

12 Mistakes businesses make in their Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations Campaigns...

1. Not understanding the advertising rate card for magazine, newspaper, TV or the Internet.

Too often a business will sign up for advertising by first looking for a great deal or discount on the advertising. What generally happens is that you are contracted into a 6 month or 12 month buy when you may have only wanted a one time ad...

- a. Mistake 1.1 – Ad buying for the one time ad. Every business encounters the need for advertising but most important is knowing the where, who and what, as well as, the rule of reach and frequency.
- b. Mistake 1.2 – Not placing the ad in the right market and/or media thereby missing potential customers. Who is your customer and where do they go for information? Do they read or watch? Are you sending a consistent message? Is your audience an Internet or Newspaper first audience and you just bought a local cable TV ad that runs at 6 AM? Is your customer industry specific and will most likely go to a trade magazine, but you just bought a newspaper ad or did a direct mail campaign to households?

2. Not creating a consistent image.

Do you keep changing your message because you can not connect with your customers? Do you change your message because you are not getting the inquiries you expected? It takes multiple impressions to get into the minds of consumers. Stay focused on the message about your product or service and why your audience needs it, then stay committed to the message with frequency and consistency – it takes an average of 27 exposures to your message before a customer will make a buying decision.

3. Not creating a positioning statement.

Who are you and what are you committed to? Often a business has no idea what to put on paper with regard to a Positioning Statement. What are you held accountable to? What do your customers know about you if they haven't bought from you before? Mission, Vision and Values, Strategy; these are all important. The Positioning statement must be truth, not generic; and must be attainable. What do you do, What is your goal, How do you do it and How do you achieve it?

4. Not focusing marketing efforts to generate sales (“Push” Marketing).

What is marketing? What is “Push” marketing? Marketing is creating communication with your customers. Marketing impacts sales. Marketing creates new forms of selling (“Push”). Marketing is not advertising. Every

company has a different customer and a different need with respect to marketing. Synergy Communications will help you identify your most likely form of marketing and then help you to develop and deploy the most efficient programs that get results.

5. Not creating eye-catching collateral that elicits demand (“Pull” Marketing).

- a. Brochures made by a friend for FREE? You get what you pay for! Are you working with a graphic designer that understands color palettes, RGB and CMYK? Do they understand the pre-press and printing process so they can give you the best advice on what to develop and what paper to print it on? A good relationship with your designer is your best weapon against the cluttered world of advertising and communication. Does your agency understand the communication needs of your customers?
- b. Did your brochures and business cards cost more than you wish to tell your friends? Synergy Communications has developed relationships with many printing outlets and we can find the best, least amount of hassle and least expensive printing options. Did you know you had options? An experienced designer will walk you through the process and educate and inform you about what to expect and make you aware of the decisions to be made.
- c. Does your advertisement break the, “immutable laws of advertising” as Al Ries and Jack Trout will tell you in their book? There are laws and rules to advertising, branding and graphic communications. These laws are not punishable, but if your designer breaks them it will cost you potential sales and future business with your audience... that is a horrible form of punishment.

6. Not paying attention to competitors.

Most businesses operate using the “Ostrich Technique” form of market analysis, customer analysis and competitor analysis. They put their head in the sand and wait for it to happen! Synergy Communications promises that if you do not research your market and your customers you will fail; maybe not quickly, but ultimately. It is a guarantee that a competitor can put you out of business if you are not careful. Become an expert on your market and your competition; after all, your customer is probably more of an expert and aware of your market and your competition than you are! What is the definition of shopping? Shopping does not mean purchasing from only your business. Stop being, “Just Lucky” with your customer sales and get smart. Know your competitors and stay ahead!

7. Not anticipating market/industry trends.

While in the midst of your R& D retreat with your staff, sequestered working hard on your new product, the customer demanded and the industry accepted a new paradigm! You were too busy to watch the industry, never asked the

customer and made sure that you did not watch the competitors. Your new product was dead before it shipped; the market changed. Did new legislation pass that opens new doors to your market or did the legislation close them? Was there a new standard accepted? Did the customer change; did they move to another market category to find the same product that was serviced better, faster and cheaper?

8. Not communicating with the media.

Your company decided to only use advertising to reach your customers. Did you budget for PR/Media Relations? Advertising reminds, marketing sells and public relations builds a relationship with your audience. It is hard to place a value on media relations. Synergy Communications has worked hard to develop strong relationships with the media. The media can be your friend or your foe. Everyone can call the press and try to place a press/news release and then check the paper or TV to see if it runs, but a good PR firm, knowledgeable of the media, newsworthiness of stories, news timing and the media personnel, will get the message placed! What can the media do for you? Guaranteed, if there is a problem, they will let the whole world know about it within 24 hours. Are you prepared for 60 Minutes to show up at your office asking questions for an audience of 20 million viewers? Do you reach 20 million viewers with your advertising in 24 hours? It takes 10 positive impressions to overcome one negative. Media relations is for good communication placed strategically among chosen media outlets, that educates about the benefits of your product or service. PR is not free advertising; it is a strategic message that can possibly create more inquiries than advertising. Media relations consists of proactive persuasive campaigns, education about a product or service, community event coverage, news/media coverage, and defense/reactive PR (Damage assessment and control). Synergy Communications is the right choice for all forms of media relations/PR. We have the talent and the relationships that get results.

9. Not utilizing important legislation as an advantage (“Pass” Marketing).

Did legislation just pass that affected your business? Did it affect positively or negatively? Did it open doors to your market or did it close them. Did you know about it before it happened? Synergy Communications understands the power of legislation. We have opened doors by assisting in the process of getting legislation passed. We have also watched the legislation to know when to move, sell, get out, or change your product or service based on impending legislative changes. The legislative process is a powerful process both for good and bad, depending on your product or service and your knowledge of it.

10. Not establishing a marketing plan and a budget for advertising, marketing and PR.

What is your company's goal? Increase sales? Increase awareness? Do you only advertise? Do you know the value of Marketing? Marketing is not a just a customer survey. Do you know that the relationships your PR firm has developed with the media (print {magazine and newspaper}, radio, TV and internet) can be invaluable if tapped into? PR does not stand for press release. Please see the Synergy Communications "Marketing Umbrella" flyer that describes the value of using all three to achieve your sales goals, also see article, "Components of PR." Every part of the process represents a piece of the pie, the pie should not be made up of one piece. Just as you place an ad in the newspaper, you create and update your web site, you contact your current customers for referrals, you send out a brochure, and you are interviewed on the radio as a representative of a particular industry. 60% of your budget should be spent on your current clients, as they are your best repeat customers.

11. Not considering marketing ROI (Return On Investment).

You may or may not realize that marketing is truly an investment. Many people have not heard of it described in these terms. When you decide to make an investment, whether it be in a marketing program, advertisement or public relations campaign, or a sales promotion, you need to think of it as an investment of your company's money to make a positive ROI (Return On Investment). When you don't think in these terms you may be missing a critically important factor that can make or break your company in the long run.

12. Not hiring the right agency.

Have you hired a designer when you need someone who understands marketing and sales? You need to understand the difference. You need to partner with a marketing, advertising, or public relations firm that has a proven record in gaining its clients a positive ROI. Don't hesitate to ask for examples of how they have affected the bottom line of a business. It is not always the prettiest collateral materials or award-winning work that is effective in selling products or services and gaining a positive result. Synergy Communications specializes in Advertising, Branding, Marketing, Positioning and Public Relations. It takes the synergy of people to create ideas. We create synergy by developing tactics, tools and strategies using our "Synergy Positioning Process™." We develop plans and programs that achieve client goals. We produce revolutionary advertising, marketing and public relations campaigns that generate buzz and deliver results.

Synergy Communications is your solution to avoid these critical Marketing Mistakes – We Create Synergy.