



# Who's Leading Your Marketing Program?

You, Your Suppliers or No One?





# Who's Leading Your Marketing?

**It's very likely, no one.**

In many businesses the owner is the defacto leader of the sales and marketing program. However, when you are inexperienced or not inclined towards sales and marketing, who takes the lead? Unfortunately, the answer is often no one.

Why, because it's difficult to lead what you don't understand and would prefer not to do. The tendency is to engage people you think you can work with, dump the task on them and hope you win the marketing lottery.

To compound this wishful thinking, you engage marketing specialists. You hire specialists in things like identity development, graphic design, copywriting, advertising, websites, programming, search engine marketing, social marketing, and so on.

By design, a specialist's role is to contribute to marketing projects led by a marketing director. Specialists don't generally need to double check if a client actually needs what they are engaged to do. They are accustomed to doing what is asked of them. So now you've dumped a leadership responsibility on someone who has a completely different understanding of their role.

Without marketing leadership, projects proceed without anyone questioning their appropriateness or defining their success criteria. Everyone just assumes someone else has a master plan, so they get busy.

Marketing is often treated more like checking random items off a shopping list, than a machine expected to drive earnings growth.

It's what we call **Random Acts of Marketing**; the first on our list of common mistakes.

MISTAKE

1



# Random Acts Of Marketing

**Independent marketing activities expected to miraculously create business results, for as little cost and effort as possible.**

Here's how the scenario starts out; you get sold on a magic bullet marketing tactic.

You buy into the salesperson's hype. You spend your money. You pat yourself on the back thinking you're investing in your future. The investment results in a functional and attractive thingamagig. You're told you need to support the tactic for several months to see results. This makes sense as it is only natural for things to take time. You continue to hope for the best, while ignoring the performance data. Some months later you check in on progress and realise the only change is a thinning of your wallet.

## WHAT HAPPENED?

With few exceptions, the random tactic behaves as you would expect a "Hail Mary - Wish and a Prayer" exercise to behave. It fails. "Nothing ventured, nothing gained" you reassure yourself, and off you go looking for the next marketing lottery ticket, hoping for a different result.

**The challenge is stepping back far enough to see the destructive pattern for what it is...a total waste of time and money, and a distraction from making sound investments in your future.**

MISTAKE

# 2



## An Activities Focus

**Focusing on independent marketing activities keeps you from achieving outcomes like sales leads and profitable sales.**

When you focus on marketing activities and tactics over target outcomes, it's easy to get off track and focused on the wrong things. The most common distraction is looking good to peers versus meeting the needs of prospective clients. You can get lost in cool factor and jargon slinging.

Designing a logo, making a brochure website, creating a video or posting social media content are all independent tasks. By themselves however, they do little to drive outcomes.

When you focus on outcomes, you need to move past one-off tactics and focus on client needs. You must determine how to string together a sequence that results in profitable sales. Your focus must shift onto personas, use cases, offers, calls to action, and key performance indicators.

An outcome focus replaces random acts of marketing with context, purpose and a continuous improvement mindset.

**An outcomes focus moves you forward with context and purpose.**

MISTAKE

# 3



## Doing Everything Yourself

**Because no one understands you well enough to do it for you.**

This mistake is completely understandable. After all, only you know all the intricate details about your company and your products, right?

The mistake is thinking that knowing everything is a good thing. Because you know so much, your tendency is to try to explain who you are and what you do in too much detail. You don't want to leave important details out. You want to tell your story, and it makes perfect sense to want that.

Unfortunately, this is a trap. You should speak about your client's needs and how they will benefit from your service or product, in simple terms, to help them make a decision to buy from you.

The more you follow your instincts to explain what you do, the less effective your communication. This is a challenging position to overcome on your own. It is often necessary for a third party to advocate on your behalf to abandon the "explain more" mistake.

**It often takes a 3rd party to advocate on your behalf for simple, client-facing, benefits-focused communication.**

MISTAKE

# 4



## We Don't Have Money To Market

**This usually translates into, you lack the confidence to invest.**

 This mistake is perfectly natural too. If you don't have clear goals and a plan you believe in, why would you invest your money?

The mistake is in thinking you don't have the money to invest. The real problem is your lack of clarity on goals and your lack of a plan that you believe in, and are committed to.

The reality is, if you were crystal clear on your goals and you had a plan you believed in, you would go find the money to do it.

If you are anything like your peers, you avoid getting clear because you're so busy putting out fires all the time. In the absence of a plan, you only spend to the limits of your discretionary income. This is perfectly normal, and completely self-defeating at the same time.

**If you were clear and committed to a worthy course of action, you would find the money to make it happen.**



## TO SUMMARIZE:

When no one leads your marketing program, you risk making the following mistakes:

- You engage the wrong types of help and set unrealistic expectations.
- You engage in random acts of marketing rather than building systems that get results.
- You focus on to-do activities, rather than outcomes like sales leads and earnings growth.
- You tell and sell instead of facilitating your client's purchase process.
- You lack clarity and confidence to invest in goal achievement.

These mistakes compound to increase your costs and your risk of failure. We invite you to step up and lead your business development program. Gain the clarity and confidence to invest. Give up the random acts of marketing and start focusing on client needs instead of pitching your agenda.



## HOW DO YOU PROCEED?

You engage a marketing coach and consultant to help you get clear and committed to a worthy plan of action. You use your coach to help you move through obstacles, and to adopt more effective sales and marketing behaviours. Don't make the mistake of thinking you don't have the time or the money. You do. We work with all kinds of start-ups and small business owners who were surprised to learn how affordable it is to get the help they need. We hope you'll take the time to see for yourself.



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