

Title:

Are You Sabotaging Your Marketing Success?

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893

Summary:

80% of new businesses fail within the first 5 years. Learn 4 reasons why plus 10 tips to make your business succeed!

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Article Body:

What?!? Sabotage your own success? Who would do that? Well, you'd be surprised how many small business owners think they are effectively marketing their business, when in fact they are cutting their own throat.

Yes, they may be running ads that are pulling in leads or customers. And yes, they may be writing a regular column for their local newspaper so they are perceived as the expert in their industry. And yes, they may even be doing a pretty good job of marketing on a regular basis to their prospect list.

So if they are doing all of these things "right," how are they sabotaging their success? Well there are lots of ways.

Following are just a few of the ways small business owners unknowingly sabotage their own success.

(1) They have not taken the time to develop a marketing plan.

A plan focuses your efforts and allows you to make the most of your marketing budget. Unfortunately, you can market without a plan. Yes, you read that right. You can do it, and people do market without marketing plans everyday.

But that does not mean you should. To make the most of your marketing efforts and budget, make sure you take the time each year to create a plan.

(2) They don't have written goals

Smart business owners have written goals and objectives for what they want to

achieve with their business and for each of their marketing activities. I know this sounds b-o-r-i-n-g, but it's a fact.

There is proof that people who put their goals into writing have a higher success rate than those who do not. Plus, how can you develop a plan if you don't have concrete objectives? You need a clear vision and target to aim for. You can't possibly determine what marketing or how much marketing you need if you don't know what you are aiming for.

(3) They have a short-term attitude.

They are reactive in nature, and while on the surface it appears they are doing a lot of marketing, they are not doing anything consistently or long enough to make an impact. Running an ad or sending out your newsletter a few times and giving up when you don't get immediate results is worse than doing nothing at all.

How so? Because at least when you do nothing it doesn't cost you any money. Pulling the plug too soon costs you money. And statistics show it takes somewhere between three and 10 exposures to a message for the average consumer to notice it and take action. So it is quite possible your audience was just beginning to take notice right about the time you threw in the towel!

(4) They don't know their USP.

Probably the worst way business owners sabotage their marketing efforts without even realizing it, is to NOT have a clear Unique Selling Proposition (USP).

The greatest marketing plan in the world will not be effective if you have not clearly defined why someone should buy your product or service instead of all the other products or services available to them.

If you have not figured out what is unique and better about your product or service, and found a compelling way to communicate this in everything you do, you can market 'til the cows come home and you will be wasting your time and your money

10 Tips to Banish Marketing Sabotage

(1) Develop a marketing plan. Make sure you make it your number one priority to develop a marketing plan every year.

(2) Write objectives. Write at least one objective that states what results you would like to achieve with your business over the next year. And, write at least one objective for every marketing activity you undertake, that states what results you would like to achieve from that activity over the next year.

(3) Stay the course. Check in on your progress toward your objectives every three to six months, but give your plan a good nine to 12 months to work.

(4) Determine your unique selling proposition and make sure it is represented clearly and in a compelling way in everything you do.

(5) Don't try to be "everything to everyone." Focus on a few specific benefits and a specific audience.

(6) Track all of your marketing activities so you know exactly what is working and what is not working.

(7) Don't rely on one marketing activity. Employ a mix of several marketing activities to reach more people more times.

(8) Create a system to help you stay on track with your marketing activities every month and to help you plan ahead for future activities.

(9) Create a realistic budget based on a percentage of your projected revenue, or the dollars you have available for marketing and stick to it. Marketing is an investment in your business. You have to spend enough to make progress but not more than your business can financially support.

(10) Understand your environment. The economy, competition, the strength of your particular industry, your prospects' situation. You have to understand them all so you can create an effective plan to either overcome obstacles or take advantage of opportunities.

Follow these guidelines and your business stands a much greater chance of

succeeding. All of these activities are part of a good marketing plan. And no business that wants to succeed should be without one.

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