

Title:

A Marketing Lesson From TV's The Apprentice

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523

Summary:

What happens when smart business people try to be too creative with their advertising and marketing? They often lose sight of exactly what they're trying to accomplish. Yes you can be too creative for your business' good.

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Article Body:

Advertising and marketing are creative disciplines. That's one reason I love being a part of the marketing industry. Finding creative solutions to help clients sell their products and services is a fun way to make a living. Having said that, I must also say that too often I see marketers going too far.

In my opinion it is certainly possible to be too creative for your own good. What exactly do I mean by that? Let me share a very public example to explain.

My example comes from the reality television show, "The Apprentice." Okay, so I admit it, I LOVE that show. I'm not much of a reality TV fan, but there's something about watching these teams compete on business challenges week in and week out that intrigues and entertains me.

Quite often they are given marketing-related tasks on the show. Let's face it, marketing is one of THE most important jobs you'll ever have in business. If you can do it well, your business will more than likely do well. If you can't market well, your business is in trouble.

In a recent episode of "The Apprentice" the task was to create a TV commercial for Dove Body Wash. The teams were instructed to come up with an "out of the box" 30-second spot to promote the product. The result?

Both teams created garbage! I guess some may argue they certainly did think "out of the box," and both teams tried to justify that's what they did, but in the end, they failed miserably at their number one task: to sell the product!

And that's what I think happens to many marketers who try to be too creative.

They lose sight of the fact their job is to sell a product or service. To do that effectively, your marketing has to be one word: relevant.

You can be as clever or creative as you want, but in the end if your marketing is not relevant to the product and to those who are most likely to buy it, you have failed.

Look, I realize we have to be creative to capture our audience's attention. After all we are trying to cut through a sea of marketing clutter. I just wish more marketers tried harder to connect with their audience vs. simply entertain them.

Heck, I sometimes wonder if marketers even know who their audience is. This definitely came into play in The Apprentice with both teams showing men using Dove Body Wash in their commercials. C'mon, it doesn't take a lot of sense to recognize this product is for women! But because they were so focused on being clever, they lost sight of this very basic fact.

If I can leave you with one thought it is this: Identify and know your audience and then aim to connect with them and jump into the conversation they are already having in their head about your product or service.

If you can do this, you will be effective in capturing their attention, AND selling your product or service.

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