

# The Five Biggest Marketing Mistakes

By Loretta Love Huff

You've probably heard the phrase that "people do business with people that they know, like and trust." However you've probably wondered just how to get your prospects to know, like and trust you.

## **Mistake #1** - Believing that if they do good work the dollars will roll right in

Many professionals who are in service businesses chose their life's work because they wanted to make the world a better place in some way. They believe erroneously, that if they serve the world with their 'gift', that it would somehow be a violation of their ethics to engage in sales and marketing conversations. While they might be doing OK with their silence, imagine how much stronger their businesses would be if they were to put some effort into promoting themselves and finding more clients.

Solution: Communicate the value of what you do and for whom, over and over again.

## **Mistake #2** - Thinking their website will market for them

With the rise of internet marketing, many service providers throw up websites because they think they should. Indeed, not having a website in this day and age may put business owners at a distinct disadvantage. However, neither websites nor brilliant technicians are inherently skilled at building rapport through a computer screen. People often want to 'sample' a service before plunking down money on something or someone they are unfamiliar with.

Solution: Identify and execute effective marketing strategies that powerfully connect you with your target market.

## **Mistake #3** - Networking the wrong way in the wrong places

Do you cringe at the thought of attending networking meetings? It's probably because some professionals desperate for sales go to breakfast, lunch and dinner meetings trolling for prospects. You know the ones. They try to sell their services without making a genuine effort to learn anything about the person they are attempting to sell. The business social scene would be so much more pleasant – and productive - if attendees worked to see how they could help each other with information, resources or contacts rather than trying to 'close the sale' on the first date.

Solution: Identify the networking venues that are most effective for you and drop the rest.

## **Mistake #4** - Trying to market like their competition

You haven't identified the specific strategies and tactics that will reach your targeted audience and leverage your skills and abilities. You see your colleagues advertising in local magazines and directories and assume you should do the same. However advertising isn't the most effective marketing vehicle for service providers. Like websites, ads don't allow you to personally connect with your prospects. They may explain the features and perhaps benefits from working with you, but without personal, targeted and custom conversations with your prospects, your message may fall on deaf ears.

Solution: Evaluate the marketing strategies you use and make sure they are the best ones for you and your business.

## **Mistake #5** - Not having a marketing plan or system

You're confused or perhaps even a bit desperate about which marketing tactics are the most effective. You use a shotgun approach. You try one tactic, then another hoping that something will 'click' and start generating the sales you need. You procrastinate and waste time organizing your office, shuffling through (or worse yet, avoiding) that stack of business cards on your desk. Or perhaps you take comfort chatting on the phone with your friends or current customers rather than risk talking with prospects.

Solution: Identify exactly where you're stuck in the marketing process and create a system – a set of consistent actions - that will keep you motivated and in action – moving forward every day.

Connecting with your prospects in ways that are meaningful for them and appropriate for you will help you build the rapport necessary for them to know, like, trust – and then hire you.

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