

IN THE TRENCHES

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

November 2009

Real World Lessons Learned from an "In the Trenches" Marketing Contrarian...

1. **Infusionsoft Deliverability Test** - Currently, I'm seeing about a 5-15% hit in deliverability using Infusionsoft (<http://www.infusionsoft.com>) vs AWeber. This is **without** using a dedicated IP, which is a pretty cheap upgrade at \$500 per month. (*This is not a scientific test... but it is a test nevertheless. Actually more than one. Enough to give me a rough idea of what I'm up against.*) Now 5-15% might seem like a lot, but considering the other profit producing tools that Infusionsoft brings to the table (like actually connecting revenue to leads and customers and many, many ways to deliver individualized marketing based on RESPONSE), that hit should be easy to make up for. Plus, I'm not really as concerned with deliverability long term as I am with **sales**. If I can double my sales talking to 25% fewer people, so be it. I can find more people. NOTE: Infusion is a powerful system... but it can feel like you're driving a tank sometimes. Because of that, I call the folks at Infusion **a lot**. Often because I get different answers if I ask the same question twice. So I've learned to double and triple confirm the things that are important. You might want to do the same thing if you're considering switching.
2. Selling online is **not** rocket science. If it's not working for you and you have a basic grasp of "how to sell online," then move on to selling something people actually **want**. The **market** is the key. Not the marketing tactics, or the product.
3. **Less is better**. Creating and managing less gets you to results faster. I'd rather implement a smaller plan today than concoct a huge scale plan for world domination that'll only launch next year. Do you really need social media, PPC, Twitter, SEO, and whatever new marketing technique that's being featured as the flavor of the week? Who has time to do all that? I haven't read a study where anyone's quantified the opportunity cost of going gaga over every new bright and shiny tactic to market stuff online, but I imagine it's **HUGE**. Heck, it could be the largest (missing) line item on their P/L. In the end, there are probably only 3 or 4 ways your business will generate 80%-90% of its revenue. Maybe only 1 or 2 ways. The job is to **find those things** and leverage them to the max.
4. Don't catch a case of what I call: **ENTREPRENURIAL START-ITIS**. Entrepreneurs seem to be universally good at **starting** things. Fewer seem to be good at keeping them going... even fewer seem to excel at managing and improving the things they've already **got** going that are working. I have yet to see success as something sexy and glamorous. In my experience, it comes from doing the basics well... and improving them over time.
5. Read George Cloutier's **Profits Aren't Everything, They're the Only Thing**.
6. The market online seems to be shifting. If you're selling to business owners, they seem to be buying as voraciously as ever... if you're selling to consumers, the same old marketing techniques seem to be losing their effectiveness. Time to get creative and (heaven forbid) try something new.
7. The 80/20 rule is probably more like 95/5. I think a lot of business owners are probably familiar with the 80/20 rule. But I haven't met many that act on that understanding. Aim your resources at fewer things and you'll move them forward **faster**.

8. You can improve your results fairly quickly by following a very simple recipe. It's not exciting, not glamorous and it might even be considered real work. It's called setting up a split test and actually **acting** on the results. Are you constantly split-testing the major income generators in your business? Do you even know for certain what those are?

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