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Building a better brand

5 steps to improve identity of goods, services

Orlando Business Journal - by [Tom Marin](#)

While speaking at a conference, I was approached by a company that markets in the business-to-business space asking how they could gain more exposure using brand marketing.

They admitted sales results had been disappointing, and since the economy had slowed, they were having a problem meeting sales quotas.

When I asked what their normal marketing process was, they said they try to use a balanced mix of many different marketing communications and then follow-up with the leads they get.

I suggested they launch a brand-marketing program and here is what I told them to do:

1. Understand your market. Since the market tanked a year ago, companies have pulled back their expenditures and are limiting them to essentials only. This has changed how companies view external vendors and providers. On balance, they want new information, new insights, not sales pitches. Today, you need to make 'pitches' that solve client problems and add value to their bottom line.
2. Create compelling content. Go through all your content on your Web site and literature and eliminate any copy that is dry, boring or out-of-date. Having a big Web site with old copy is a drag on your sales development. No one wants his time wasted.
3. Lead them. Use the simple "you are here" approach that lets them choose what they would like to learn next. Questions first, listen, listen, listen, and then offer solutions. It's better to develop one solution than to identify 10 problems.
4. Get clients talking. Approach some of your satisfied customers who will let you videotape a short testimonial of their experience with your products and services and post them to your Web site. Then start a YouTube channel to post these videos along with others you create.
5. Spoonfuls, not bucket loads. Remember, you want to dose out your marketing in small, digestible amounts. Send out a "Tip of the Week" in an e-mail rather than one gigantic e-mail with everything at once.

Here are two items I cautioned them not to use:

1. Don't build a large, irrelevant footprint. A sales representative has a maximum number of prospects he can develop effectively. Marketing lists with thousands for one person is unrealistic. So don't expect miracles just because you bought a list of 5,000 names.
2. Don't use a hard-sell approach. Trying to strong-arm a prospect into a client is an extremely poor tactic in today's information marketplace. Don't use pressure. Choices and solutions work far better.

What have we accomplished here? We've focused on a potential client's market needs, created an insightful conversation, led them to possible solutions, presented satisfied clients already using our products and services, and provided the information in easy sound bites.

All for zero cost, other than our time. Once you've completed these simple steps you can begin to socialize your solutions using media channels such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. But first make sure your content is ready for primetime.

Given these parameters, what will your next move be?



Five steps

1. Understand your market.
2. Create compelling content.
3. Lead them.
4. Get clients talking.
5. Spoonfuls, not bucket loads.

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