

4R

! Marketing Matters

Sez Who Marketing

*By Trish Lambert, President,
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Subvert the Dominant Paradigm. That has been one of my guiding mottoes since I first saw it on a bumper sticker at a street fair stall years ago. Subvert the Dominant Paradigm. This intentionally fancy pants statement is a way of reminding me to rock the boat, challenge the status quo, and, in my work with clients, to practice what I call “sez who” marketing.

People are rule makers and rule followers by nature. We tend to like our environments organized and reliable, and if things around us are messy and confusing, we

get very uncomfortable and will go looking for ways to put things in order.

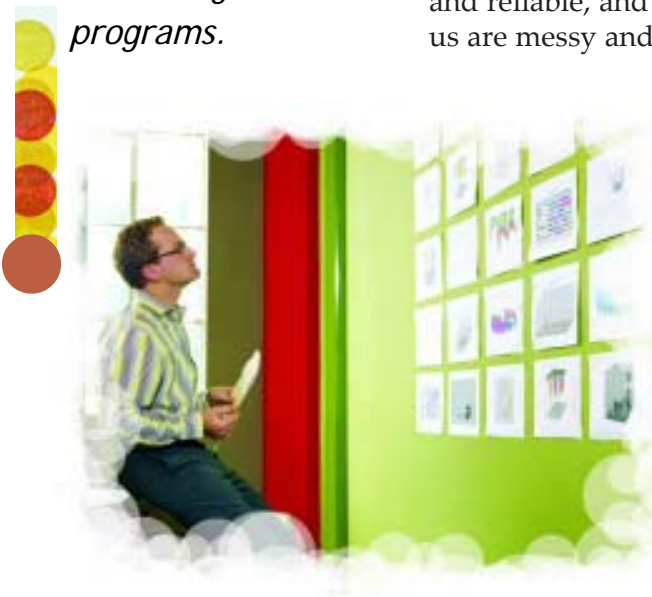
Marketing is an area that can get messy and confusing real fast. A mixture of art and science, marketing is often attended by a lot of ambiguity and uncertainty. It is also a high-profile expense bucket that may or may not produce the right results. With all the unknowns, it's no wonder that we look for rules to follow when planning our marketing programs.

And there are rules aplenty out there. There are piles and piles of web sites, newsletters, ebooks, printed books, training courses, and other resources that will tell you how to market in as much detail as your heart desires. And there are loads of companies and consultants offering systems and methodologies that you can follow like cook books to whip up marketing results.

There is nothing wrong with all this—it's great to have such an extensive resource to draw from when considering your best way forward. But beware! If you adopt marketing practices and methods without first thinking them through for yourself, you may end up with the wrong results at the end of the day.

I suggest practicing “sez who?” marketing. For example...

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Everyone knows that a company needs a brochure....sez who? There might be other materials that will give you a better return on investment than a brochure. OR

To gain recognition in your market, you need to exhibit at industry trade shows...sez who? You might be way more productive for a lot less money by walking the show aisles, rubbing elbows with your prospects and leveraging your network to gain introductions and arrange meetings.

To succeed today, you need to blog or podcast...sez who? Both of these communication vehicles are specialized and require a steady commitment of time and money to work well. Sure, there might be uses for one or both of these in your business, but you might also be able to succeed mightily without ever starting a blog or recording a podcast.

Here's one that might sound odd. If you have a business,

you must have a web site...sez who? Okay, I admit that I think that there are very few businesses that won't get big benefits from having an online presence. It's the word "must" that rings alarm bells for me...why MUST you have a web site?

The list of rules and good advice goes on from there, but hopefully you get the picture.

Always ask 'why?' Are there other ways we can do it? Who says we need to do this? And continue to ask questions, even for programs and initiatives that have been around for a while. Test alternatives, consider new approaches, color outside the lines.

Remember—there aren't really any rules in marketing. Just made up stuff that gets disguised as rules. By all means, subscribe to the newsletters, read the books, and invite the consultants to pitch to you. While you do this, though, keep an open mind, don't assume that what worked

for someone else will necessarily work for you, and practice "sez who" marketing any time you find yourself thinking automatically about how things should look.



4R

**Content that connects.
Projects that produce.SM**

Service companies rely on communication to snag their markets' interest. Written and verbal communication of the "one to many" variety is the keystone of services marketing, and the basis for any marketing strategy. Well thought out and executed programs that "get the word out about us" need to get your market's attention and grease the wheels for sales.

4R creates content that connects and produces measurable results through well-planned marketing initiatives. We will work with you to increase the awareness and interest of your target audiences so that sales opportunities increase and your sales cycle decreases.

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