

What's all this jazz about marketing?

By Cajun Clark

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Cajun Clark's Cookbook <http://cajunclark.com>

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Good question, very good question. Marketing is probably the most misunderstood aspect of any business, even by those who "specialize" in it. All too often you'll find a person who says they're a marketing consultant, when they're really in public relations, or in print advertising, or in direct mail, or in Internet sales. So, yes, it's understandable if you don't know what's all this jazz about marketing. But maybe, perhaps, hopefully, by the end of this article you will have a better grasp on this vital business function.

Commit these two sentences to memory, they happen to be universal laws of business: Marketing is not bells, whistles, and esoteric concepts. And...Marketing is more than sales calls, advertising, and doing a good job. Okay, read the paragraph again, slowly, out loud. Do it again. Same drill. Got it? Good, we'll proceed.

MARKETING, to be effective, must be grounded in good, sound, common sense basics. These are the techniques, methods, and strategies which worked yesterday; will produce positive results today; and continue to benefit your business tomorrow. Some techniques you're already using. Some methods you are aware of but have not yet implemented. While some strategies you encounter will be entirely new to you; so don't make what could be a crucial mistake and automatically discount their value.

Now, after many years of trial-and-error, which means thousands of dollars wasted, I have finally learned that SUCCESSFUL MARKETING IS concerned with setting your business apart from your competitors; from the competition in what you have defined as your market area. The image created by your Website, including graphics, ease of navigation, editorial content, and every thing else you can name.

Also, don't forget your email. Can you readily be contacted, or does your visitor have to go through hoops to get answers? Is your correspondence content grammatically correct? Face it, it's your image.

In other words, marketing includes everything about your business; from the first click to the last click on your website, to the completion of your interaction with your customer. EVERYTHING!

Another closely guarded secret; shouldn't be, but is: In ANY BUSINESS, there are only three

sources of customers: REPEAT, REFERRAL, and NEW. And here's another universal law of business: A well designed marketing plan, in order to be successful, will focus on maximizing repeat business, consistently receiving referrals, and cost-effectively generating new business.

Here's another little tidbit which accounts for the success or failure of any marketing program: Consistently implementing a marketing plan improves your attitude, and that of your employees. Why? Because there is a track-to-run-on, a guide. Results are generated, and the daily routine becomes more enjoyable--there's more fun in life.

Oh, yeah, there's one other little goodie you should try to remember: Your words and actions (attitude) as perceived by your customers, prospective customers, vendors, and employees--this means nearly everyone--sets the tone (atmosphere) of your business. And the tone you set (atmosphere, attitude) will be reflected back to you by those persons with whom you are in contact.

In other words, when you are open, relaxed and positive: Then your customers, prospective customers, vendors and employees will in all likelihood reflect these same traits, characteristics, emotions, this tone (attitude) back to you. And of course, sad to say, the reverse is true.

Well, to sum it up, "What's all this jazz about marketing?"

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