

Dare to be Different in Carving Your Niche

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Finding your place in the business world is sometimes like looking for a needle in a haystack . . . even with a magnet you would have trouble drawing it out. Rarely, if ever, does a new business excel when it opens its doors and offers the same old thing the same old way the guy up the road has been offering it for ten years. The ten-year veteran has a niche . . . he has been in business for ten years and has established an existence. This does not necessarily mean the new guy on the block is going to fail. It means the new guy on the block must market the same products and services from a different perspective in order to carve his niche and become successful.

Daring to be different is not a new concept. It has been the backbone of success for many products and services throughout time. The cola wars are a prominent example. With regular colas, diet colas, uncolas, decaffeinated colas, and even diet decaffeinated colas, the major companies have managed to rally with new and inventive ideas for soda pop! Each time the entire world population asks, "How many different ways can they serve up soda pop," we are introduced to yet another. It is all a part of the marketing game called "Beat the Competition."

But you do not have to beat your competition. As a business owner, you may offer similar products and services, but the key to your level of success lies in establishing your own target audience and inventing creative marketing techniques that are different from those of your competition. How far are you willing to go to obtain your niche? How different will you dare to be? I would venture a guess that many small businesses fail because the owners do not dare to step outside of their comfort zone or are unwilling to take risks that may be involved in trying something different. But daring to be different is not necessarily complicated. It basically involves finding an inventive way to market and sell your products and services before your competition beats you to it.

Start by researching your competition and discover their marketing strategies. Then develop a plan wherein you can do it differently and achieve greater results. Consumers associate products and services by remembering one or two things about them that stand out. Your goal is to introduce your products and services in such a way that it triggers the mind and directs them to you. The manner in which you market your products and services establishes your position with your target market. Slogans and jingles are the first concepts that come to mind. Think of how many products you associate to slogans and jingles. Devise your own catchy phrase and use it in all of your advertisements and promotions.

Discover a creative way to market your product to your target audience. For example, if your product happens to be a "revolutionary breakthrough" in wrinkle vanishing cream made from all natural products, you would not even waste your time or money advertising in a magazine geared toward teenage girls.

Carefully evaluate your product. While you recognize that you would market the product to middle-aged females, how would you go about structuring a marketing plan to reach them? Would you try to target your audience one by one and sell one jar at a time? No, you would not. Step out of the box and dare to be different. Your product is a wrinkle vanishing cream made from all natural products. Where could you possibly sell that in large quantities? Perhaps, you would market it to stores that sell healthy, all natural products. Other entities would be day spas, cosmetologists, and dermatologists. This is merely the tip of the iceberg. By marketing your cream on a larger level across the world, you could sell it by the cases instead of by the jars.

You must, however, develop an advertising campaign in order to make these middle-aged women aware of this product. Start by working on a product slogan, such as "The natural woman's natural defense against aging!" Go a step further and package your product in environmentally safe containers. Make your audience aware that it is sold in health food stores worldwide, or endorsed by the dermatologists . . . whatever you have developed as your marketing niche. Of course, you will have it available on your web site, as well, with ordering instructions and easy payment methods to attract sales.

Dare to be different. Establish your niche simply by creatively positioning yourself in the business world and consistently striving to fill a need based on what your competition is NOT doing!

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