

The Do's and Don'ts of Marketing Your Business

A comprehensive guide for entrepreneurs and small business owners



“When I’m looking for a local business to deal with the first place I look is online. And if I find that the store or restaurant or service provider doesn’t have a website – or has one that clearly hasn’t been updated since 2003 – I discount it immediately. I assume (rightly or wrongly) that the enterprise is unprofessional and low quality.”

– **Erika Anderson**
Contributor, Forbes

In today’s world, there is so much content available online to instruct you on how to market your business. No matter how many articles you read or videos you watch, a “silver bullet” has yet to be delivered. The marketing landscape is constantly changing as consumers and their preferences change. Being able to adapt and change within a market while remaining true to your business is more important now than ever. We can’t promise sales or leads, but this E-book will help guide you down the right path to successfully market your business. Here’s what you should and should not do when marketing your business.

The Do’s

Be consistent

Whether in the way you communicate with your audience or the designs of your promotional materials, consistency is key. Consumers are more easily able to recognize and recall your business when they are receiving a unified message. Everyone recognizes the slogan “I’m Lovin’ It” because McDonalds has incorporated that message in all advertisements, packaging and communications.

An inconsistent look or message creates a flaw in your brand. A brand that has flaws can discredit the business and cause customers to question the brand.

Make a content strategy and calendar

Sure, you need to be consistent in your messaging, but you need to have a strategy and purpose in what you're saying. A content strategy will help you measure if your communications are delivering results, whether your goals are to increase sales or gain a larger social media audience.

A calendar will allow you to coordinate your messaging through different mediums and be organized in your communications. It will aid you in a step by step process for executing your strategy and tactics.

Research your audience

Just because something works for a business you admire or one of your competitors, doesn't necessarily mean it's the right choice for your company. Doing research to better understand your target market will help you to make informed decisions which are more likely to result in success.

You don't have to pay a large amount of money to a research firm to get the answers you need. Instead, you could do an online survey or customer intercepts. Be sure you're asking appropriate questions that don't lead your consumers into an answer you want to hear. Your goal should be to understand the real perception of your brand.

93%

of successful businesses say they follow a specific strategy with their marketing



72%
of all
internet
users
are now
active
on social
media.

Use social media... appropriately

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest are all great avenues to communicate and interact directly with current and prospective customers. Social media is a great way to generate leads and gain an active following. When using social media, it's important to post and share content that is relevant, valuable, and engaging to your target market. Yes, your kitten is adorable - but she won't build trust with your customers.

Diversify your advertising

Using different mediums to advertise to your consumers is one of the smartest, advertising decisions that you can make. Certain consumers respond to different messages from some mediums better than others. Some people love to receive mail, others would rather get an email or see you on a billboard. Diversifying your advertising mediums helps you to reduce the risk of your messaging not being heard or seen.

Tip: Try different creative options for testing purposes. Test different messages and mediums against each other to see what works best.

The Don'ts

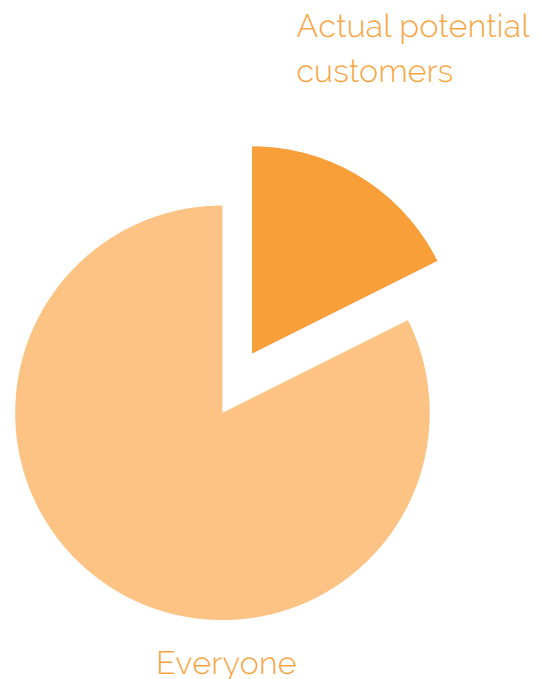
Let just anyone do your marketing.

You wouldn't let an auto mechanic perform surgery on you, so why have just anyone plan and execute your marketing efforts? Hiring a professional allows you to leverage their expertise and experience. It also gives you an independent source to consult and brainstorm ideas with.

As a small business owner, you have plenty of important things to give your attention to. Marketing is one thing best left to a team of professionals to get the best return on investment.

Target everyone

Your company can't be everything to everyone, no matter how hard you try to spin it. Not every product is intended to be used by all consumers, so why would you target everyone? Instead, focus on your ideal consumer who is most likely to purchase. This focus will help to guide your advertising efforts and will ensure you aren't chasing customers that will likely never purchase from you, saving you money.



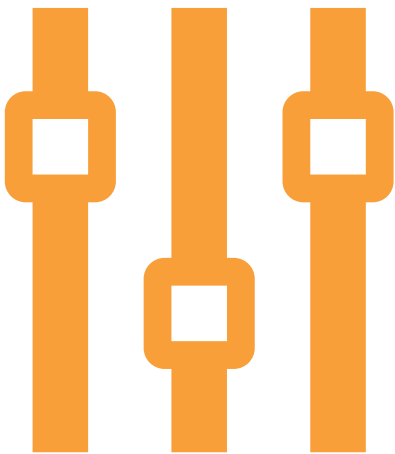
Rely on a group for approval

If you can't agree with your spouse on where to go for dinner, what are the odds a group of managers can agree on how to market a business. With so many different viewpoints and opinions, it can be difficult to reach a consensus without sacrificing and making compromises to please certain people. Rather than compromising the brand, leave the final decision to one appointed person who can work with the marketing firm directly.

Lag on measuring the effects of your advertising

If you don't plan on tracking your marketing to measure your return on investment, you might as well just throw money out the window. Without tracking your marketing efforts, you have no idea what mediums are resulting in sales versus increased brand awareness or may be going unnoticed all together. Simple things such as tracking phone numbers or URLs are a great way to track your results. Looking for a cheaper route? Just ask your customers how they heard about you!

Measuring the effects of your advertising will let you know if you're reaching your goals. It allows you to make changes to your execution if things aren't going how you planned.



Not advertise at all

The only thing worse than cutting corners when marketing is doing nothing at all. If you're a new business, you need to ensure you're getting your name in front of the right consumers; advertising may be a good avenue to explore. However, not every piece of advertising is going to result in a sale. It's important to stay top of mind for consumers. It is imperative for when they are ready to purchase.

Tip: Marketing is a marathon, not a sprint. Don't expect your first advertisement to bring in waves of customers. Over time, with proper execution your advertising strategy will change and develop into a successful machine, building brand awareness along the way.

We hope these five do's and don'ts have helped you to gain a better understanding of marketing and where to start. It should be noted that marketing isn't something that can be perfected overnight. You'll need to constantly be researching, reviewing and editing your marketing plan in order to adapt to changes in the marketplace and your product mix.

If you have questions about what may be best for your business or if you would like help formulating your marketing plan, contacting an advertising agency or marketing consultant is always a great place to start.

On average,
businesses
that
advertise
strategically
earn **5**
times their
investment
in gross
profit.

About the author

Avidity Creative is a branding and strategy agency. We work with companies build an effective brand to connect and interact with their customers. We are passionate and love what we do and our clients are passionate and love what they do.

Our expertise is brand design and creating valuable identities and strategies for our clients. We take our knack for the visuals and combine it with knowledge of innovation to build effective brands that people enjoy.

Learn more about what we do and see some work we've done for our amazing clients by visiting www.aviditycreative.com.

Want to work with us? We'd love to hear what troubles you're having and figuring out how we can help. Shoot us a message at info@aviditycreative.com or give us a call at **712-269-0941**.

Thank you!

