

# False Dogma in Web Marketing

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The Web is awash with bad marketing advice written by people who have never made any money on the Web. This bad advice is repeated over and over again by pretend marketing experts. Are you following this dogma without thinking it through? Below are some misguided ideas you need to ignore.

## 1. Target your advertising - FALSE!

As an example, let's say you are selling a business opportunity. Do you place your advertising in the same place where everybody else is selling business opportunities? Would you fish from the same pier where two hundred other fishermen have lines in the water? Of course not!

Instead, let's say that you place your advertising in a newsletter about gardening. The readers of the publication are exposed to many "targeted" ads about gardening products. Familiarity has trained them to ignore these ads. But your ad is the only one promoting a business opportunity.

Do you think a gardener might be interested in starting a business? Gardeners are people with a variety of interests. They will be receptive to your ad because in the gardening newsletter yours is the only ad promoting a business

opportunity.

I'll tell you a secret: Almost all the people reading publications related to business opportunities are selling a business opportunity. They read these publications to find out what the competition is doing. They have absolutely no interest in buying a business opportunity.

Instead of targeting your advertising, place it where the audience is not bombarded with similar offers. Where your offer is something unique and interesting.

## 2. Use testimonials - FALSE!

When people have problems with a product or service they may complain. But if a product or service performs good, they never take the time to write a testimonial.

Testimonials are only provided in return for money or other incentives. Do you believe the testimonials you see on TV infomercials? I don't think you're that stupid.

Most testimonials are total fabrications. Who's going to question them? If someone does question a testimonial, the advertiser can say that they lost contact with the individual who gave the testimonial.

People know that testimonials are lies, and they view ads that use testimonials as dishonest and an insult to their intelligence.

Instead of using testimonials, provide complete information about your product or service. The more information you provide, the less risk there is from the customers prospective.

Of course, if your product or service is inferior, then don't provide complete information about it - use testimonials.

## 3. Give an unconditional guarantee - FALSE!

There is a large group of people who make it a pursuit to scout out products sold with an unconditional guarantee. They use and enjoy the products with full intention of returning them for their money back. This is especially prevalent in the areas of software and information products, where they can make a copy and return the original to get their money back.

If you want to support these freeloaders with your hard work, then offer an unconditional guarantee. Sure 90% of your customers are honest and won't return the product. But the other 10% will not only demand their money back, they may also start selling copies of your product!

Instead of giving an unconditional guarantee, give a conditional guarantee. The purpose of a guarantee is to eliminate risk to the purchaser of not receiving what they paid for. Carefully word your guarantee to protect the honest people, while preventing the freeloaders from stealing your work and destroying your business.

For example: "money back guaranteed if the product does not perform as advertised." Or "if the CD is defective, return it within 90 days for a free replacement."

4. People need to see your offer seven times before they buy - FALSE!

In the off-line direct marketing world, when you send a snail-mail offer a second time, a few people who didn't respond to the first mailing will buy. This can continue up to the seventh mailing, although with fewer orders from each mailing.

But the on-line audience is very different. On-line people have an extremely short attention span, and bore easily. They will scan your offer once, and either accept it or reject it. They don't want to see your offer again. The second time they see your offer, their eyes will gloss over as they click away as fast as possible.

Instead of pushing your offer to the same people seven times, put it in front of seven times as many people. Spread the offer to as wide an audience as you can. Then radically modify the offer (so it is unrecognizable as the original offer) and spread it wide again.

5. You need to establish personal relationships with your customers - FALSE!

In the off-line world, it costs much more to find new customers than it costs to get new orders from past customers. But the on-line world is very different. On the Web, it costs about the same to find new customers as it does to get new orders from past customers.

The on-line world is impersonal. On-line people have an extremely short attention span and they bore very easily. They are not interested in yesterday's news or yesterday's contacts. If you contact a past on-line customer, they will consider it spam!

Instead of trying to establish personal relationships on-line, establish an on-line presence. Promote your Web site, publish a newsletter, publish ebooks, write and distribute articles. Let your customers find you - out

there in cyberspace!

#### 6. Sell "benefits" not "features" - FALSE!

Only a tiny percentage of people will buy based on benefits. This is because they already know the benefits of the particular product or service. The benefits are the reason why they are in the market for a particular product or service. To buy, they need to know the

features of your specific offering.

For example, having a web site will increase profits and reduce costs for a business. These are some of the benefits of having a web site. But advertising those benefits will not sell your web development service. To buy, the prospective customer needs to know what features your specific web development service has to offer.

Instead of selling benefits, tell prospective customers what features make your product or service better or unique compared to other offerings available.

Of course, if your product or service has no better or unique features to offer - sell benefits.

#### 7. Using a P.O. box makes your business look "unprofessional" - FALSE!

If using a P.O. box makes a business look unprofessional, then why do so many major corporations use P.O. boxes? If you have an office outside your home, then go ahead and use that address.

But if your business is in your home, NEVER GIVE OUT YOUR HOME ADDRESS. Do you want some lunatic who is dissatisfied with your business showing up at your house with a gun? If you think this world is safe enough to be using your home address in your advertising and business correspondence, then stop reading this. Go back to reading your Winnie the Pooh fairytales.

Don't put yourself and your family in danger. When I see a small business using a P.O. box, I think "this business person is intelligent and professional".

#### 8. There is a lot more bad marketing advice out there.

I can't expose all the bad marketing advice out there in this one article. So instead of following the next bad marketing idea that you read, take a moment to think it through. Always be skeptical about any marketing advice you read - including what you just read in this article.

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