



Wouldn't it be great if you could methodically review all the factors that have a bearing on your advertising with the goal of planning ahead for your best ad program ever? THAT'S what **Make Your Advertising Pay** is about! It can be the key to your future success in marketing.

Part 2: Brainstorm!

If you will take the time to brainstorm and fill out the areas of study in these worksheets, you will...

- ...Pinpoint and verbalize your insights and intuitions, and develop a grasp of what your marketing challenge is.

- ...Be encouraged to institute regular methods for gaining input to guide your marketing efforts.

- ...Create a document that can guide your creative team, enabling them to build maximum accountability into your advertising program.

Taking an overall approach to your marketing communications will save you time and money in the long run.

Brainstorm:

1. Know the trends.

A. Name several societal trends that affect or could affect your business.

B. What are the trends in your industry that are likely to affect its course and profitability?

C. For each trend you noted, write a brief statement describing its impact or potential impact on your business.

Evaluate:

• What are your methods for staying abreast of industry developments? What are the attitudes within your organization that could prevent effective, creative use of trend watching?

“

Everything should be
made as simple as
possible, but not
simpler.

”

Albert Einstein

NOTE: The first full line of each “answer” area in this form is set up as a multi-line text box. The additional visible lines are to allow someone who is printing the online page to write in an answer by hand.

Brainstorm:

2. What do your employees know and how do they feel on important subjects?

Do your employees understand the company's mission and its goals? Are they aware of your advertising messages and media schedule? Do you know their insights for product or service improvement? If not, please take advantage of the Do The New Employee Innovation Program, also available on fastzone.com/.

Evaluate:

- Have you recently surveyed your employees to discover their insights and feelings about company matters?

NOTES

“

To me, the most important element in management is the human being. You can have the best plans in the world, you can have the most marvelous equipment. But it is people that carry out the plans and use the equipment. Without willing workers, you have nothing. So the first essential is to treat people with consideration.

”

Yoshiki Yamasaki, Mazda

Brainstorm:

3. Do you REALLY know your customers and prospects?

Specify the demographic information on your target markets and secondary markets – age, sex, family status, education, occupation and income. Sometimes ethnicity, religion and geographic info or title and job function can be pertinent. For business-to-business firms, specify client location, size in terms of number of employees and sales volume, type of industry and business type, whether a corporation, nonprofit, etc. Specify the psychographic tendencies of your targets – personality characteristics, lifestyle, values. For business-to-business, envision the decision maker. What are his/her values as pertains to work, doing business, service, fees. Please also note whether the target is a customer or prospect.

TARGET MARKET #1: _____

DEMOGRAPHICS

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

TARGET MARKET #2: _____

DEMOGRAPHICS

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

SECONDARY MARKET: _____

DEMOGRAPHICS

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

SECONDARY MARKET: _____

DEMOGRAPHICS

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

Evaluate:

- What are you doing to keep the loyalty of your customers? How do you reward customers? Solicit referrals?
- Name some appealing prospects. Why aren't they customers?
- Do you have a regular means of appraising customer satisfaction or of gathering market information?
- Have you studied U.S. census statistics regarding ethnic trends? Do you need to offer Spanish language options?

Brainstorm:

4. Know your offering.

Note the tangible and intangible features (attributes) of your product(s) and/or service(s) and the related customer benefit for each of your target markets. The object is to list as many attributes and benefits as possible, since these will help determine the message strategy for your ad program. These are the factors that [would] most influence your customers and prospects to buy. If you are evaluating the same product/service but for different targets, the attributes may be the same, but the benefits will correspond to the demographic and psychographic characteristics of the target. (See previous section.)

On the following worksheet you will find listings of social values and emotions that drive human behavior. As you note the customer benefits of your offering, think how each fulfills the emotional needs of your targeted prospect/customer and how it interfaces with their social values.

TARGET MARKET: _____ PRDCT / SVC: _____

| | ATTRIBUTE | BENEFIT |
|------------|-----------|---------|
| TANGIBLE | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| INTANGIBLE | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |

Describe your customer service philosophy.

Evaluate:

- Can you back up these claims with customer guarantees, testimonials, reports from surveys, etc.?
- Are there any negative attitudes to overcome in regard to what you sell, make or offer?
- What is the news about your product / service? Have you searched on the web for any commenting, etc.?
- In which phase does your product/service fall? -Introduction / Growth / Maturity / Saturation / Decline
- How could value be added to your service(s) or product(s)? THINK.

Continued on following page

Brainstorm:

4. Know your offering (cont.).

TARGET MARKET: _____ PRDCT / SVC: _____

| | ATTRIBUTE | BENEFIT |
|------------|-----------|---------|
| TANGIBLE | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| INTANGIBLE | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |

Describe your customer service philosophy.

Evaluate same points listed on page 4.

The eight basic emotions that drive behavior are:

- Joy
- Acceptance
- Fear
- Surprise
- Sadness
- Disgust
- Anger
- Anticipation

Eight basic social values that drive behavior:

- Achievement
- Security
- Sense of belonging
- Love
- Excitement
- Fun and enjoyment
- Self-esteem
- Social recognition

*from The Marketing Revolution
by Kevin J. Clancy and Robert S. Shulman*

“

Service is not an event; it is the process of creating a customer environment of information, assurance and comfort.

”

Relationship Marketing by Regis McKenna

Brainstorm:

5. What do you know about your competition?

In the categories below, rate or rank your firm against four competitors.

| | YOU | COMPETITOR #1 | C#2 | C#3 | C#4 |
|--------------------|-------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|
| SIZE | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| MARKET SHARE | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| IMAGE | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| REPUTATION | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| PROD./SVC. QUALITY | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| CUSTOMER SERVICE | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| DISTRIBUTION | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| PRICING / FEES | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| WEBSITE | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| ADVERTISING | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Note three KEY attributes/benefits for your major offerings and consider whether you surpass your competition in each area.

PRODUCT/SERVICE _____

ATTRIBUTE/BENEFIT

| | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

PRODUCT/SERVICE _____

ATTRIBUTE/BENEFIT

| | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Evaluate:

- What is your method for monitoring the competition?
- Is secrecy important in your industry, or could alliances be fruitful?
- In regard to market share, what is the leader doing differently than you?
- How often do you review pricing?
- Describe your competitors' advertising. What is their message? What media do they use? Estimate how much they spend. If you have a file of ads and brochures of your competition, show it to your creative team.

“ When your eyes are on the competition, you have taken them off the customer. ”

*Seven Steps to
Maximizing Business Potential*

Brainstorm:

6. What are your strategic objectives?

A. What are your strategic short- and long-term goals as they relate to your marketing quest? Can you think of any new niche markets to pursue or any new applications for your offering? (THINK INNOVATIONS.)

B. Is there a way of involving your employees in your marketing program to increase its effectiveness?

C. Could you tie a group of services together in a service package to reach a specific niche?

C. Can you utilize the Internet in a new way? Do you offer an iPhone or smart phone App?

D. Can you beef up your customer service policy?

E. Looking back over your statements of how various trends may affect your business (Section 1), do you foresee a need to outline an Advertising Plan B in the event Plan A is obsoleted?

F. What is your sales/billings goal for the coming year, or, if you prefer, what percent increase in your billings/sales over the present year do you seek in the coming year? How many new customers does this represent? What increase in market share do you seek?

“

**In the long run
men hit only what
they aim at.**

”

Henry David Thoreau

Brainstorm:

7. Know your target audiences.

You have many important “publics” to communicate with. Among them are:

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Customers | Prospects | Employees |
| Media | Financial leaders | Industry leaders |
| Government leaders | The community | Investors |
| Professional organizations | Suppliers | Editors / Bloggers |

A. With which of the above publics are you presently communicating? Do you use Twitter? Facebook? Other?

B. What other groups would be important to communicate with?

C. What are your present public relations programs? Do you foresee any in your future?

D. Has there been any adverse publicity about your organization or your industry that would need to be addressed with the media or with customers?

“

...10 percent of the people in an industry influence the other 90 percent. If a company can win the hearts and minds of the most important 10 percent, its market positioning is assured.

*Regis McKenna
The Regis Touch*

”

Brainstorm:

8. What are your communications objectives?

A. What is the most important message to convey in your ads and any web-related communications?

FOR ACQUIRING NEW CUSTOMERS

FOR RETAINING CURRENT CUSTOMERS

FOR INCREASING VOLUME - w/ CUS.

B. What is the feeling or approach that will best relate the personality of your offering(s)?

FOR ACQUIRING NEW CUSTOMERS

FOR RETAINING CURRENT CUSTOMERS

FOR INCREASING VOLUME - w/ CUS.

C. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of your advertising program(s)?

FOR ACQUIRING NEW CUSTOMERS

FOR RETAINING CURRENT CUSTOMERS

FOR INCREASING VOLUME - w/ CUS.

Evaluate:

- Are your customers aware of all that you offer?
- Do you have a need to educate customers or others about your services or products?

Brainstorm:

9. Annual program options

Here are listings of items which may be considered as part of your marketing communications budget, or as potential ways to advertise. Fill in the blanks for amounts you know will be in your budget. Put a cost estimate for any that you foresee investing in for the coming year. [The calculation function will not work unless you have Acrobat Reader 8 installed on your computer.] Please consider these as possibilities rather than absolutes to give your creative team leeway in making recommendations.

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Open House.....\$ | Yellow Pages/Online Directories \$ |
| Changes in showroom..... | Niche Publications..... |
| Client entertainment / gifts..... | Internet ad program |
| PowerPoint presentation | Website |
| Literature / brochures | Direct / Individualized Mail |
| Market research..... | Newsletter / Eletter..... |
| Trade Shows..... | Point of sale..... |
| Memberships..... | Specialties..... |
| Employee training / meetings | Newspaper |
| Christmas / other cards..... | Catalog |
| Telemarketing | Magazine |
| Special Events..... | Radio |
| Public Relations | Network / Cable TV |
| Search Engine Optimization | Outdoor..... |
| Sales meetings..... | Trade Publication |
| Other | Vehicle..... |
| TOTAL..... | TOTAL |

“

An advertising agency that shows you work that does not contain some sense of the unexpected— at least a few surprises— is simply not doing its job the way it should. I am quite serious when I say that one of the main responsibilities any advertising agency has is to prepare, propose, and fight for ads that make clients nervous.

”

Consider:

10. The importance of image

A. What does your name suggest? Is it appropriate? Has your firm outgrown it?

B. Does your logo accurately symbolize your company? What comments have you heard about it? Is it contemporary?

C. How long have you used your present colors? Do they convey the personality and character of your company and industry? Are they different from your competitors'?

D. Does your logo look good in black & white? On a fax? Can it be animated for the Internet?

E. Do you have a Service Mark? What is it? Is it up to date? Overused? What are the SMs of your competitors?

F. Do your signs, stationery, website(s) and social media pages promote a favorable impression of your organization?

Before going on to projects that will feature your Name, Logo, Colors and Service Mark, it is important to invest in "the basics." Get branded!

And finally, decide:

How much to spend.

A budget for marketing communications will include cost estimates for a variety of items for promotion and advertising (See Section 9). An advertising budget is derived by taking a percentage of your previous year's sales or billings or by projecting an amount which relates to your goal for increasing your sales volume (Section 6).

Estimate a total figure for your marketing and promotional programs. (If you prefer, your creative team will assist you to set a budget.)

Evaluate:

- Are you considering your marketing and advertising as tax deductible investments in your business?
- Are you factoring in the need to be consistent in your programs?
- Will you receive any advertising co-op money from suppliers or manufacturers?

“

**Advertising is the power
of an idea multiplied.**

D'Arcy Agency slogan

”