

3 Reasons You're Scared to Market the Right Way

Will Smith, one of my favorite actors, says that the thing you want the most is on the other side of terror. Basically, if it scares the ever-loving bejeezus out of you, then that's the thing you NEED to do.

In the cacophony of voices shouting right now, it's really hard to know what is the right thing to do. You're hearing a lot of mixed messages. The sales and marketing experts are out in full force, and they're spreading falsehoods like farmers spread seeds at planting time (my midwestern roots are showing).

The reality is that there is a way to market yourself right now. There is a RIGHT way to do this. It's not difficult to do, but it's difficult to get your mind around it.

We've put together this little guide to help you get past your fears and start marketing like a human being. The business world (and world in general) needs human beings now more than ever.

#1 You're Scared To GIVE

You know what terrifies businesses more than anything? Giving things away. It flat out terrifies them. Turns out, the thing they want most (hint: customers) is on the other side of the thing that terrifies them most (giving things away).

People accuse me of being a little too cryptic, so let me try to make this as simple as possible. Find every possible way you can give things to your audience (not prospects because that makes you a prospector and there hasn't been a gold rush since a long time ago) without asking anything in return.

Give away the very things that justify what you charge your customers. Your secrets, low-cost products, access to your software, processes you use, data you gather, whatever makes you valuable.

Give it away.



The Best Ways To Give

Blogs

Share your expertise on your website. Show your audience how to solve their problems, whatever those problems are, even if it's not something you can directly help with.

Systems and Processes

If you have a business, there's a good chance you've developed systems and processes that help you function. Other businesses can benefit from your experience. Share everything from how you're handling remote work to your sales process to your HR policies. Other businesses will appreciate your transparency.

Low-Cost Products and Services

What I mean by "low-cost" is low-cost to you. We've all got services we offer that take very little of our time or products that cost us very little to produce. These can become free offerings that help us build relationships. Something you can do in your sleep might take someone in your audience 4 hours to do. Giving away products and services that don't cost you is a great way to give.

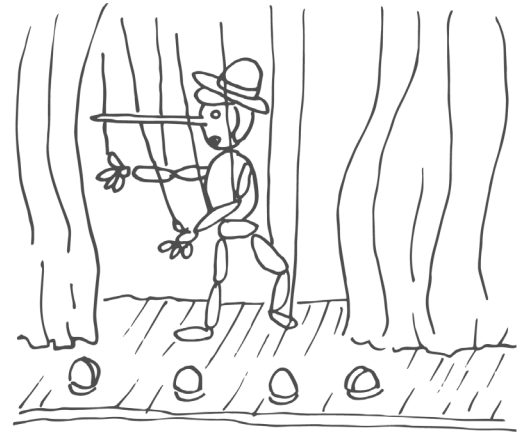
#2 – You're Scared of Appearing "Fake"

This is a big fear for businesses when they start facing the reality of marketing right. Often, when you're first trying to be authentic and give real value, you start to feel like an imposter. There are so many businesses sending super cheesy or gimmicky messages that it feels like you're just another voice in all the noise.

The good news is that your audience is not stupid! It's actually not that hard to tell the difference between a business that is doing it right and one that is just out for themselves.

Again, that idea of giving is a big part of this, but your voice and expression are also important. If you find yourself sounding like the marketing messages you hate, stop and ask yourself, "Is this how I talk?" Chances are good the answer is a resounding, "NO!!!!!"

Getting your marketing voice down can be difficult, but that's usually because everybody WAY overthinks it. In reality, your marketing voice should be YOUR voice. Speak to your audience as yourself. Problem solved! Nobody else can sound like you now, because you're the only you!



The Best Ways To Be Genuine

Practice empathy

The best way to know if you're being genuine or not is to ask yourself, "If I read this, how would it make me feel?" If the answer is that you would be suspicious and likely ignore the email or headline, then don't write that thing. It's pretty simple. Write things you would want to read. Kind of like the Golden Rule, but for marketing.

Tell the truth

One of the biggest reasons that everyone is so wary of marketing is because they've been lied to so many times. It's a lie when you use misleading subject lines. It's a lie when you offer a useless "guide" in exchange for someone's email address. It's a lie when you promise to only send one email a week and then proceed to send seven. Yes, these all happen and are common abuses. TELL THE TRUTH.

Speak like you're a human

Most people start writing marketing messaging and next thing they know they've written 43 words they've never used once in a normal conversation. If you find yourself using words like "synergy," "alignment," "checking-in," "metrics," "cost-effective," and so on, it's time to pull the plug. Erase that copy and start over. Use YOUR words, not someone else's.

#3 – You're Scared of Getting Hurt

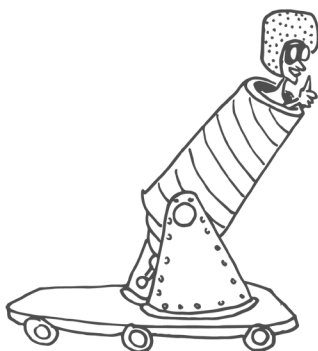
There's nothing worse than putting in a ton of work and getting zero recognition. It's like slaving 5 hours in the kitchen making an amazing lasagna and then your guests eat it like it's just what they expected from you anyway.

Well, do you want the truth? You want the truth??? YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE... sorry. I got a little carried away there. But seriously, here's the cold, hard reality. If you're doing your marketing correctly, people will take advantage. It's going to happen.

You can't spend your time worrying about people who will take advantage of your generosity and value. Your job is to focus on the people who see what you're doing and appreciate it. Those are the people who will build relationships with you. Those are the people who will become customers.

I'm not telling you that people aren't going to take advantage. They will. What I'm telling is, STOP WORRYING ABOUT IT. It's not a reason to keep doing crappy marketing. You can't change the fact that there are moochers out there looking for a handout. Big deal. There are also a ton of people looking for great businesses to work with. You can't hide from one without hiding from the other.

Get out of your head and into your market!



The Best Ways To Have The Right Perspective

Understand you can't serve everybody

Notice, I didn't say you can't PLEASE everybody. That's also true, but it's a cliché and not what I'm saying. What I am saying is that while you're so worried about whoever might take your stuff and go do it themselves, there are way more businesses than you could ever serve who are willing to spend money with you. You CANNOT serve all of the businesses that could potentially work with you. All you're trying to do is attract a small fraction of that total amount.

Stop listening to critics

At some point, you have to start trusting yourself. There will ALWAYS be critics and naysayers, and they are going to say really stupid things like, "You can't just give that away!" or "What are you doing? What if that guy takes your secrets and starts his own company?" These are really dumb things to worry about. There are so many potential customers, if some idiot wants to steal your ideas, that's fine, they won't get very far.

Remember it's not about you

When you approach your marketing decisions (or any decisions for that matter) from a place of fear, you're likely to make bad decisions. Especially right now, the last thing to worry about is whether or not people are going to abuse your generosity. The best way to renounce this fear is to give things away. Spit in the face of the fear that is driving you to make bad marketing decisions. Do the right thing, the rest will follow.



We're All In This Together.

This is the reality, your business has never been about you. Maybe you thought it was, maybe you've made it this far thinking that the reason your business existed was you. If that's the case, then I'm really glad you can't hide behind that ridiculous idea anymore.

I know you're scared. I am too. This is new territory. What I can promise you is that you need new customers. You can't hide in the sand while this all plays out around you. The best cure for fear is action. Take action to let the market know that you're there to help. Give value, no questions asked, no gimmicks, no commitments.

You will build relationships and brand equity and these will lead to new business.

If there's any way that I can help, email me at john@skymousestudios.com. Even if it's just a question or if you want my thoughts on any marketing ideas you're working on, I'm always happy to help. No questions asked, no gimmicks, no commitments.

Peace.

— John