



Small Business Marketing 101

The Do's and Don'ts of Marketing

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Hello fellow entrepreneur,

I'm business start-up consultant Kent Gustafson. I'm a long-time entrepreneur and the founder of Kent Gustafson Consulting.

Whether you have been operating a business for a while or are just getting started, learning how to market your business effectively will be critical to achieving growth and profitability.

Over the past 13 years I've guided 2,000 individuals through the process of starting, growing, and sustaining profitable businesses. Needless to say, I've learned a few "tricks of the trade" along the way and now, I'm excited to share that experience with you!

Most business owners have passion for the product they sell, or the service they provide, but learning how to market that effectively is another story.

Every business owner I've ever talked to would love more leads AND more sales, but what is the magic formula to make that happen???

Honestly, there isn't one and you could go broke trying to figure that out. Fortunately, you don't have to because this exclusive guide was created just for you.

So if you're ready for your Marketing Blueprint, including the "Do's" and the "Don'ts" of Marketing...

Let's get started!



Let's Start With 4 Don'ts

#1: DON'T Wait For Magic

I've seen countless business owners who launch their business with a level of excitement and enthusiasm that is hard to contain. That's okay, but what happens when the excitement fades?

They rent an office or retail space, put up signage, order business cards, create a website, and hand out some flyers. Then they wait for the phone to ring or for new customers to come strolling in. This is what I refer to as the "Customers Just Magically Appear" method, and it's completely ridiculous.

Guess what? Contrary to popular opinion, handing out business cards and flyers is NOT marketing. Do you have any idea how many business cards I have collected over the years or how many promotional flyers the average person receives in the mail? The short answer is: Way too many to count.

If you think handing out business cards and posting flyers will lead to sales, don't hold your breath. It WON'T work and you WILL go broke.





2: DON'T Just Throw Money At It

When it comes to marketing, many new business owners make the critical mistake of “trying a little bit of this, and a little bit of that”. They start with buying some radio ads, slap their face on a huge billboard, dabble with the various social media platforms, or spend money on Google advertising.

They wrongfully assume that if they just throw some money at marketing, it will generate brand awareness and lead to sales.

Is it possible that you could produce some sales from these tactics? Sure, but it won't be sustainable and will end up hurting you in the long run.

The problem with this “strategy” is that there is nothing strategic about it and it will quickly burn through your most valuable asset... CASH.

There are better ways to utilize your resources, grow brand awareness, and make sales. More importantly, there are systems that are predictable, profitable, and scalable.



3: DON'T Cold Call

Far too many aspiring entrepreneurs fail because they waste too much time and energy focusing on methods that don't work.

Cold calling and door-to-door selling were once relatively effective forms of marketing, but these methods are outdated in the technology age and are largely ineffective now.

If you implement these tactics in your business I guarantee you will burn up more time, energy, and resources than you are able to afford at this critical stage in your business. They are simply too inefficient to produce any real ROI (Return On Investment), and will leave you frustrated and broke.

4: DON'T Flood Social Media (Randomly)

Let me start by saying that social media, when leveraged properly, is a massive platform that can produce results within your marketing strategy.

Unfortunately, most would-be entrepreneurs have very limited knowledge of social media or how to use it to create successful marketing campaigns.

So instead they start flooding Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, or other social media platforms with the hope that if they just put enough information out there, it will create brand awareness and generate sales.

The problem with this mindset is that there's no rhyme or reason for the content that is generated, where and when it is posted, who it is targeting, and what the desired outcome is.

This can actually have an adverse effect on your business as people may find your posts annoying and become disenfranchised with your brand.



Now Let's Talk About 4 Do's

#1 : DO Discover Your Value

Whether you sell products or services, did you know that one of the most critical elements of any marketing strategy is to first discover your value?

Many business owners fail to market effectively because they've never taken the time to understand their value. In marketing, the only thing worse than underestimating your value is the failure to uncover it in the first place.



If your goal is to market successfully and build a profitable business, it's vital that you identify your unique value and customize your marketing strategy to highlight that value.

If you don't, you become a commodity and people buy commodities based solely on price.

Unless you've learned how to make a better widget than your competitors, AND are able to sell it for less (and still be profitable), your business will fail if you allow the market to commoditize you.



#2: DO Complete A Marketing Analysis

A vast majority of businesses fail to be as successful as they could be simply because they never take the time to complete a thorough analysis of their marketing strategies and practices.

It's quite common for people to assume that if they put up a sign, send out some flyers, run a radio or newspaper ad, or create a Facebook page they have effectively marketed their business. They think they are well on their way to wealth and success and just sit by the phone and wait for it to ring (the "Customer's Just Magically Appear plan").

BUT marketing is so much more than "how you attract new customers". In fact, it should be deeply rooted in you, your brand, and what your business stands for (and how that sets you apart from your competitors in the area).

When assessed comprehensively and executed properly, your strategic marketing practices should establish high retention rates with your existing customers, produce strong and consistent referrals, and even allow you to increase your rates without any pushback from your customer base. Don't believe me? Fine, I'll prove it to you.

#3: DO Identify Your Target Market

Do you have any idea how many times I've seen business owners market to the wrong audience? If I told you the actual number it would blow your mind and you'd be left shaking your head.

It's a critical mistake, but it's an easy trap to fall into. Instead of investing the time in strategic planning to identify their ideal target market, they either market to the wrong audience, or worse yet, market to NO audience.

Have you ever been asked the question: Who is an ideal customer for

your product or service? If so, what do you say?

I cringe any time I hear a business owner say "EVERYONE" is a potential customer because I know that IF they are marketing to EVERYONE, then their message will be received by NO ONE.

I know that isn't what they want to hear, but it is the unfortunate truth. It is simply impossible to market effectively to such a broad audience and if you choose to take that track it will cost you dearly.





#4: DO Market AND Sell Profitably

There is a time and a place for every business owner to incorporate sales or promotions into their business, and I don't have a problem with that. Special discounts and other promotions are standard operating procedure for most businesses and certainly have their place.

BUT I've seen too many business owners make a practice of discounting themselves out of profitability and into the RED. This is what I like to call "Giving Away The Farm" and it will destroy your business.

Here's a little secret: Anyone can GIVE something away. It takes absolutely no effort and requires no unique ability. It will also make you no money and lead to a disastrous outcome.

Did you know that when you properly educate your customers on the value you bring, the price doesn't matter? Trust me, it's true.

Once you've uncovered your value and what makes your product or service unique, it's easy to demonstrate that there's simply no comparison between you and your competitors.

Ideal Client

The 3 W's:

Who are they?

What do they like?

Where do they hang out?

When you don't identify the 3 W's, you fail to define your target market.

When you have absolutely no idea who your target market is, you essentially market to EVERYONE.

When you market to EVERYONE, you reach NO ONE.

So many people just start throwing stuff out there, with no rhyme or reason.

It's kind of like, if I just throw a bunch of stuff out there then something good is bound to happen, right?
WRONG

The only thing that will happen is you will go broke, FAST!





I'm not going to let you make that mistake.
So let's define your IDEAL client:

Ideal Client (Characteristics):

Who:

What:

Where:

When you identify WHO your ideal client is, what they like, and where they spend their time (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest) you can develop targeted content that is specific to them AND you can focus on disseminating that content where they are, in a cost effective manner that will drive conversions.

Discovering Your Value



For many business owners, one of the most difficult aspects of marketing and selling is defining their (your) value. In many cases, clients would pay more for your product or service, if only you had educated them on why you're worth it.

I get it... for most of us, it's not easy to brag about ourselves and confidently demand "X" number of dollars per hour (or "X" amount of \$\$ for our service).

BUT... if you don't believe you're worth it, how can you expect anyone else to?

The sad reality is that in most cases, the business owner has never taken the time to discover their true value.

This is a big mistake and one I'm not going to let you make.

Here's the thing, YOU are a BIG DEAL and your business is a BIG DEAL...

You need to act like it, and you need to run your business like it.

When you discover your value, you can market yourself with confidence.

Develop Your USP

Part of developing your value is uncovering your USP (Unique Selling Points). Every successful business has Unique Selling Points, so let's uncover yours now.

Your USP:

This is where you brag about yourself... SERIOUSLY. You need to think about all of your strengths, unique abilities, and skill sets.



What do you do better than others?

What is unique about you, your product or service?

Is it how you deliver it? Is it an added component that competitors don't offer?

Define Your Value

Examples:

- 30% More Leads Than Top Competitor
- 2X Sales In 60 Days or Less
- Product Lasts Twice As Long As Competition
- MONEY BACK GUARANTEE!
- Experience, Honesty, Integrity

Define Your Value:



The Blueprint

You Now Know:

- WHAT To Do
- What NOT To Do
- WHO Your Ideal Client Is
- WHAT They Like
- WHERE They Spend Their Time
- What Your Unique Selling Points Are
- What Your Value Proposition Is
- What Sets You Apart From Competition



Now It's Time To Market and Sell
With **CONFIDENCE!**



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