

The 7 Commandments of Marketing

By [Michele Schermerhorn](#)

Marketing is the key to success with any business, online or traditional. You can have a website or business location. You can have a great product. However, if no one has heard about your business or your product, you have NOTHING!

Marketing is everything you do to promote yourself and your business. Without an aggressive marketing effort, your website is just one of EIGHT BILLION listed on Google. Without an aggressive marketing effort, your store better have a location next to Wal-Mart and hope for their overflow. How do you stand out from the crowd?

There are seven (let's call them) commandments for your marketing efforts. Keep these in mind and you are well on your way to creating an effective marketing machine. Remember, there is only one way to score the effectiveness of your marketing efforts – SALES!

Commandment #1. Use a Rifle NOT a Shotgun

Rifles leave a neat, clean hole where you point them. Shotguns scatter shot in the general direction you point them. Most failed marketing efforts are born in a scattered marketing message aimed at the world.

Let's say you were trying to sell a snowboard. To effectively sell a snowboard to a fifteen year old requires an entirely different conversation than selling the same item to his mother. Therefore, commandment #1 directs us to segment our possible customers into different groups who share common concerns. If your product could be sold to a fifteen year old or a 40 year old, you'd better decide who you are going to focus your marketing efforts upon for the greatest success.

Commandment #2. KNOW Thy Customer Like Thyself

Following commandment #1, we selected a targeted group of people for our marketing message. Now, we MUST understand that targeted market as well as we know ourselves. We must crawl within their mindset. We must understand what they think about our product, what they want from our product, and the alternatives they have to our product.

Customers buy for their reasons, not yours. If you want to sell them your product, you MUST sell to their concerns, not your own. Every piece of marketing copy must FOCUS upon them. If you don't speak their language, you don't get their money.

Commandment #3. Be PASSIONATE About Your Company & Your Product

Attitude is infectious. If we are around upset people, we begin to take on that attitude ourselves. If we are with positive people, the same phenomenon occurs. Most people like to associate with enthusiastic people. And, most of us like passionate people. If you aren't passionate about your company and your product, why should anyone else be? Commandment #3 means to show passion for your product by speaking and writing about it with enthusiasm. Talk about what your product can help people accomplish in their lives. If you can't work up enthusiasm for your own product or business, find another business or product.

Commandment #4. Accept the fact that "NO" won't kill you

In the process of running a business and selling a product, you will hear "no" more frequently than you hear "yes" (if you're doing it right). What? By "doing it right", we mean you are TRYING things. Some work. Some don't.

Whenever you think of a new marketing approach, remember, the worst that can happen is they say "no". So, try it! This is not a matter of life or death. This is a great experiment!

"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." - Charles Darwin

Commandment #5. Wear a CLOWN SUIT! It's hard to ignore!

The cheapest and easiest marketing in the world is free advertising. How do you get free advertising? Wear a clown suit! Do something OUTRAGEOUS! Become news worthy. How?

When Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream first tried to expand to a nation-wide operation, it had trouble finding distributors. They determined the problem was that Pillsbury put out the word to all distributors not to work with Ben & Jerry's. Pillsbury's edict effectively blocked Ben & Jerry's from the services of the national distributors. What to do? Put on a clown suit!

Ben & Jerry's set up a one-man picket line outside Pillsbury headquarters. The picket sign read "Who's the Doughboy afraid of?" The result? National-wide FREE publicity on television and newspapers. Publicity they couldn't afford to buy.

In order to differentiate yourself from the crowd of competitors, you MUST be DIFFERENT! Design your own clown suit and wear it proudly!

Commandment #6. NEVER Give Up!

Albert Einstein said, "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up".

In marketing, everything you do moves you forward. If one campaign fails, you are that much closer to the one destined to succeed. Watch others. Learn from others. Learn from your own mistakes. BUT KEEP GOING!

Commandment #7. Always Be Closing

"Always be closing" is often referred to as the "ABCs of sales". However, it also applies to marketing. The objective of marketing is to increase sales. Not to "inform", "educate", or "entertain". I repeat: The objective of marketing is to increase sales.

Therefore, this last commandment directs us to write all marketing copy with the sale in mind. Only information that moves a potential customer toward a sale is allowed in our marketing copy. How do we know what should stay and what should go in our marketing materials? Read through it asking yourself one question – "So what?"

Another way of stating "so what?" is asking "why should the customer care?" You've been in business since 1972. So what? Your product folds flat. So what? You're a family owned business. So what? The alternative?

"We have been in business since 1972 so you'll always know where to find us. Since we are a family-owned business, you're always talking to an owner who can answer your questions and solve your problems. Our product folds flat to save you valuable office space when not in use." See the difference? Now you're talking about the customer's issues, not yours.

There you have my seven commandments of marketing based upon 33 years of business experience. "Commandment" is defined as "A formal pronouncement or rule". Keep in mind and put into practice these seven commandments of marketing. When you do, your marketing efforts will result in the only true value of marketing – increased sales!

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