

MASTERING MARKETING



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Ginger S. Myers

MARKETING SPECIALIST,
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
EXTENSION

DIRECTOR, MARYLAND
RURAL ENTERPRISE
DEVELOPMENT CENTER

gsmyers@umd.edu
301-432-2767 x338



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Marketing— The Root of All Profits

I've written, taught, and executed marketing ideas and plans for some time now. But, after pages and pages of text and theories, I've found marketing really boils down to a couple key concepts executed over three similar categories. And, marketing is truly the root of all profits in any business.

PROFITABLE MARKETING

**HAVE THE
RIGHT
MESSAGE**

In agriculture, we tend to romance the farm life style and then trumpet that we feed the world. All very nice, but that's not the message that motivates a customer to buy. Your product must satisfy the customer's wants or needs. Is it nutritionally superior, how was it produced, or will the family enjoy its flavor or the experience of being engaged in its harvest or interaction?

So what is your message? What makes your product unique and what want or need will it satisfy for the customer. Can you detail that message into three to five sentences? Attention spans are short and you only have about 3-5 seconds to hold that potential customer's attention.

Does your message include a call to action? Click here, call now, buy now, visit our website etc. Help make the sale by engaging the customer to take the next step to purchasing.

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TARGET THE RIGHT MARKET

Targeting a specific market does not mean that you are excluding people who do not fit your criteria. Rather, target marketing allows you to focus your marketing dollars and brand message on a specific market that is more likely to buy from you than other markets. Who are your competitors targeting? Who are their current customers? Don't go after the same market. You may find a niche market that they are overlooking.

Write out a list of each feature of your product or service. Next to each feature, list the benefits it provides. For example, a fruit grower offers fresh, nutritionally dense, awesome tasting products. Once you have your benefits listed, make a list of people who have a need that your benefit fulfills. While this is still too general, you now have a base to start from. Figure out not only who has a need for your product or service, but also who is most likely to buy it. From our previous example, mothers with young children may be looking for local fruits to replace sugary snacks in their children's diets.

Once you've sorted out your target market, consider these questions:

- ✓ Are there enough people that fit my criteria?
- ✓ Will my target audience see the benefits of my product/service?
- ✓ Do I understand what drives my target customer to make purchasing decisions?
- ✓ Can they afford my product/service?
- ✓ How will I reach them with my marketing message?

USING THE RIGHT MEDIA

Do your homework to find the best media channel to market your type of product or service. There are a host of different media streams and you want to make sure your best marketing message is seen. Some methods include: social, text, website marketing, word-of-mouth, referrals, print, event and trade shows, radio, e-mail, newsletters, sponsorships, direct mail, television, in-store shopping, catalog or radio just to name some of the obvious ones.

The most important part of media selections comes down to the percentage of your target market that uses a particular type of media. For example, Millennials use social media while Baby Boomers still respond well to newsletters and emails.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CUSTOMERS - INCLUDING THE DIFFERENT CHANNELS THEY USE AND THE REASONS THEY USE THOSE CHANNELS - IS CRITICAL FOR DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES.