



Focused Marketing

The Key To Growing Your Business In Any Economy

By

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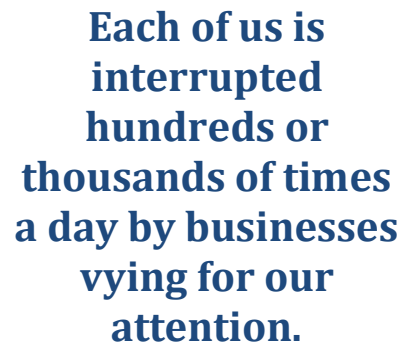
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Unfocused marketing ...

I'd like to start by asking you a question.

How many advertisements have you seen so far today? They could include:

- logos and products name on clothes, kitchen equipment and your computer
- television, radio, newspaper or magazine adverts
- billboards
- coffee cups
- websites, emails, social networks



Each of us is interrupted hundreds or thousands of times a day by businesses vying for our attention.

You get the picture – every single advert you've seen so far today.

I bet it's too many to count, right?

Unless you're living in a cave it's likely to be hundreds, if not thousands – just in one single day!

Can you remember every single one? No chance.

If you're like me you won't have even noticed many of them.

Why? Because you're bombarded with so many advertising messages that they turn into a "noise".

The noise comes from the millions of businesses who are vying for your attention. Desperately trying to interrupt what you're doing to get you to look at their product or service for long enough to be interested and be motivated to purchase.

The more businesses trying to interrupt you means the more some try harder and harder to get your attention and the tougher the economy, the harder businesses try.

The shopping centre ...

At a shopping centre near me the section of shops leading to the car park has temporary sales stands in the middle of the walk way. These used to be rented by people selling crafts and food gifts, but now there is a utility company, a roadside recovery company and a DVD rental company and these guys practically jump out in front of you as you walk to your car to get your attention.

A polite “no thank you”, or “I’m in a hurry” is taken as a challenge, they’ll even follow down the walk way trying to wear you down into stopping just to keep them quiet.


Does this make me want to buy?

No way!

It irritates me! I try to find other ways to get to my car so I don’t have to walk past these stalls.

I only go shopping to quickly visit the bank, buy some food, or get something for my wife or children. I don’t want to be interrupted, cajoled into having a conversation about a product or service I’m not interested in.

If I did want to buy one of these products or services I’d make a conscious effort to use other companies because these guys have irritated me so much by their tactics.



**Interrupting
people to market
to them isn’t the
best way to get
more customers.**

Interrupting people to market to them isn’t the best way to get more customers.

If you do it in person you seriously damage the credibility and likeability that people need to start off on the road to know, like and trust you before they are ready to buy from you.

If you are using traditional advertising like newspaper, radio or television advertisements, flyers or any other type of marketing where you are trying to grab someone’s attention then as a small business how can you possibly compete?

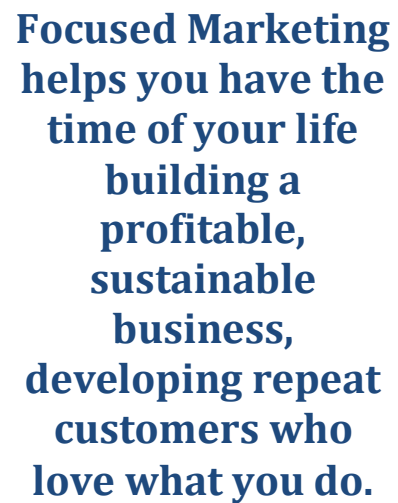
The only companies able to still effectively use this type of marketing are rich super-brands such as Coca Cola, Virgin and Microsoft who are not trying to interrupt people to get a quick sale but are building their brand name, a good example is the regular Christmas Coca Cola television advert with the truck and Santa Claus, it doesn’t include any prices or offers, just a seasonal reminder to drink Coca Cola at Christmas.

Mass Marketing . . .

This type of advertising is mass marketing. The big problem with mass marketing for a small business is that there is always someone else with more money, more salespeople and a more creative designer, who will be fighting you for the attention of the people you are trying to reach.

Mass marketing works on the basis of trying to get the attention of as many people as possible in the hope that some will be interested in your products and services and respond to your advertising. What’s the problem with this?

- It's very expensive as you're trying to reach everyone
- It's time consuming
- It's frustrating for the business as they have a small return compared with a large financial outlay and a lot of activity
- It's frustrating for you and I as we put up with an ever increasing amount of unfocused marketing messages



**Focused Marketing
helps you have the
time of your life
building a
profitable,
sustainable
business,
developing repeat
customers who
love what you do.**

What's the alternative?

Is there a way to grow your business without interrupting and irritating people?

Is it possible to find customers who actually want to hear what you have to say and who are waiting to hear about your products and services?

Not just waiting to hear about your products and services but actually **searching right now** for a business they can trust that provides your products and services?

Yes, and you can find these prospects and have the time of your life building a profitable, sustainable business, developing repeat customers who love what you do.

All you need to do is **focus**.

Focused Marketing . . .

Focused marketing is based on a completely different logic. Instead of trying to market to everyone and hope that you reach some of the right people you begin with a very clear profile of who you need to reach, who will be really interested in your products and services.



**Focused Marketing
is about attracting
your perfect
customer.**

What are the benefits?


When you focus on reaching your perfect customer you reduce the size of your target market.

This is an excellent because:


- **It's cheaper to reach less people.** Both in terms of the direct costs of any printing, postage, email list maintenance and in terms of time, having a single focus allows you to concentrate all of your available time on one target customer type, rather than spreading your time between several.
- **You gain a better understanding of the customer.** What's your target customer's pain? What is keeping them up at night? What is good for them about the current economy, and what's bad? The more you focus on your customer profile, the more you can "get into the mind" of your customer. The more you understand about their problems, the better prepared you are to help.
- **You can be more relevant.** For example, if you are an accountant and you decide to focus on owner managed businesses who are just starting, or in their first year of trading, you could spend time educating your prospects about company formation, when to register for Value Added Tax, how to manage their cash flow, which accounting software to use, etc. These topics would be less relevant for a business that's been established for five years as the owners would have already made these decisions.
- **You can be social.** If you have a few hundred people following you on Twitter, Facebook or Google+ you can spend the time to interact with these followers, build relationships and show that you're a real person. You can talk about the relevant topics your followers will all be interested in and demonstrate your knowledge. This is much harder if you have tens of thousands of people, you can't interact with everyone and you'll struggle to be relevant. Interaction and knowledge sharing are

important aspects of helping people to know, like and trust you before buying your products or services.

- **You can be an authority.** By educating your prospects on solutions to their problems you position yourself as a likeable expert, an authority in your subject. Prospects will value your knowledge and skills and be keen to share it with like-minded people, helping you attract more prospects.
- **You attract the right prospects.** If you focus on solving problems for a particular type of customer you become to “go to” person. The accountant for start-up businesses in your city, the graphic designer for work-at-home mums in your town, etc. As your name spreads target customers will be attracted to you. Yes, you read that right. No interrupting people at the shopping centre, ***you can actually attract the perfect customers time after time, all it takes is focus.***
- **It’s more fun!** Yes, the best bit of focused marketing is that you get to do business with your perfect customers, which means you get to have the best fun as you’re dealing with people that your products and services can really help and who are going to be grateful for the solutions that you’ve given to their problems. There is nothing better than doing business everyday with people who you enjoy talking to and spending time with and who show you gratitude for what you provide.



By educating your prospects on solutions to their problems you position yourself as a likeable expert, an authority in your subject.



Doesn't it sound great?

Where do you start?

Profile


The first step in focused marketing is to create the profile for your perfect customer.

Who are you trying to reach?

If you have an established business look at the people that have already been buying from you.

Are there notable similarities between your best customers? Are your best customers, in terms of sales, the customer that you most enjoy dealing with? – **Your perfect customer doesn't have to be the one that you currently sell the most to. It needs to be the one who gets the most benefit from your product or services.**

If you're a real estate agent and you have a high percentage of young professionals you could make this type of customer your focus. A web designer might only focus on restaurants; a hair stylist might only focus on weddings.



The real key to your perfect customer profile is to make it personal.

Imagine your perfect customer . . .

The real key to your perfect customer profile is to make it personal.

So if you're a web designer focusing on small privately owned hotels in your region pick a customer or prospect that you have and make that person your perfect customer.

Instead of just focusing on "owners of small private hotels", focus on – "Steve". Let's imagine that Steve is an owner that you've met and got on well with, he was interested in what you had to say.

What keeps them up at night?

What are Steve's problems, what keeps Steve awake at night?

We refer to this as Steve's **pain**.

The pain of your perfect customer has to be substantial. The perfect customer is someone who really, really needs your service, not someone who would see it as a "nice to have".

What is Steve trying to achieve in his business and how can you help him? What can you offer Steve that will give him a good night's sleep – that is relevance and that is how to build a profitable, sustainable business.


What if you are a new business with no customers?

Great, if you're a new business you can focus from the start.


Decide who you would most like to work with, who can you help the most?

What made you go into business in the first place?

If you love baking cakes and decided to start out on your own baking cakes for special occasions which type of occasions do you enjoy most, perhaps you could specialise in wedding cakes?



Write as much of this information into your profile as possible, it's gold dust!



Do some research . . .

If you were starting out and going to specialise in wedding cakes then find some people planning a wedding and ask to talk to them for a few minutes.

Find out everything you can about their decision process to buy a cake, what are they concerned about when selecting a type of cake and a supplier?

Who makes the decision, the bride, the groom or parents? Each will probably have very different feelings about the purchase. Who is going to decide? Try and talk to a few different people and build a picture of the similar feelings and comments.

If you discover that the bride is the one making the decision then imagine one of the brides that you talked to a build up a profile in your mind around that bride. Let's call her Sarah – what was Sarah most concerned about with the cake, the colour scheme, the number of tiers, the type of cake so everyone would enjoy it?

Write as much of this information into your profile as possible, it's gold dust!

Why is it so important to imagine your customer?

Focus

Its keeps you focused on who you are targeting. You can always go back to your mental picture of Steve or Sarah and make sure you are still on track and focusing on the right type of customer.

If you have a picture of your customer you could even put it on your office wall and use it as a reminder that this is who you are trying to help.

Relevant Content

Secondly it helps you write relevant content, such as website pages, blog articles or emails.

Rather than write for private hotel owners write for Steve.

Rather than write for new brides write for Sarah.

As you sit with your computer or notepad imagine that you are sitting with them having a coffee and explaining your product and services, write as you would explain to them – this will make your writing relevant, entertaining and interesting to your readers.

If you have a digital recorder or a memo function on your mobile telephone you can even practice talking to Steve or Sarah. Record yourself explaining something and then write what you said in a natural way.

If you write a guide for your website that helps brides chose the perfect wedding cake and write it with all of the things in mind that you learnt from Sarah and write it in a style that would be natural for you to explain if you were having a coffee with her she'll love it.

What's more, other "Sarah's" will love it because it's relevant and gives them valuable information about something that they are really interested in.



Focused Marketing helps you develop a constant stream of new prospects who are already presold on your products and services.

Referrals

Having a clear idea of marketing to a customer like Steve or Sarah means that the customer will also feel that you have a very clear idea on who you want to do business with.

So Sarah will feel comfortable sharing your name and links to your information with other people she knows who are planning weddings because she knows that you are the person who helps new brides with wedding cakes.

This means that you get new prospects who are not only attracted to you without you having to spend lots of time and money irritating people by interrupting them but that you can get a constant stream of new prospects who are already presold on your products and services.

What about other customers?

What happens to the customers who don't fit your perfect profile?

Do you turn them away?

No.

Focused marketing is about attracting the perfect clients, but it doesn't mean you can't do business with anyone who wants to hire you.

It means that you are only targeting a certain type of client. If you have clients outside of that profile it's fine, just carry on doing business with them as long as it doesn't take you away from your focus.

Just don't become unfocused.

Steps To Focused Marketing . . .

Are you ready to start using focused marketing and ensure your business grows in any economy?

Here are the crucial steps:

Email me at rpeters@fresheyesconsultancy.com to arrange a free of charge, no obligation twenty minute telephone or Skype call to discuss your Focused Marketing and how I could help you grow your business.

1. Decide who you are trying to reach, who is your perfect customer?
2. Make your perfect customer profile personal, turn it into your very own Steve or Sarah.
3. Understand your perfect customer's pain, what is keeping them up at night?
4. Create solutions for their problems, products and services you can offer them that will help them sleep at night.
5. Share your knowledge with them and demonstrate how you can help them. If you get the steps right they'll be glad to hear from you!

About Robert Peters

Robert Peters is a Small Business Advisor who helps small businesses grow by focusing on their perfect customers and sharing their knowledge and experience. Robert has been involved with small businesses for fifteen years.

Robert lives in the UK with his wife and two daughters.

You can read more from Robert at <http://fresheyesconsultancy.com>



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