

### Technique #3 – Your Marketing Mission

A true marketing mission includes non-traditional marketing areas as well. Some of the areas are philosophical and some have scientific underpinnings to launching a marketing crusade.

You need to include the attitude toward customers, product and/or service.

You need to put your mission into the research of new products and services.

Your marketing mission needs to be included in what kind of profit you want to make and into how you're going to handle credit, packaging, inventory selection, transportation, advertising, sales force, your image, your prices, your location, and your incentives.

To break these down:

Customers.

Customers need to be treated as the most valuable asset they are. One must never forget how difficult or how expensive it was to put someone in contact with that customer or the potential customer, the prospect. Each customer or client contact must be treated as the marketing opportunity that it really represents.

You've got to reverse the greed that wants you to make the sale and see everyone with a dollar sign on their forehead, and start thinking of how you can fulfill that customer's need.

Product or service.

How do we weave our marketing mission into our product or service? Rather than offering a sale or a product line or a mix that really reflects your impression of what your business should offer it's clients or it's potential customers, you need to select the right mix of services and products based on research that you do with your potential prospects and give them specifically what they've identified as their needs and wants.

In other words, test marketing to find out what they want.

The easiest way to do this is to ask what they want. Then you select your products and services based on your business' ability to sell them and service them to your customer's or potential client's satisfaction.

You need to weave your marketing mission into your research. Any time your research and development efforts involve any new products or services, they should be directed toward a customer based study of proven customer needs and wants.

You go out and ask them what they need and want, and then research and put together products and services that will fulfill those needs and wants. No other research is as important as trying to determine what the desires are of your customer, prospect or client.

You need to weave your mission into your innovation in your company. Any changes and improvements are always welcome in business.

Before you make any changes to any of the characteristics of your business, products or services, you really need to first consider how these changes will be viewed and accepted by your customer base. That's what you're in business for. You're not in business for yourself.

If the innovation passes the test of the customer, then it's logical to pursue it from other points of view. How much will this change cost? Will it save time? Will the reliability improve? Will there be added features?

#### Profit.

You need to weave your marketing mission into profit. As soon as you take the perspective that all profits originate from sales dollars, then it's much more logical to assign a disproportional amount of time and effort into insuring that the stream of cash flow from sales is maintained or increased over time.

This is a function of marketing. This is where your marketing mission directs our attention as business owners. Your marketing mission and your credit policy originates from sales dollars.

Credit policies can be a critical element in the overall marketing of your product and service. If you offer VISA, MasterCard, and American Express, that may get a sale. The less restrictive credit policies that can naturally encourage sales need to be balanced with financial regulations or constraints present in the process of extended credit.

Many profitable small businesses have gone out of business due to lack of cash flow because they've implemented incorrect credit policies.

Implement your marketing mission into your package.

#### Presentation.

The manner in which a product actually looks is presented, packaged, or the way a business or service is rendered to the prospect will have a profound effect on the salability of what you're offering.

As an owner, you never want to forget how important the packaging role is in encouraging prospects to not only buy, but to refer other business.

If you're a service business such as a contractor, you don't want to be sending workers in with ripped up blue jeans, unshaven, dirty shirts. You want them to be packaged presentably.

If you're selling a product, obviously you want it to be well-made and well put together. You don't want nuts and bolts falling off or chipped paint, etc.

#### Inventory.

Your inventory selection can be woven into your marketing mission. If your business is inventory based, then the selection of that inventory will, to different degrees, be important to the overall sales success.

One of the more important aspects to inventory is selection. You will want to approach these decisions with marketability in mind. If you don't, all of a sudden your inventory won't turn over properly and you'll wind up with dead stock that will either be difficult to sell and require deep discounts to unload, or you won't be able to unload it at all, or if it's perishable it may spoil, etc.

You need to talk with industry and association reps to really determine the number of times inventory should turn over in your line of business on average. If it's a new venture, you may know this number already.

#### Transportation.

You need to weave your marketing mission into transportation. If you're going to deliver products and services, your ability may be keyed to its marketability.

If your product actually requires delivery like furniture, then your ability to make these deliveries in a quick manner is critical to the sale.

If your business service requires that a technician or a contractor goes to the home or business, then your ability to schedule that technician in and out of that customer's life is very important to their satisfaction and, therefore, the continued success of your marketing program.

#### Advertising.

Weave your marketing mission into your advertising. It's no surprise that advertising is critical to the marketing success of your business. However, what's not as obvious is the role that advertising can play in actually advertising the different aspects of the marketing mission to your potential clients. If your business adheres to this marketing mission type of approach, then it's a lost opportunity if your advertising doesn't really address this fact in an effort to distinguish your business from its competition.

All of your advertising should prominently state your USA.

#### Sales Force.

Your marketing mission should connect with your sales force. A well-trained sales force should be aware of the various elements of your entire marketing mission.

They need to be trained to point out the USA to each prospect they meet. They need to know how to fulfill your USA so it will meet the customer's needs and wants.

Through your overall marketing efforts, you need to continue to be aware of the customer's demands. Your USA should properly reflect the rationale under which a customer is going to deal with you.

It's not sufficient for just the owner of a business to know and understand your USA. Every employee, every salesperson, every assistant, every telemarketer, and every phone person needs to be able to communicate the USA in their calls and dealings with prospective customers.

#### Image.

Image needs to be in your USA and marketing mission. If a customer perceives your business to be sensitive to their needs and you're able to satisfy those needs in a professional and timely manner, you'll see the results of this awareness in their increased loyalty.

You've got to get this whole marketing/USA mission to obtain referrals from existing customers and you'll get an overall more positive relationship with your customer base. It's involved in your mission also.

#### Price.

If your business prices its products or services just to be competitive, there may be a tendency for your customers to determine that your company is just about prices and it is no more favorable than your competitors. If price is important to your potential customer's or client's buying decision, you need to structure your prices so there is no doubt in your customers' minds that you have priced those products and services in fairness.

#### Location.

The importance of location varies depending on the type of business you're in. One thing is clear. If, from the customer's point of view, your business is in a bad location, it is inconvenient to get there, difficult to find, too far away, or in an unprofessional area, your business and sales may suffer if location is important to your business.

#### Incentives.

You need to have one or more incentive programs to show your customers how valuable they really are. These can take many forms; sales discounts, freebies, etc. We'll explore different ways to structure these and when to utilize incentives later in the program.