



Abstract : How to turbo-charge your marketing & sales efforts

Do you have all the customers you need? Are you looking for cost-effective ways to attract more customers? Have you tried advertisements, newsletters, trade-shows, brochures, coupons, and dozens of other ways - without the success you would like? Are you happy with the status-quo? Would you like to turbo-charge your sales efforts, maybe double or triple your sales, without paying a fortune?

There are several marketing secrets that no one really discusses. In fact, if you talk with a hundred different marketing consultants, you are likely to get 99 different opinions about what to do! And, probably in their own area of expertise. You can't afford to try them all, but isn't that what you've been doing? Without the success you would like?

If you are ready to learn changes you can make in order to boost revenue and your company's value, then read on.

What does "strategic marketing" mean?

The secret to increasing sales has everything to do with being effective, instead of efficient. And it has everything to do with "managing by facts," instead of through seat-of-the-pants marketing. If one marketing method brings ten times the response rates over a second method, then why even spend a dime on that second way? Yet time after time, that is exactly what business owners do. Because that's what they think "marketing" is: doing lots of "marketing"! This approach is quite natural and pervasive, but it can be very ineffective! If you are interested in making your trade shows the best they can be, but they yield the lowest close ratios, then why make it perfect? Or do it at all? Find out what works and do that, instead!

The difference between tactical marketing and strategic marketing is simple: Tactical marketing is "doing stuff," and strategic marketing is focused

on getting results! It has to do with knowing, instead of guessing (through marketing failures), what will and won't work ... before you spend loads of cash on any particular marketing initiative.

Doing six marketing "things" ... may generate a lot of leads... but if they are not the right leads, nor converting to sales - in the shortest time, what do you do? You add a seventh "thing." This spreads out your limited marketing \$\$ even thinner. If you knew which one marketing approach gave you the largest return on your investment, wouldn't you simply do just that one thing? Why do more? Spend more? Get lower returns? This just doesn't make sense, yet business owners do it all the time... because most "marketing types" are great at marketing tactics - not necessarily marketing strategies! In tactical marketing, more (spending) is better. In strategic marketing less (spending) is better. And just talking

about strategic marketing doesn't mean you're actually doing it!

The key notion here is... how can you leverage your limited marketing resources to yield even greater returns?

Are you ready to turbo-charge your sales?

How would you like to:

- Learn how to attract more customers, by spending *less* on marketing?
- Have your customers spend more on your products and services?
- Double or triple your sales' effectiveness?

The marketing secret discussed in this article requires that you are 100% open to change and learning, that you stop making even the smallest assumptions about your marketplace, and that you may need to learn a new language... your customers'!

What can you do to attract more customers?

Determine exactly what you need to know in order to attract more of your "A" customers. Not the "market research" that tells you how many competitors you have, and what other product / service choices your customers have. Nor is this about "the sale:" where you are having a one to one conversation, finding out specific needs. This secret will help you communicate with your prospects in the way that they want to buy... from you!

The four things you need to know about your customers and prospects are:

- Who are they?
- What are they buying?
- Why are they buying?
- How are they making their purchasing decisions?

The specific answers to these general questions will [1] show the way to bring in business, [2] help you go after those customers who will provide you the biggest bang for the buck, [3] enable you to develop exactly what you say to prospects, and [4] approach them how they want to be approached.

Who are your customers?

Specifically, given a choice between customers who spend an average of \$1,000 on your company's offerings and those who spend \$5,000, wouldn't you rather find those who spend five times as much? You can also assess their sales cycle, lifetime value, gross margins, etc. Determining exactly and statistically who your preferred customers are - and what attributes and characteristics they have - will allow you to spend time only on the best prospects. What is it about your best customers that make them spend more? If you don't know, wouldn't it make sense to find out? Once you do, you have started figuring out how to address a "5X" challenge. That is, if you solve this one problem, you may have an opportunity to increase your sales by a factor of five! And since you are going after 5X buyers, your cost-to-acquire decreases, enabling you to focus better, and potentially spend even less time and money on marketing.

What are they buying?

Specifically, what benefits and features are they buying? What tangible attributes do they want? Are they buying your products and services because they are faster? Smaller? More durable? Integrated? Easily changed? By answering this question, you will be able to learn which of your offerings' features to discuss with prospects. If there are 25 features, and your prospects are only interested in five, then why spend any time discussing the other twenty? This is

where you start learning their exact language. Sometimes a one word change in your message can make a significant difference!

Why are they buying?

Specifically, what are your prospects' underlying motivations for purchasing your products/services? If you can uncover their reasons for buying from you, you will be able to address these reasons when you market and sell to them. Your task is to find their intangible rationale for their buying patterns! And do so statistically.

How are they buying?

If everyone in your business-to-business industry is presenting at trade shows, but your customers buy because of referrals, why go to trade shows? If coupons overwhelmingly bring them to your retail store, why advertise in the yellow pages? The methods you like to use may have worked in the past, but times change. And they're changing rapidly. A much more effective way is to learn before you spend money on low-return methods. And the best way to do that is to statistically learn your customers' preferred methods.

I use the terms "specific" and "statistically" for each of these four areas. The reason is to avoid the "loudest, last customer" syndrome. You know... that one customer or prospect who was/is insistent that you do this or that... while nine out of ten others quietly prefer something else. If you don't uncover the hidden majority-driven preferences, you will be forever lagging in sales.

Why do we answer the four questions above? We want to learn what we need to do to attract more customers. Specifically, we want to better understand the following areas:

- Markets: Only after we better learn who are our best customers, can we more effectively target them. We can reduce spending in areas that attract the wrong customers, and improve our return on investment.
- Messages: Only after we understand what our customers' are buying and why they are buying, we will be able to develop specific messages that map into their mind... that resonate with their thinking and feeling.
- Methods: Only after we determine how our customers make their purchase decisions will we be able to use the appropriate methods for the appropriate market, in the way they buy.

If each of the answers to the four questions (who, what, why, how) yields a 3X to 5X improvement in performance, then combining the results can yield significant corporate performance improvements. You might be able to focus on only one customer type, with fewer products - the exact opposite of our natural instincts - which is to create more products, go into adjacent markets and try to "buy" market share. These typically fail - unless you are made of cash and can afford many failures. Most clients I work with don't have the luxury of extra time and money and want great results sooner, not later.

What results can you achieve?

Every company, industry, and market is different. However, here are typical results our clients have achieved as a result of using this secret, in conjunction with six others:

- Doubled the number of customers in three months.
- Increased available cash in the bank from \$150K to \$1.4 million in 18 months.
- Raised prices 50% and increased sales as a result.

- Increased revenue 71% in three months, doubling within one year.
- Obtained direct marketing response rate of 25% from prospects & 40% from customers.
- Increased company value from prior offers of \$1 million - to \$20 million in six months.
- Grossed an additional \$500,000 in three months (\$233K/month average, before).
- Fifth, test (market, message, method) what you have learned to validate you are no longer making assumptions.

When rolling out your new fact-based marketing initiative, there are some great marketing, advertising, PR and “marcom” firms who can help you achieve success. You will be able to choose them with great confidence that you now know the right markets, messages, and methods. You will no longer be making any assumptions. And you can be assured your marketing will be significantly more effective.

What to do tomorrow - to start attracting new customers.

At the end of in-house seminars I present to CEOs, participants ask me how to get started right away.

- First, perform an internal assessment of your customers. Analyze your customer database (you *do* have a database of customers, right?). There are several analyses you can perform, but sort on total revenue per customer, gross margin, sales cycle, life-of-customer value, costs to acquire, etc.
- Second, figure out who your top (i.e preferred) customers are - their characteristics and attributes.
- Third, develop and deploy a survey that contains both open-ended and closed-ended questions to determine the nuances your seat-of-the-pants approach can't.
- Fourth, analyze, then synthesize the results to statistically get at the information that you need in order to develop highly-effective marketing!

If you don't know how - or don't have time to make this happen, hire someone who has done this many times before. Isn't your company worth it?

A final thought

If this were easy, then everyone would be doing it. It is the hard work that pays dividends - not only in the long run - it can also dramatically increase your business in very short order! It is far easier to simply “do marketing” than it is to know which is the right marketing to do. So step back, think, plan and go attract more customers!

Author's note: This abstract is of the new book: *How to Attract Significantly More Customers*, just published.

It can be ordered here:
www.attractmorecustomers.net

Mark Paul has thirty years of executive level leadership experience - including 11 years at Global 500 companies (Ford and Northrop Corporations, where he built a \$50 million business unit in two years, with 250 people reporting to him in line and project roles). He has 19 years of business leadership consulting as the president at Phoenix Management, Inc., and most recently as a Managing Partner at Synergy Consulting Group, LLC, an executive / business development consultancy. He has led small, under-funded start-ups, mid-size companies, as well as a public technology company. Synergy Consulting (www.synergy-usa.com) helps clients attract new customers, increase revenue, profitability and company value. Mark has served on boards of directors and advisors for several companies.

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