

Memorable Solutions

Elements of a Memorable Marketing Plan

Remarkable Product/Service

This is where it all starts. Without a product or service **worth talking about**, you're doomed. No amount of advertising, gimmickry, or the like will make-up for a dull or inadequate product. So, get this part right for sure. The rest will be much easier if you do.

Memorable Delivery of the Product/Service

Okay, so you've created the next "Purple Cow". Now, comes the really hard part.....**making sure your delivery is memorable enough to compel folks to talk about you**. Remember, a car, dining experience, computer, etc., can be incredibly good. But, it's the artful and personal delivery which solidifies the emotional connection with the customer, and in turn makes the experience memorable. And, when it's memorable it becomes a story worth telling. Did you ever think we would stand in line to pay \$4 for a cup of coffee from someone called Starbucks?

The Story

The Story is the culmination of the first two elements of the plan. It's the **emotional connection you make with your customer**. It's the "what" people say about you and "why" they say it, all wrapped up into one. This is the amplification you need to make to be sure your message is heard.

Spreading the Story

This is the only part of the plan which at all resembles what you learned in your Marketing 101 class. Please note that it comes LAST! If you don't get the other parts right, you can forget about this section.

You spread the story by getting people to notice, and then to talk.

People notice you when they hear about you from someone they know and trust. It could be a friend, family member, colleague, or someone they pay for advice like a lawyer or travel agent. Or, it could be a "trusted source" like a popular magazine, club they belong to, etc. You get the picture...they have to be emotionally connected to the source somehow. That's why traditional advertising is so ineffective. Inherently, people don't trust the source, at least not as much as if they heard from someone they know. Even when your favorite movie star, talk show host, etc., appears in the ad, it's not reliable....because you know they are getting paid to do it. And, in almost all cases, you don't know them personally.

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Yes, you can make the argument that people will notice you if you cram enough advertising down their throats or if you happen to catch them at just the right moment when they by chance are ready to buy what you're selling. But, you had better have really deep pockets if you want to go this route. And, even then, there's a very good argument that you would still be better off putting all of that ad money back into the product and/or the delivery to make it even better! Just think how cool Coke might be if they shifted some of those millions into the delivery. Nobody talks about Coke....anymore. It's boring. There's no story to tell.

So, you need to get some of these people (sneezers, influencers, etc.) that others trust to try you out. Here's an idea....**just give it to them for free!** No obligation to buy, sell it or anything. If they think it's half as good as you do, the rest will take care of itself.

I read a story not long ago about the Toyota Prius. The discussion centered around the lack of market share, i.e., disappointing initial sales results. Two points were made by the leader of the discussion: 1. the product is boring, not remarkable (aside from the technical side, nothing else about the car is either cool or practical. In fact, one can argue that it's quite ugly); 2. Toyota tried the traditional advertising route to get people to buy. What would have happened if the design of the car was really neat, stylish, etc? And, what if they had given a whole bunch of the cars to key influencers, celebrities, etc? Now, instead of appealing only to the "environmentally conscious" or gas saver types, you reach a much broader audience.

Along with the selected freebies, **carefully leak the information** to the right folks via press releases, phone calls, begging, etc.

Also, **get to the "hives"**, and make a splash. Go to trade shows, conventions, or any gathering of potential users who are also likely to be trusted sources.

Then, get the trade pubs, newspapers and user associations interested in you. **Get them to write about you**, blog about you, or whatever. Believe me, if you're product is remarkable, and you have a great story to tell, they will write about you....no problem.

Finally, **find people who are trusted and influence others outside the circles of your product's traditional consumer base.** And, get them to talk about you.

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For instance, there's a Microsoft marketing exec who is fairly well known and trusted in the world of software and high tech. So much so that he has a fairly sizeable subscriber base to his personal blog. Wouldn't it be great if you could get him to endorse your product and service, even if it has nothing to do with computers? I would bet that some of those subscribers fit your target audience profile.

There's really no limit to the amount of people you can get to spread the word if you **get it going in enough places**.

Once you do get some folks' attention, be sure to make it easy for them to spread the word, and **make it very clear what you want them to say**. Give them fun things to hand-out, make it easy to tell the story (not complicated to risk getting screwed up), give them incentives, follow-up to be sure they have what they need and.....get feedback.

Unlike what ad execs and marketing professors will have you believe, this part of the plan is actually the easy part if you've done everything else right.