



Is your marketing strategy working for you?

Surprising as it may seem, many small business operators don't have a marketing strategy.

That's right. They simply establish their websites, do a little random emailing, send some letters, tell people about their great offers and hope that fate will shine profitably on them.

Well ladies and gentlemen, it just doesn't happen that way. Oh, sure, one in a million rags to riches stories may have happened accidentally, but the statistics are well against it happening to YOU ... or me.

To be successful you have to be master of your own destiny ... you have to *engineer* your success; if you can make others successful at the same

time, then that's even better. They'll appreciate you for it and be your friends for life. [Remember the law that says if you help others, they will help you?]

So, now that I've raised the issue of businesses not having marketing strategies, where does your business fit? Uh huh, I thought so, you *are* one of those without a marketing strategy.

Don't feel bad about it ... you're no Robinson Crusoe.

And now that you know, you need to decide to do something about it. Now, today!

What can you do? You could rush off and enrol in a university course about marketing theory. That'd take a while to complete. You could hire a marketing expert at considerable expense. You

could go it alone learning step by step implementing your own strategy as you learn from trial and error. Or, finally, you could forget about it because it's all too hard and stumble along as usual.

If you want to be successful, none of these approaches alone will be of much real help, especially the last!

But, if you were to adopt aspects of each of the first three approaches, what I call a 'blended' approach, you could expect to see real gains with low expense.

And if you do it on-the-job, you are not only saving money, but learning more and more about marketing; learning and growing as an individual. Isn't that what we all want to do?

As an educator I know how valuable self-directed learning is. Apart from having a raft of tertiary, post-secondary, corporate inservice, and other studies behind me, I still learn something on-the-job every week.

I've purchased and read a small library of publications, newsletters, opinions, sales materials and anything else I thought would be helpful.

And guess what I found? By far the best method of becoming successful is to study someone else who has already done the hard yards and improve on their performance.

I have been doing that for a while and my income has been gradually increasing. Here's how:



Automate as much as possible

I remember a teacher at boarding school who used to say, 'If you want to play cricket, Henry, dress like a cricketer'.

It was some years before I grasped the real meaning - be prepared - be the part.

If you are going to be a successful anything, be prepared and be the part. There is a cornucopia of evidence suggesting that what we envisage for ourselves (consciously or unconsciously) is what we get.

How does this relate to automation? Simply this: if you want to be a big player, prepare for big things.

You can still start small, but be prepared to become big.

Here's an example:

Mine is the smallest of small businesses since there is only me to do the work - I'm a one-man-band.

I sell three electronic publications, give away numerous free reports and publish a free monthly newsletter. Another subscription only newsletter is due for release shortly and I've started receiving subscriptions.

Four years ago when I commenced business, sales were few and far between as were requests for my free reports. I could handle each sale manually and still have time to spare.

Now, most of my sales are transacted by Clickbank, a secure online merchant. I receive email confirmation from Clickbank every time a sale or subscription is made. And I receive numbers

of requests for the reports and other email asking various questions or seeking quotations.

Now that business is increasing, I can't handle all the incoming email myself - if I did, email would take over my life.

I've invested in a software program specifically designed to automate marketing activities.

Read how it works for me and frees me to do the more important work:

Example: When Clickbank notices arrive I am able to extract the name, email address and geographical location details of the person to whom the sale was made - automatically. My marketing software then sends email with the epublication purchased attached, or acknowledges the

subscription automatically. I spent about 10 minutes writing the responses and setting up the filters ... while I watched the television. Very simple.

As I have the clients' details, I can send a follow-up email any time. This is handy for back-end sales; people who have dealt with you before and developed trust, will buy again.

I may also want to email everyone who purchased a specific product to ask if they are happy with it. Marketing is a breeze with this software called Mailloop 5.

To learn more about Mailloop 5 and how it can almost completely automate your marketing activity, click [here](#).



Learning and Experimentation

Having automated your marketing activities with Mailloop 5 you can rest confident that you will be able to deal with any number of daily email transactions automatically.

Even when people email questions you can automatically send them a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) response with another email address to which they can address enquiries that are not on the FAQ. You will then have to attend to those individually, but at least most of your queries will be done without your direct intervention.

Next you need to learn from those who have 'been there and done that'. And there is a handful of marketing gurus around who offer excellent information and assistance.

I've studied most of them and while they all have something to offer, I found Corey Rudl's free newsletters, ebooks and courses the most thorough and well produced.

A complete list of Corey's products can be found [here](#).

Various other ebooks, both free and fee are available on hundreds of web sites. If you decide not to do a formal course like Corey's, read as many of these books, reports etc as you can fit into your busy schedule.

You will learn about such things as backend sales, up-selling, how to write sales copy, how to get exposure for your site in the search engines, where to advertise and so on.

A theme that flows through all of the literature is the need for discovery learning ie, learning by experimentation or trial and error.

For example, when you run your advertising campaign, don't just write some adverts and run them. Go to pains to experiment with each advert. Use different headings, different key words and make sure you can track which responses you get from which adverts. It may be as easy as using a different email enquiry address for each advert as in:

ad1@dwave.com.au
ad2@dwave.com.au
ad3@dwave.com.au

When the responses arrive you will notice it if one advert is pulling more than the others. Keep a log of the results so that you can replicate them next time you

advertise. No point in learning which advert is the best if you don't take advantage of it. Give the non-performers the flick and stay with the money generating ads. But be careful, you need also analyse the place where the advert has been lodged. It might be the medium being used and NOT the advert ... experiment on that too.

While you are setting up your quality email management system and learning how it's done by people like Corey, also document your marketing strategy.

It need not be anything grand. Simply write what you are going to do, when, how and what outcome you expect. If you don't have a plan, you won't know where you are going and if you've arrived.



Documenting your marketing strategy

Contrary to what some people believe, plans don't have to be grand, verbose schemes with hundreds of pages.

Plans like that tend to fail. Either they sit on shelves and don't get used, or they are so complex that nobody understands them.

A plan can be drafted on a single sheet of paper. Or several sheets of paper, but never hundreds of sheets of paper.

Let's have a quick look at a case study. George and Tara have a home-based business selling widgets (online or offline). They have decided to create a marketing plan to help them keep on track because they've found that without one, they get sidetracked and nothing gets done. Familiar?

Item	Action	Where/How	When	Who	Outcome
1	Advertise in newspaper using two-step sales approach	Monday Sun	29 June 12 July 23 July	Tara	Adverts attract average 20 responses each

George and Tara's Marketing Plan

Your turn: Using the space available above ... or a piece of paper if you're reading this online, determine the entries for another strategy that might be used?

You could rely on a television advertisement, leaflet drop, email campaign, fax campaign, or any of those depending on how much money you have.

Remember, unless you have the resources of the Federal Government, don't launch a massively expensive campaign until you have tested it. Test the advert, test the medium, test, test, test.

If the tests do well, then by all means put your money into it. What will you do with the responses you get? How will you

deliver your widgets? Will you allow discounts for volume, refunds and so on?

Don't let your campaign fail because you can't adequately handle the orders. You must be able to follow through or you will lose clients.

Conclusion: I hope this brief discussion has been useful to you. If you really want to run a successful, slick marketing campaign, I highly recommend you buy a copy of [Mailloop 5](#) and at least one of Corey's [marketing courses](#). It will make a world of difference for you as it has me.

Every best wish,

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