

# 18 Web-Marketing Concepts That Make A Difference

## 1. Think Audiences Not Markets

What's your market? Hire a consultant to help you with your Web-business problems and one of the first questions he or she will ask is, what's your market? How about eighteen to thirty-four year old, single male college graduates with a dog named Spot; or maybe forty-five to fifty-nine year old married women, who hate their husbands and can't get their adult children to move out of the house. Maybe, just maybe, they're asking the wrong question.

The Web isn't about markets, it's about audiences. Audiences need to be entertained, enlightened, and engaged, and if your website doesn't, you're never going to achieve what you want.

Time to rethink how you're delivering your marketing message. Start treating Web-visitors like an audience not a market, and you might just find what it takes to be successful on the Web.

## 2. Think People Not Customers

You know all those visitors you attract to your website with your brilliant search engine optimisation schemes, how many actually purchase anything? Stop treating visitors as if they are already customers and start treating them like what they are - people. That's right, people. You know the two-legged funny creatures with wants, needs, desires, and maybe even a few pounds to spend.

Customers are always looking for a deal and they're leery of websites that only want to take their hard earned cash. Treat your Web-visitors like people who can satisfy their wants, needs, and desires with your assistance and guess what? Maybe it will make a difference: one small step for Web-credibility, one giant leap for Web-success.

## 3. Think Experiences Not Features

Bought any good features lately? Didn't think so. You would think the way business pushes the whole feature-frenzy thing that features are exactly what people are looking for, but nobody buys features, they don't even buy solutions - boy doesn't that whole solution provider nonsense really get to you after a while.

What people really buy are experiences, hopefully positive ones. Whether it's soft ice cream or a new accounting program, what people are paying for is the experience your product or service provides.

Does your website offer an experience? Does it explain the experience your product or service delivers? If it doesn't, then you really haven't got anything anybody wants.

## 4. Think Emotion Not Logic

Think you're a logical person, always making rational decisions based on practical criteria, and bottom line results. So tell me what was the functional thinking that went into the purchase of those leather pants you bought last year, or that sixty inch plasma television you bought just to watch the big game?

Let's get real. You make purchasing decisions based on what you want, and then justify them with seemingly sensible rationalisations, just like everybody else. So stop trying to appeal only to the practical, logical, aspects of bean-counter sales, and start pushing the feel good aspects of emotional marketing. If you're trying to appeal to an audience that gets its only satisfaction out of acquiring the most features for the least cost, then your marketing to the wrong audience.

## **5. Think Memories Not Promotions**

Most animals live in the moment, whereas human beings live in the past. Our here and now and our plans for the future are based on our experiences, our histories, and our memories.

We take pictures of our kids, holidays, and special events; we commemorate birthdays, anniversaries, promotions, and milestones of all kinds. Even the significance of our prized possessions is centered on the fact that those mere objects represent memories of the people, places, and events that shaped our lives.

Real marketing, the kind that creates long-term clients and customer relationships, is not about coupons, sale promotions, or deep discounts; it's about delivering memories.

## **6. Think Marketing Not S.E.O.**

Okay, here's one you've heard from us before: think marketing not search engine optimisation. Sure you've got to drive as many people to your website as possible, but if your marketing message is so confused, unfocused, and hard to comprehend because of all the keyword density and S.E.O. tricks, then what have you really accomplished other than wasting people's time? And people really get upset when you waste their time.

## **7. Think Stickiness Not Hits**

It's not about how many hits you get on your website, it's about how long people stay. If visitors remain on your site long enough to get your marketing message then you must have said something worth listening to, and if visitors get the message, your site has done its job.

If your website delivers the message, then you can expect the email inquiries and phone calls to start flowing, but it's still up to you and your sales staff to close the sale: people close sales not websites.

## **8. Think Stories Not Pitches**

Did you hear the one about the farmer's daughter and the search engine optimiser ... Stories, everyone loves stories. In fact before the invention of the Gutenberg press, oral story telling was the way knowledge got passed down from one generation to the next, and how news was sent from one region to another.

Now that we have this multimedia Web-environment, we can continue the tradition of real people delivering creative audio and video presentations that capture the imagination and drive home the marketing message so your audience won't forget who you are. Nothing informs, engages, and entertains, like a good story: sounds to me like one heck of a way to sell to an audience desperate for meaningful communication.

## **9. Think Focus Not Confusion**

There you go again, telling everyone who will listen all the wonderful things you and your company can do. Trouble is, telling them all those things just confuses them.

What is the product or service that is most important to your company, the one you are determined to sell to your audience? That's the one you want to talk about. That's the one you want to devote your marketing effort to promoting. That's the one you want people to think about when they hear your name or see your logo. Focus your communication or your message will just be a forgettable, incomprehensible blur.

## **10. Think Campaigns Not Ads**

Isolated one-time advertisements are like one-night-stands: exciting for a while but ultimately unfulfilling and devoid of meaning. Your audience is looking to get married, not a short-term fling. Your marketing has to woo your visitors with long-term campaigns that tell your story and deliver your focused message; audiences expect to be courted and counseled with meaningful communication. And that takes time and commitment.

If you're spending money on just ads, you might as well be throwing that money down the drain. There is a better way. So if you're looking for a long-term relationship with your audience, think campaigns not ads.

### **11. Think Message Not Hype**

What message are you delivering to your online visitors? Are you telling them you've got the best product, at the best price, with the best staff, and world-class customer service? Is that what you saying? Guess what? Nobody cares, because nobody believes you.

There is only one way to show people you're the best and that is to prove it, but here's the catch, you can't prove it until they become customers. Whoops. Okay, so what's the solution? How about a real marketing message that speaks to what your audience really wants. It's not about you it's about them.

### **12. Think Personality Not Banality**

Does your website just lie there like a lox; you know that cold, dead fish that often comes with a bagel? No personality, just more of the same tedious, dull, dreary, mind-numbing, tiresome, lackluster, monotonous, stuff everybody else has. Boring! This is the new Web, so if you can't get with it, you'd better get out because you're wasting your time and everybody else's.

You're so worried about downloading times that you forgot to put anything on your site worth seeing or hearing. Check your logs. If people are jumping ship faster than rats on a burning ship, it's time to try something new; like, maybe some compelling content.

### **13. Think Branding Not Copyrights**

Hay, I love the Beatles. I grew up with them, and I have all their records - ya records, like vinyl dude, not CDs. And guess what, I've also got a Mac, in fact I've got a bunch of them, not to mention iPods and other assorted Apple gizmos and gadgets. And you know something, I've never once got John, Paul, George, or Ringo confused with Steve Jobs. Amazing!

Worry just a little less about all that small print stuff and more on building a memorable brand that people will remember, and that nobody will mistake for some johnny-come-lately imposter.