

Four Reasons Your Marketing Effort May Be Missing the Boat

Written by Edward F. Nesta

Do you ever wonder if all the different tactics that you are engaging to improve your marketing position are working? Are you really walking-the-walk, or just talking a good game? Here are four areas that you can look at to see how you are doing and to gauge if you are executing, or talking.

The more things change, the more they stay the same. Even with a plethora of information available to read and learn, many businesses still execute in a vacuum when it comes to knowing if they are engaging prospective customers with their marketing and sales efforts.

Even if you have seen some positive upward movement to your bottom-line, that does not mean that the effort and money that is being spent on all of your marketing and sales efforts are hitting their marks. I understand that many companies are performing with limited resources due to the hard economic times, thus providing adequate time to manage all of their processes may seem daunting. So, here are four areas that you can evaluate in a timely manner, and which are the foundation to many other programs that you may have in place. Thus, if there is a weakness in these areas, then the other programs are probably not hitting their mark.

First - A website is all that you need.

I still deal with small to mid-size companies who are content with just having a website, but they have not looked under the hood to see if they have a presence on the Internet that is being tracked. Just having a website that you can see once you key in the Internet address is nice; but, what about the customer that does not know about you, how do you connect with them?

The Internet provides around-the-clock visibility, so you need to project your brand, product, or service, beyond the website. You need to make sure that your information is being cataloged by the major search engines, and that it reflects the message that it was intended to convey.

How do you do this? Well, the first step is to see how the different search engines see your website. The search engines are our friends, but if you don't speak their language then they cannot hear you. To see how Google sees your site, go to www.Google.com and type in your website address or the name of your company in the search box. The results that are returned should show your website on the first page. If you read the information that is provided with the search result, you will see the word "cached." If you click on this field the screen will change to the view that the Google's mechanical search process sees when they find your website and catalog the content. The information that you will see in the "cached view" is not what a customer will see, but it is what Google sees and uses to determine who you are, what you do, and/or what you are selling.

For many websites, the cached view is blank or does not contain any of the key information that may be found on the website's home page as viewed by a customer. Typically, this is caused by a website that is built to display information via a development tool called "flash," or through streaming video. Though this format looks great to a customer, it is not compatible for the search engines. Thus, you are not being cataloged fully and the search engines do not know who you are, what you do, and/or what you are selling. The correction to this problem is straightforward, but you cannot fix something

that you do not know is a problem.

Second - Checklist marketing, but not doing anything.

With the continued assault on companies regarding new ways to promote their product and new tools that pop-up everyday, (i.e. social networking to mobile marketing), it is easy to see how a company will focus more on saying that they are doing something, (ex. they are on all the social networks, using mobile applications, or have a Twitter account), than actually measuring the benefit.

Sometimes you need to step back and take inventory of what you are doing and to ask yourself "How does it all tie together," and "Is the message consistent across the different channels?" If you cannot come up with a concise response, then you may need to review your checklist and refocus your execution either by targeting the top two or three processes or tools to ensure that you are communicating concisely and consistently.

Third - Wanting to be everything to everybody, but not being anything to anybody.

A fallout from trying to participate in every marketing scheme that exists is that you open yourself up to too many fronts to maintain. Basic time management will restrict your ability to provide adequate attention to detail to each of the different tactics, and an inconsistent message can be more devastating as it creates confusion to existing and/or prospective customers. You will not be deemed "not progressive" if you do not have a Twitter account or Facebook page, but you will be deemed inconsequential if you use either poorly.

Fourth - Mistaking Search Engine Optimizing (SEO) for Marketing

Search Engine Optimizing has its place within the foundation of a website; it is the infrastructure of your website, but it should not be mistaken for marketing. SEO tactics ensure that your website is structured to be cataloged by the major search engines, as well as other infrastructure essentials for a website. The proper positioning of your information across the search engines is an important step to your marketing, but making sure that the information you want communicated is properly depicted per each page of your website is not the responsibility of the SEO team, it is the responsibility of the marketing team.

Utilizing other Internet channels, social networks, and relationship websites, is not search engine optimizing, this is a strategic direction driven by your marketing plan. Do not defer this process because you are not familiar with it, or because you deem it too technical; an inconsistent or wrong message transmitted across one of these channels can be very devastating to your brand image.

© March 2011. Luxury Experience Company. www.L-E-Company.com. All rights reserved.