

Marketing Facts of Life

Seven Basic Facts For Marketing Your Business Effectively

By Bill Neal

Just like so many endeavors in life, there are some fundamental laws in marketing that are necessary to make a marketing campaign effective. We call these the "Marketing Fact of Life". Whether you are a marketing novice or a veteran, it's always a good idea to stay focused on the basics. Ignoring some of these basic facts can waste valuable time and marketing dollars. So to keep your campaign on track, keep these marketing "facts of life" pinned to your wall and stick to them!

Marketing Fact of Life #1

Marketing Works!

When you start your marketing campaign, it's easy to get discouraged and feel like no one is listening. But the billions of dollars that are spent every year on marketing products and services are spent for a good reason: marketing works. In essence, marketing is no more than making your products and services known to potential customers. From this perspective, marketing must be a part of every business for it to grow and prosper. If you follow the basics, marketing will work for you too.

Marketing Fact Of Life #2

It Doesn't Work Overnight!

The classic mistake for any small-to-medium size business is to find that sales are down and scramble to try and get out a letter or flyer that will bring in enough business for the next year. It doesn't work that way. Marketing takes time to work and works well over time. Developing an image in your market and making your services known take continual repetition. One piece of a campaign builds on another and from newsletters to ads to direct mail all the pieces fit together to implement your strategy. Marketing isn't something you can do occasionally and expect it to be effective. It should be an ongoing effort in your business; *it never stops*.

Marketing Fact Of Life #3

Present A Consistent Identity!

New customers don't know you or your company. You need to fill this void of information with an identity. Everything you send out, every means of communication, should be consistent with the identity you want to project. Regardless of the project you may be promoting in a particular piece, there should be an underlying message about your identity that remains the same. If you forget this, you will confuse your marketplace and squander a valuable hidden benefit of consistent marketing; *a recognized established identity in your market*.

Marketing Fact Of Life #4

Present a Consistent Message!

The lack of marketing strategy and plan will cause you to "shotgun" ideas and messages. Your potential customers have a void of information about you. You need to fill that void by directing their attention to a particular message about your capabilities. Then you need to back it up for

your campaign to be truly effective over time. Make a plan, determine an identity and message that address the needs of your market and *stick to it*.

Marketing Fact Of Life #5

Marketing Must Be Done Regularly!

It isn't the brilliance of your campaign, or the foil embossing on your stationary that will ultimately bring you marketing success. It's the relentless hammering away on your marketplace, with a consistent message, that will win the day. A mediocre campaign, doggedly carried out on a regular schedule, will always out perform the most dazzling, but haphazard campaign. Part of marketing regularly is making sure your campaign is dynamic; that is, it reaches into every communication you have with new and existing customers. If your newsletter stresses your commitment to service, don't have sullen or uncooperative phone personnel.

Marketing Fact Of Life #6

Follow Up Is Vital To Success!

What good is a marketing campaign with little or no follow up? No good at all! Yet it happens all the time. There is a flurry of activity, money is spent, mailings and ads are done, leads come in...and that's it. The sales person was too busy to follow up. In three month, when you need new business, those leads are as cold as yesterday's oatmeal. Decide ahead of time who will handle follow up and make sure they do. If it's you and you're going to run the business and work all day at your desk..think again! Follow up is the final step in making your marketing efforts pay off. It can't be done when you have the time, it has to be done now.

Marketing Fact of Life #7

It Takes Commitment to Work!

Like everything else, you will get out of your marketing campaign what you put into it. Take the time to do a strategy and plan, stay on schedule, and get your targets done.

You can visit Mr. Neal's website at <http://www.AlmadenMarketing.com>

William F. Neal, CDT, president of Almaden Marketing Group, Inc., has an extensive background in the dental industry dating back to 1964. He worked for a small full service dental laboratory in ceramics until 1969 and has since worked with J. F. Jelenko, A.L. Engelhardt, a subsidiary of Howmedica Dental Inc., and formed the Almaden Marketing Group, a full service marketing/ad agency, in 1991. Almaden Marketing Group has clients in the educational and computer software industries in addition to its dental clients. They are the single largest producer of marketing materials and advertising for commercial dental laboratories in the US. Almaden also writes, directs and produces multimedia and video training programs. Bill lectures throughout the US, Australia, Canada and Europe. He was a big hit at the 2000 MRC.