



5 MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN ADVERTISING RIGHT NOW

It's not your fault. We are constantly being overrun with #fakenews on the interwebs, and navigating what's right for your company can be unclear and discouraging. So, let's break through the noise and stop wasting your marketing dollars right now.

From billboards to pop-up ads, media has changed quite a bit. But what hasn't is the need for advertising, and the commitment to invest in reaching out to new and existing audiences. It's worth repeating the age-old mantra "the most cost effective strategy for marketing your business is to **target your audience, reach as many as you can, as many times as possible**". So, let's take a look at 5 mistakes advertisers make, and how you can avoid them.



01

BUYING MEDIA, INSTEAD OF AUDIENCE

Back in the day when there were only three TV networks, a few AM radio stations, and one local paper, the choices were much simpler. Now there are thousands of media outlets available and your options are much more obscure. Often companies forget that by knowing who the target audience is, can actually help you to see through the fog of endless options. If you define your customers first, you can avoid the common mistake of jumping from media-to-media and instead use that information to identify the best channels within your budget range. If you want to waste money, buy media. If you want to make money, know your audience.



02

NOT CONNECTING

Ever try and get a dog's attention with spinach? Not much happens. But when you wave a T-bone in their face you'll have their attention forever. Ads that speak to the heart of the customer and evoke a feeling are the ones that turn little companies into big ones. Many business owners make the mistake of approaching advertising with the goal of merely getting their name out.

A famous Wharton study showed that everything hinges on the message you connect to your brand. They studied two advertisers investing the same amount of money, and reaching the same target audience, but while one succeeded, the other failed after receiving zero responses. The difference between the two was in the message of their ads.

Is your message forgettable or even predictable? Is it relevant to the needs of your potential customers? It's worth spending time discovering messages that work. Your results are directly linked to your message, so find your T-bone and connect with your audience.



03

TRYING TO BE POPULAR

Jumping into the latest social communication app or trend is a familiar misstep businesses regularly wrestle with. Often it just starts with an employee hearing about the latest “viral” video, and suddenly marketing is required to jump on the bandwagon and spend limited resources on researching and becoming experts right away. Unfortunately, most of these decisions come from desperation rather than inspiration.

It can be easy to lock onto the “shiny & new’ and overlook fundamental advertising questions such as, “who is our audience” and “what is the specific goal we want to achieve”. Every smart business knows that without properly evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of a new audience source, the chance to overspend and waste resources is often realized. Stay away from knee-jerk decisions by watching and measuring new channel results. Consistency and minor adjustments along the way will always generate better results that benefit your company’s revenue and longevity.



04

CUTTING ADVERTISING BUDGETS

It’s tempting to cut marketing dollars when faced with a period of economic downturn, and that’s a big mistake. If there’s anything history has shown, it’s that if a successful business stops advertising, they will consequently experience a significant drop in business. Conversely, if they continue their advertising they stay top of mind, and if providing a compelling call to action, will bring customers through their door and weather the storm.

I don’t share this wisdom lightly. When the economy is uncertain, fear grips the community and it’s difficult to think big-picture. I am genuinely worried for businesses that act on that fear and stop or cut back. Advertisers who panic and cancel their marketing will result in a worse position than those who maintain the course and stay relevant. Remain focused, benefit from the increased media engagement, and the situation will pass in your favor.



05

GHOSTING

Yep, this term isn't just relevant to the dating world, it's also applicable to businesses that don't allow for frequency to build and impact an advertising campaign. Unsuccessful companies fall victim to expecting immediate returns from a short-term run, and then draw the conclusion that the method or message wasn't effective. You're not alone in trying to get the attention of your target audience. The more competitors advertise, the greater the frequency needed to gain potential customer's attention.

Don't "ghost" on a carefully thought out marketing strategy. Regardless of the medium, an effective campaign takes time to produce a significant increase in customers and sales. In addition, useful analytics cannot be captured after a short period of time. Reality is that you need to create multiple touch points across a combination of mediums to reach your target audience. Building your company's reputation is a journey, not a one-time "sales" pitch.

Deciding how best to use your marketing resources can be challenging. There are endless options, budget limitations, just finding time to plan, execute, measure, and adjust your marketing is a monumental task. It's impossible to know everything, all the time. And many businesses are looking at either building a robust in-house marketing department or finding solid outside marketing partners to get creative and help reach key goals. Choosing who you work with (internally or externally) has become more and more critical.

At the end of the day, connection is key to success. Your target audience wants a compelling message. If you're disconnected from important information like who your customers are, and how each medium allows you to communicate, then you're simply creating pretty pictures and a cool slogan, but not likely to create a ton of results. The good news is that you can avoid these mistakes and begin taking your marketing to the next level. I like to say, the same old challenges + new situations = new ideas!

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