

IN THE TRENCHES

BUSINESS THOUGHTS AND IDEAS FROM SOMEONE WHO'S WALKING THE TALK

October 2009

NOTE: These items are more strategy or big thinking ideas than tactics. These days, high-quality, proven tactics are available to anyone with an internet connection or credit card. And if that's all it took, there'd be far more successful businesses than there are.

1. **Beware the survey.** Most marketing books will tell you to survey your market then give it what it wants. But when you respond to your market, you're following what I think is an imaginary target. Instead, figure out how you can lead your market. Plus, there's a good chance that what they say in a survey isn't going to be the same as what they do when you ask them to get their wallet out.
2. Pay-per-click is just **one** tool. Lately there are far better ways to reach many markets. They're also cheaper... and they aren't controlled by an 800 pound gorilla like Google® that makes up the rules for you as it goes.
3. There is great power in being reachable to your customers and prospects. The "guru at the top of the mountain" business is dying as people realize they're not as stupid as they thought. The guy who said you're supposed to be unreachable as a positioning tool to sell more stuff was probably just trying to sell you his course or his book. The game is over. It's time to be **real**.
4. Stop buying marketing courses and start thinking for yourself. Buying someone else's thoughts and implementing them doesn't add to your unique value in the marketplace. Thinking for yourself and implementing those ideas does. (NOTE: Thinking is hard work.)
5. The internet is turning the buying process on its head. How about leading the way? Stop making the SALE the only goal. That's extremely transparent and it's starting to piss people off. Make the SALE a symptom of building the RELATIONSHIP that you build with your prospects. If you have the relationship, you don't even need to ASK for the sale. (I've just seen it happen... it works very nicely.)
6. The longer I go in this business, the more proof I have that copy is not as important as everyone says it is. If you're renting a cold list and spending money on postage, that's one thing... but if you're building a relationship with a prospect over time... then not so much. The letters I spend weeks writing create no more results than the ones I create in one day or less. Often times, the letters that take forever actually sell far less. If your promotions aren't working, maybe you're selling something nobody wants. It's a whole lot smarter to face reality and work at creating something people actually *want* than it is to buy copywriting courses looking for money sucking secrets that don't exist :) This business is not hard, as long as you are selling something someone actually wants.
7. How many things can you focus on at once? Pay-per-click, SEO, copywriting, social media? How about pick ONE and master it. I think diversification is overrated. And as business advice, it can be downright deadly. Diversification is what unsophisticated investors do to avoid risk. Are you playing this game to avoid losing or are you playing to win? **Focus on something and KILL IT.**

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