

WARNING: 'CASUAL MARKETING' LEADS TO BUSINESS CASUALTIES

Let's start out by defining exactly what 'casual marketing' is. In a nutshell, it's trying a marketing tactic once, maybe twice, and when you don't see immediate or expected results, you drop that marketing tactic and either try something else or worse yet don't do any marketing for a while – hoping clients will just magically appear. This is the old “build it and they will come” disorder. I don't know if you're one of the charmed ones or not, but sitting and waiting for clients to show up has never worked for me or anyone I know of. Now when analyzing reports provided by the U.S. Small Business Association, I noticed a shocking trend. Basically, for every small business that opens its doors each year, another one closes theirs. That's a pretty scary statistic! And it's my belief that 'casual marketing' is one of the main causes of that statistic being as bad as it is. So how do you ensure that you don't wind up on the bad side of that statistic? Well from a marketing standpoint, here are 3 steps to avoid the 'casual marketing' curse:

- **Vary Your Marketing Approach to Ensure the Most Comprehensive Reach**

Approach your target audience from different angles using a variety of different mediums. First off, I believe it's important to note that different people like to be communicated to in different ways. Visual people may give more credence to messages that appeal to their eyes – eye candy so to speak. For example flashy display ads, photographs, and video would most likely be their preference. Auditory people most likely would enjoy hearing your messages. Therefore, marketing campaigns that used tactics such as radio, teleseminars, and audio postcards would probably yield the most success. And lastly kinesthetic people who typically prefer something they can put their hands on. For example, test driving your product or service and physical samples would most likely appeal to them the most. So being that it's close to impossible to know the communication style preference of every one in your target audience, which approach do you choose? How about a combination of the three? For example, if you are a car dealership, why not offer a combination of flashy display ads, audio postcards, and test drives? This way you appeal to your entire target audience in one way shape or form. Additionally, you may want to approach your target audience using different mediums. Don't be afraid to mix it up here because once again different people tend to be more comfortable with different mediums. Some like print media like newspapers and magazines, others prefer Internet-based mediums such as web sites and email, while still others prefer mediums such as television – and the list can go on and on here.

- **Marketing Consistency Is Key to Building Relationships**

While you may want to vary your marketing approach, it is critical however to communicate a consistent message and image of who you are and how you can solve your target audience's problem. And for small businesses, the byproduct of this effort should lead to branding.

- **'All-the-time marketing' Is Vital to Your Survival**

Marketing should not be a some-of-the-time thing; it needs to be an all-of-the-time thing. And in the absence of your leadership, your target audience will tend to listen to whoever is doing the talking. And with the vast array of competition out there screaming in your target audience's ear, your allegiance to 'all-the-time marketing' is more critical than ever. Now how you stand out from the pack is a whole other story for another day. Just know that you have to at least be in the game. So always don the marketing hat and learn how to sense and make the most of marketing opportunities. So let's be honest now, have you been guilty of 'casual marketing'? Whether you have or you haven't, know that that's not what's important here, it's what you do from now on that counts. So decide right now to employ 'all-the-time marketing' in your business. I urge you to try this persona on for a while and see how it fits. I'm sure that you'll notice that it gets much easier over time – it becomes second nature. And better yet, it brings results. © 2006 Online Marketing Muscle -- All Rights Reserved.