

Developing Strategic (One to One) Marketing

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Abstract

Whether you are selling to a market of ten or ten million, one of the most effective ways to learn how to improve your marketing is to talk with a single person and sell something to them. According to the author, marketing isn't a science – it is an art-form with a lot of science surrounding it. It's a matter of human interaction.

Introduction

Marketing is all about finding out what your customers want and satisfying that need. For many businesses the whole concept of marketing is a minefield of jargon. It is often confused with sales, but without adequate marketing there may be no sales. Unless you can establish exactly what the market is demanding, where it should be supplied, and at what price, you may have no customers. In general, any marketing strategy that works in a one-on-one scenario will tend to work when marketing to the public.

To support this, let us consider some of the main principles of conversation:

1. **Speak in terms of the customer's interests** – When speaking to any individual prospect, you start by finding out what excites them, what their goals are, and then speak to them on those terms.

As an example, if you want to sell laptops to a business owner, you find out what line of work they are in, and then you let them know which model would suit their needs best, and you speak to them in terms of how it will help them get their work done. This is no different from analytics and

targeted marketing where you crunch the numbers to determine who your typical buyer is, paint a portrait of their worldview, and adjust your advertising material accordingly.

2. **Listen** – You will not get a second opportunity if you spend the first meeting talking about yourself, and you will not sell anything when you talk *at* the prospect. This is true in one-on-one marketing, and it's just as true in mass marketing. Today, your marketing is not just the advertising that you put into the world. It is about how your customers talk about you – whether you are there, and listening, or not.

Notch, the developer behind Minecraft, recently sold his creation for \$2.5 billion dollars. He didn't achieve that by flooding television, radio and the web with ads. The core user-base for the game learned of it through word of mouth. Players tell each other stories about fun things they did in the game, they post YouTube videos of their most ambitious in-game constructions. Throughout the early days of development, Notch made a point of listening to his users and implementing their ideas and suggestions when appropriate.

Analytics play a big part in listening. You can see who is buying your products, what their most common comments, reviews and complaints are, and what they like best about the brand. Even so, maybe the best way to listen is still the old fashioned way: just listen. Read customer emails, and when reasonable, address their concerns directly.

3. **Care** – Listening isn't that effective when what you are hearing goes in one ear and out the other. When you really care what the other person is saying, they can tell, and they can tell when you don't care, too. This is true in a one-on-one scenario, and it's true when talking to hundreds of people at a time. Assuming that you are never bigger than any individual customer is a mindset that will pay immeasurably in the long run.

In conclusion

On top of these three fundamentals add a foundation of solid analytics and a reasonable marketing budget, and it's possible to make every one of many prospects feel like you are speaking directly to them.

Remember: the only thing that anyone is really interested in is themselves. Which is why, in marketing, you will have greater success when you embrace this aspect of human nature and do what they would like you to do. Speak to them, in their language, and listen with attention and a caring ear. Doing that, as a strategy, is remarkable, because so few do. It shouldn't be remarkable, but, as we say at Abelard, being remarkable isn't about doing extraordinary things, it's about doing the ordinary things that others fail to do, and doing them well.