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Why Your Business Messaging Should Be Strategic!

KEY Frequency, Reach & Message

Lord knows it isn't easy when you are trying to determine what platform will work best for your advertising.

The minute advertising companies know you are spending money, you will get hit with the heavy hitting sales people. You can't guess, or **hope** what you decide to do will work... you have to plan, learn and be strategic.

Why would a company like McDonald's continue to tell you they have large soft drinks for .99 cents? To send you clear, concise messaging. You may wonder why you see that commercial during every break of your favorite show... or up to 100 times in the next 3 days on your favorite TV station... is that their only advertiser? No. A company that chooses to advertise that way does so because they understand the importance of frequency and reach.

A commercial placed in the Super Bowl this year is valued at 4 million dollars. Why? The right people, the right time, the right message. If executed correctly, it will be talked about, shared and generate it's worth in income. For most of us, that is simply unreasonable... for a small business owner, \$1,200 is a considerable investment and needs to generate results.

Before you spend money on that next advertising campaign... consider the following three factors that will help you make a more informed decision.

Frequency

Frequency is the number of times your message is heard or seen or is repeated over a particular period of time or in a space. For instance, if you have flyers at an event and you see them at the door, in your swag bag, on a poster in the lobby, at a booth in the vendors area and on the email ad you receive for the event... that campaign has great frequency.

Reach

Reach is the potential size of an audience exposed to your message through a specific platform. Even with the right frequency, if there is no reach... it has little to no effect on your overall branding effort. For example, if you have ideal frequency but only 3 people attend the event... you don't have as much impact. But if there were 700 attending the event and the mailing list was at around 200K, you have an excellent platform and formula to make your message fly.

Message

Clear, concise consistent messaging rules the day. The more straight forward you can be, the better. Creativity is always fun and appreciated, but at the end of the day, this is an investment into your company and you want to see a return. It is critical you convey the right message to the right audience at the right time. During tax season, you will see companies like Liberty Mutual, H & R Block, and more telling you WHY you should choose them as your tax preparation company. You will see car dealerships telling you can buy a car the same day with specific arrangements... the list goes on and on.

Your message should also be crafted to interest your target market. If you sell bikes, and you know you are going to advertise to an extreme sporting group, your design, wording and overall message should be crafted to engage with that group. Consider making an offer that will entice them to join you.

The power of strategic messaging allows your platform to grow its wings. This is why large companies continue to advertise despite obvious success.

What Are You **Saying** About Your Business?

KEY Always Speak Positively, Even When You Don't Want To!

What do you say about your business to others?

Are you telling them about your successes, your struggles or your fears and worries?

You are what you say you are.

First things first, you must acknowledge that what you say is what is coming out of your heart. It is what YOU believe. If you aren't speaking growth, success, prosperity and peace over your business you are pronouncing the opposite. Your first audience is self.

People will repeat what you say.

The last thing any business needs is the echo of negativity pronounced over it. If you aren't pronouncing it, no one else will! Learn to share the positive's! Acknowledge what you love, what you positively expect your business to do, what is unique about you!

Glorify your uniqueness!

Take the gloves off and leave your fingerprint everywhere! Leave it on what you say, what you do, how you operate. I remember I could easily recognize a Spike Lee movie. He always used signature camera shots and specific types of content (sports enthusiasts). I loved recognizing his work!

Daily Affirmations

Practice getting up each morning and saying wonderful things about your business. "This will be our best year ever", "We will generate xxx in revenue", "I will serve every client with excellence", "We will expand this year", "My business is blessed", "We will overcome mediocrity and skyrocket into victory". Remember words are powerful containers of life!

Your company's brand is strengthened by your positive comments. It all starts in your heart, what do you believe about your business? Believe the best and talk about what you know you were created to do, serve with excellence!



BRANDING YOUR “WHY”

helping you tell your story in a way
that makes others take notice...

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PR That Grabs **Attention**

In a Pinch!

KEY We All Have a Story to Tell!

The heart of public relations is to share
the right message with the right people at the right time.

We all have a story to tell. But, not everyone gets heard. It doesn't matter what you are trying to promote the goal is to get heard! Here are a couple of tidbits that just may help you get the attention you need for your next big project!

Celebrate!

Get all the juicy tidbits in there – the ones the public won't know at first glance. When you write a release, make sure you have all of the juicy must-have details at the top. For example, you might include the fact that a 12-year old girl reinvented the new dessert recipe on the wake of her grandmother's last day -- after years of cooking with her in their restaurant, during the release of a new menu/re-branding of a local restaurant. Just make sure the most intriguing detail is at the top of your release.

Get it out there – but make sure you are sending it to the **RIGHT** people!

Send it to your trusted contacts. Ones that you can rely on to get it out there. By the time an event arises, this is something you should have – a list of great contacts you can depend on to help spread the word. But, even more importantly, send it to the right people! Nothing insults a reporter more (especially a busy one) than getting “junk” mail. Junk mail is mail that is not for them. Make sure the reporter/person you are sending your info to cares about it! *Sometimes the publishing of your story to a wide audience is instant. I rarely check the newspaper for my client's releases as most of them are dropped online, sometimes mere minutes after I send them!*

Tweet, Facebook and Instagram with keyword hashtags to meet new people in your field

Follow people with similar causes and start speaking to their audience immediately. Search in twitter with at least 3 keywords that relate: health fitness city – then start writing and using the tags that have the most content. Like what others say and reply with links to your product, service or event. I really suggest you start forging relationships with these groups. Sometimes, it is all in who you know. Point blank – period. So, even though you don't want to attend all of those little networking events like community breakfasts, chamber meetings, schmoozapalooza's and what not - do it. Join an organization related to what you do and another that is completely non-related like Toastmasters or the Kawanis Club and NETWORK! *Business friendships/relationships take a serious investment of time but are well worth it because they go a long way (and save you tons of time)!*

Make your calls and consider the “why”?

If you e-mailed a reporter you aren't familiar with or don't know so well – call them. Remind them about your press release, event or product. Always consider the why too, why aren't they calling – why aren't they responding. What is it going to take to make it happen? Don't hesitate to ask – closed mouths don't get fed. *Keep calling - persistence pays off.*

Express **TRUE** gratitude

When it is all said and done and everyone starts generating that buzz, send personal thank you notes and let them know how much you truly appreciate their time and help. *A great “thank you” goes farther than you think!*

We all have a story to tell. But, not everyone gets heard. Follow the steps above and stay consistent – eventually, it will pay off! Nothing happens overnight.

How to Make, Keep and Manage Lifelong Business Relationships!

KEY Valuable Relationships are Mutually Beneficial!

There are 7 Critical Steps in Relationship Building

Remember when you were in school and found out there would be a quiz the next week? I certainly do! I also remember my history teacher (who will remain nameless) would hand out these elongated boring study guides and tell us that if we completed them and knew the content, we would have all the answers and no problem with the test. Really??? I hated that... but when I entered the world of selling, I realized - that is exactly what listening to your client does... it gives you all the answers to the test! So I have 7 steps to developing a great and long lasting relationship with your client, beginning with listening.

1. Listen

Your client or potential client has a definite need. If you have called on them to make an appointment, or better yet, they have called you - somewhere in the back of their mind they believe that you may be able to serve or fill that need. AWESOME. But what is that need? You won't know until you hear them out. The art of listening requires that you allow the client to speak. While you may have done your research and feel as though you know exactly why they need your product or service, you must allow them to tell you why they have allowed you to have some of their time. *But, you can't and won't unless you listen and let them tell you why they need you. Be sure to take notes.*

2. Knowledge

Know your product/service and how it can help. Once you have established their needs, find out what works and what doesn't work. Find out why they love or loved a prior service and why they feel as though it helped or didn't help. Then share your expertise. Explain what may have been the problem and how your product/service can fill that gap. Or tell them that you can do something similar to what worked in the past and how your product or service can exceed their expectations. Be honest! If you can or can't help them, let them know. You may not be able to serve them, but they may know 3 other people you can help. *Because you chose to be honest, they will refer you with confidence.*

3. Creativity

Clients love creative solutions! They love to hear ideas that get people in the door, product off the shelf or offer a unique way to make tremendous progress. So, come prepared to be creative and think outside of the box. Brainstorming with a client allows them to know you are actively engaged and care about the success of their business or health and not just making a quick buck. *So don't be afraid to offer creative solutions.*

4. Negotiate

Once you know what your client desires and what you can offer, it's time to negotiate. The terms you negotiate will be what you and your client refer to in the time of a problem. So, if there is a problem, you can refer back to the terms of the initial agreement to establish a solution. This requires you know exactly what you can negotiate and what is not up for negotiation. It also requires that you remember your key objective is to make a profit and what the client's key objective is as well. *Once you have established in your mind what is important or critical to both of you, you are in a good place to negotiate. Bottom line, it all has to make sense.*

5. Respect & Serve

Respect and service go a long way! Be respectful of your client's time. Time is money for most if not all of us. So, if a client makes an appointment or calls you with a question – take the time to respond with courtesy and careful consideration. Your time is important too, so if you feel as though a client is monopolizing or taking too much of your time, don't hesitate to create boundaries. Just be clear and concise in your communications and stick to what you promise! Place value and stock in serving. Good customer service is hard to find, especially when you have a good product to offer as well. The two are rarely found joined together, so when a client finds the right fit – they are going to stick with it. A great servant is worth more in gold than the product itself. People enjoy being around those that respect them. Also, you must know the difference between being respectful or a good servant and just kissing up. *A great servant will tell the truth even when it is hard too, because they respect their client enough to do so.*

6. Value

Valuable relationships are mutually beneficial. They RULE. When you know what a person needs and understand how they make buying decisions your relationship with them has true value. When you manage their contract correctly or with due diligence it brings value. For a person to spend time or invest in your product or service, it must have value. You are the vehicle to bring value, to show value and to ensure value is present. This is your personal responsibility. Not the companies, not the clients – YOURS. *If you do your part correctly, you can have a valuable customer for life and they will refer tons of business your way!*

7. Happy

Be happy and joyful. Don't be a grumpy or depressed sales executive! People want to hear you smile. Even when they are having a bad day, if they call you and hear your happy voice it immediately changes their outlook. So be happy but not fake. Clients have fake detectors and hate fakeness. *Fake people only get business for a season.*



YOU Are the Ambassador of Your Brand!

KEY You are the ONLY one who cares about your business!

I try to look into the mirror each morning and say, “I am the ambassador of my brand. No one cares about my brand more than I do. It is my responsibility to manage it successfully.”

Whether you know it or not, the minute you announced to your friends and family that you would own your own business, you became a local celebrity and have paparazzi. Your friends and family are taking mental pictures of every message you make, every step you take and every accomplishment you gain.

It is your responsibility to harness your brand, to make sure that your brand is represented correctly. You work too hard not to ensure what people say about you is positive.

Quality work and Customer Service

The quality of your work and your customer service speaks volumes. Happy clients tell other happy clients. Happy clients will help your brand to grow exponentially. If you make a mistake and owe someone an apology, give it. Make it right. Clients that feel as though they were treated unfairly will tell more detailed stories to more people than happy clients do.

Attitude and Presence

Your attitude in the little things means so much. Are you a happy person? If not, it's time to really find the joy in not only what you do, but in life in general. People will talk about your attitude and how you treat others on a regular basis. They also expect you to be present where your clients are, where your peers are and more. Joining an organization that is full of your peers and serving in that organization are critical to your success. Most organizations require you to pay a fee for membership. Don't waste your funds being a bump on a log, jump in and get your hands dirty – become a member of leadership and make that investment count.

Corporate Communication

If you don't have a website that accurately represents what you do, you need one today. Your website is your representation to potential clients or investors when you aren't around. It says what you can't say because you aren't present. What you do, how you serve, client testimonials, about your company and more are just some of the critical areas you must have.

Personal/Professional Image

Whether you realize it or not, people are watching you. If you don't dress nicely, or keep your hair managed, nails manicured or other, they most often assume you can't have a successful business. In America, we are driven by consumerism. A person with a successful business that isn't groomed well, speaks well, dresses well and drives well is considered mediocre business person. While there may be exceptions to this rule, depending on the type of business you own, there aren't many. Always remember that you are representing your brand as you leave the house each day.

Your brand is much more than a logo or tagline. It is the way you work, the way you show up, the way you live and the way you present it to the world. You work hard to run a successful business, be sure the little things are not destroying your brand in the process.



Stephanie D. Moore is the owner of Moore Marketing and Communications. Moore Marketing and Communications is a marketing and public relations firm dedicated to helping clients share targeted messages in a unique way. We also help our clients become an authority in their field by utilizing new and traditional media via strategic plans. Marketing services we offer include but are not limited to graphic design, web design, social media messaging and brand management.

Stephanie has worked in various traditional media (television/print/web) forums for more than 10 years. Oklahoma City is a Nielsen #41 Market.

I would love to hear from you!

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