to a service provider.

Keep on marketing - even when it is boring.

Here's the thing you must remember, as you're charting new territory in your business:

Understand that it sometimes takes some time for the seeds you've planted to grow roots, to sprout, grow and then bear fruit that you can eat. That's why you have to be diligent about planting them quickly and doing whatever it takes to foster them. At the same time, it's important to plant as many seeds as possible, so that you have different things cropping up and you're not relying on just one thing in your business to bring you money.

Instead of being in a place of resentment (which will NEVER attract quickly what you want), remember to keep yourself in a place of Positive Expectation. Here is a mantra I created for myself that hangs above my computer in my office:

"I am positively expecting great results, no matter what I see in front of me. The Universe is rearranging itself for my best interest right now."

If ever I get caught up in "Why isn't this happening fast enough?", getting into a place of self-doubt or blaming the process, I remind myself of this, and things seem to just work themselves out, rather quickly. That's the Mindset part of the equation. Then, a sign shows up, the project advances and the results start coming in, quicker than I imagined. But if I stay in that place of doubt, worry or worse, blame, it surely gets worse.

You are ultimately responsible for your own successes, your actions, and most importantly how you see your own progress and success. YOU create your future and your results, based on how you choose to see the world and the way you react to life. A person coming from a VICTIM point of view will always see fault in the process. That's Universal Law. A person coming from a VICTORIOUS point of view will always see opportunity, no matter what's in front of them.

How do YOU see what's in front of you? From a victim perspective, or from a victorious position?

Your Client Attraction Assignment:

Understand that sometimes, the seeds you plant take time to grow. Just as you wouldn't rush Mother Nature and expect a tree to grow in one day, blaming the process of nature for being too slow, is unrealistic. Tend to your marketing seeds. Understand that different plants sprout at different paces, do everything that's required of you, and then get yourself in a place of POSITIVE EXPECTATION.

Miraculously, that's when the results happen, quicker than you think. You'll see...