

5 Ways to add spice to your Marketing

Maybe you're just starting out in business. Maybe you're looking for some new ideas. Perhaps you've been in business for awhile and find yourself in a rut. Whatever the reason, you'd like to add some spice to your marketing. Variety helps you several ways. It helps you:

- ✓ Gain newfound attention from the market
- ✓ Gain confidence you're doing all you can
- ✓ Focus your message and positioning further

This tipsheet is designed to get you thinking of ways to inject variety into your marketing efforts—and realize the payoff.

#1 *Incorporate a mix of personal & impersonal tactics*

Personal tactics are three-dimensional, require a face-to-face contact, and are dynamic. Impersonal tactics are two-dimensional, don't require a person, and are static. Here are some examples of each:

<i>Personal Marketing Tactics</i>	<i>Impersonal Marketing Tactics</i>
Networking	Direct Mail
Sales Calls	Advertising
Trade Shows	Publicity
Speeches/Lectures	Selling Materials
Seminars & Workshops	Brochures

A successful marketing effort blends both types of tactics. Yet, all too often, a company's marketing effort suffers from an overbalance of one. Mix both types of tactics and your prospects will know the name and face of your company.

#2 *Study other industries*

Some companies have an unhealthy fixation on their own industry. This can lead to a myopia or closed-mindedness. One way to add a little spice to your marketing is to look at other, unrelated industries and learn from them. For example, if you're a service-provider, study how cereal is marketed. Or if you're a manufacturer, study a travel agency. Then, ask yourself "What do they do differently than us?" and "Why?" You're sure to get at least one 'A-Ha' to apply to your business.

#3 *Ask your customers*

Who knows your business best? Those closest to it. A quest for new ideas and variety should bring you in front of your customers first. Talk to your customers, suppliers or even prospects. Ask them questions like:

- ▶ Which company in my industry does a great job of marketing?
- ▶ What was the most unique marketing effort you've ever seen?
- ▶ If you could add one marketing element to my company, what would it be?

As you get feedback to these questions, you'll start seeing who to keep an eye on, which marketing events stick out in people's minds, and what you can add to your marketing effort.

#4 *Look through the eyes of a child*

My ten-year old daughter and 6-year old son make some of the most insightful comments. They're not industry gurus, yet their observations are every bit as clear-sighted.

If you have a chance, take a kid (your kid, a niece, a grandson) to a brand new place they'll enjoy (i.e. a new playground, a kid's store). While there, get to the root of why this place is interesting by asking them questions like:

- ✓ Why is this place fun?
- ✓ If you built this place, what else would you add?
- ✓ What's this place missing?

Then, ask them the same types of questions about your company. If you're a home-based business, show them your sales materials and get feedback there. Sometimes, a response to a seemingly unrelated topic—that comes from a 'straight shooter' (and I can't think of anyone who shoots straighter than a child!)—will give you just the answer you need.

#5 *Look to nature*

The sticky, hooked tendrils of the burr inspired the man who invented Velcro fastener. The 'spinning wing' of the elm seed served as a model for more efficient windmills. Take a hike in the woods and see if any 'outside-the-box' thinking evolves from what you see. If no new ideas come about, at least you'll have had an enjoyable outing.

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