

The Three Ps of Successful Marketing

by Rickey Gold

If I had to come up with the three most important areas of marketing, they'd probably be the three Ps: positioning, presentation and panache.

Granted, I love alliteration, but that's not the reason why. It's more a matter of what I've found over years of working with small to mid-sized businesses in a variety of different industries. When companies are stumbling over their marketing, one of the three Ps is generally at fault.

Let's look at how this works.

Positioning is probably the most critical area of a company's marketing. It's our identity. It addresses who you are. What makes your product or service unique. How you differ from the competition. What clients can expect when they work with you. If you can't answer the above, odds are your marketing can't be working very well.

You need to be able to tell prospects and customers just what your firm can do for them. For example, if you claim to be experts in time management, you should be able to estimate how much time a company can expect to save if they hire your firm. By translating the time into hourly wages, a company can see that working with you will help them save "x" amount of dollars per year. It's pretty simple and a lot more effective than just saying "we can save your company a lot of wasted time".

Presentation is the second most important aspect of marketing your business. It's the face of your company. From the receptionist in your office to the sales and marketing team and right up to the CEO. Every person in your firm represents who you are. So if the person who answers the phone does so in a dull monotone, that sets the first impression of your company – not a good one. On the other hand, a bright and friendly greeting from a person happy to help you immediately presents a positive impression.

Of course, presentation isn't limited to employees. It's reflected in your business cards and marketing material, on your website, in the professionalism of sales calls and networking, in each and every meeting and every follow-up.

If you want potential clients to view your firm as a possible vendor, make sure that everything and everyone related to your company presents well.

And the final "p" -- **panache**. Is this absolutely critical to successful marketing? Not necessarily. If you're an IT support service, your technical knowledge, track record and response time are more important than style. But then again, aptitude and talent can be defined, albeit loosely, as panache. And those are skills that an IT firm should have.

For most businesses, when I refer to panache, I mean that "extra something". An edge. It might not even be anything you can define. Call it flair or spirit -- charisma or energy. It's what makes people want to listen to what you have to say. Or see what you have to sell.

For a retailer, it could be fabulous taste and unique products, invitingly displayed. Or a merchandising flair that creates drop dead gorgeous windows where people just have to stop and

look. Throw in a warm and friendly sales staff and you've got the elements for a successful retail shopping experience.

Savvy marketers want people to stop, look, listen....and buy. Those with the right positioning, professional presentation and a bit of panache have a much better chance of succeeding than those that don't.

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