

How To Target Your Market

By JC Anderl

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Stop!

If you have the slightest thought of selling anything online, you must be able to answer one question before you do anything...

Who wants to buy your product or service?

If you're going to sell, there has to be a market that will buy, it's an irrefutable law of business and it applies to online businesses as well.

"Catering to a niche" or "specializing" or "targeting a market," whatever you call it, it's the key to a small business succeeding on the Internet.

Let Amazon or Ebay sell everything to everyone. Small online businesses target a few select markets and give those markets the special attention that only small businesses can give.

Find Your Markets

First, you should just ask yourself the question I posed earlier, "Who wants to buy my product or service?"

Most small businesses know their market well; they just have to think about it for a second.

For example, let's take web design. We start by making of list of anyone that might need web design:

- * Individuals
- * Churches
- * Schools
- * Small Businesses

- * Large Businesses
- * Etc.

Target Your Markets

When you look at that small list, you start to realize that each market has it's own needs, budget, and reason for needing web design.

For example, imagine the difference between web design for large corporate businesses and web design for schools.

Large businesses will probably be looking for an ecommerce solution and they have the budget to afford a team of designers. You would need to target them with this in mind.

Schools on the other hand, do not need ecommerce. They are looking for a way to inform the community about what is happening at their school. They might also want to incorporate a webmail system for the students and faculty.

Overall, large businesses will need a more professional approach than schools.

The point is, each market deserves special attention. You can't compromise between your markets. Instead you must target each market individually.

What Does My Market Need?

Let's say we decided on small businesses as one of our key markets. How do we know what they need?

You can start with some common sense. Small businesses are going to be price conscious, but expect quality. You will most likely be dealing with the owner or someone close to the owner. You basically just want to think about who your customer really is.

An optional next step is to actually ask. Find some people who represent your target market and just ask them what is important to them.

Just imagine a visitor arriving at your web site and instantly knowing that you can help him. If you have correctly targeted the right markets, your visitors will feel like you are in tune with their needs.

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