

## **From Marketing Savvy, Issue 1 by Highland Team and The Tager Group**

### **ONCE... OR EVEN THREE TIMES ... IS NOT ENOUGH**

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The old advertising standard used to be that someone seeing your advertisement three times would start to take notice and possibly action. But not anymore!

Why? We, as potential customers, business and consumer alike, are bombarded with marketing messages all the time, everywhere, in expanding ways. It used to be that the media choices focused on radio, TV, newspaper, magazines and billboards. The advertising world metric was \*3\*; an ad must be seen at least three times in each media choice to break through the clutter and be noticed.

### **MEDIA CHOICES ARE EXPANDING EXPONENTIALLY**

But media is exploding - email, web sites, cell phone and PDA, even the floor of your grocery store is a new medium. There are ads on buildings, ads on taxicabs and grocery carts and even the body of your favorite sports star.

### **IT TAKES SEVEN TIMES TO BREAK THROUGH THE CLUTTER**

With all this competition for the mind of your target audience, the new metric is \*7\* impressions. A prospective customer must see your message on average 7 times for it to stand out from all the other messages they see each day. That's right, 7 times. The first time or two, it may not be noticed. By the 4th, 5th, 6th or 7th time, the human brain starts realizing its been seeing a lot about this product or company!

### **SPEND MONEY ON PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, SPEND MONEY ON GETTING THE MESSAGE OUT**

Given the challenge of getting your message to your target audiences, it's amazing that companies are willing to commit enormous resources including people, capital and time to develop a product or service, but don't commit the marketing resources to break through the clutter and reach their target markets. To generate revenues, you must get your message out. This is not the place to cut costs!

When companies decide they can get by with only one direct mailing or a one-time ad, with no follow-up activities, they are lost in the noise. They are not getting their unique benefits noticed. Your message must be seen again and again to stand out and compel your targets to take the action you want—generating leads and sales.

## INTEGRATED MARKETING IS THE ANSWER

What's a businessperson to do? The good news is that you don't have to just do one marketing activity 7 times--there is a way to break through the clutter and stand out in a customer's mind—and that way is through **integrated marketing**—using a variety of methods to gain awareness, move the prospect to interest and demand and then to a sale. More on that in future **Marketing Savvy** issues.

Are there some marketing communications that get attention in one fell swoop—yes, sometimes. Product launches using 6 page spreads in the Wall Street Journal or local papers across the US may get attention. Ads for the Olympics or big sporting events, too. These type of communications are usually backed by big budgets, however. In these cases, you **may** be able to get your message across in one time.

However, the amount you spend will usually more than equal what can be done with a variety of integrated marketing activities working together to deliver your message. On the other side of the spectrum are viral marketing activities—free activities using email or word of mouth. By the time you come across innovative methods, everyone else is using them too. And there is no control over targeting your message or number of times a person will see the message. Not that this is bad, but viral activities should be incorporated as one method into your whole integrated, once is not enough plan!

## ACTIONS TO TAKE RIGHT NOW

Right now, you should be auditing what you are doing, making sure you are not doing one-shot marketing, which just does not make effective use of your marketing resources.

- 1) Document your current marketing efforts-identify what activities you are doing.

2) Analyze them—Are you doing one-shot activities or following through and consistently touching your target audience with your messages and benefits?

3) Evaluate them -- Highlight those "one shot" tactics and determine whether you can either expand them or if they should be put away for the time being.

For example, if you did a one-time ad and feel it's an effective way to reach a target audience, identify places to run it again. Increase the number of impressions to your prospects. If you did a direct mail, mail to the audience again with a new offer. Just because they don't answer the first time, does not mean they are not interested.

Remember, the average is 7 times to make an impact.

4) Evaluate your budget -- are you spending too little, just enough or too much? Search on the Internet for data on marketing spend rates in your industry to see where you stand. Or talk to your peers.

5) Compare them -- Review the marketing efforts of your competitors. How are they reaching the same people and companies you're trying to reach? See if you can find out what's working and not working for them.