9 Marketing Myths We Should Not Believe

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When it comes to marketing, you'll hear a lot of different advice. One expert will say to always do A, while another expert says to never do A. At the end of the day, you have to take in all the advice you read and hear and figure out what works for you as a small-business owner.

One study showed that around 70 percent of marketers are not handling the era of big data well and a mere 3 percent said their data was aligned with their marketing efforts. One of the reasons marketing and business goals aren't aligned may have to do with the many marketing myths business owners face.

Here are nine marketing myths you shouldn't believe and what you should do instead:

1. The ROI of Inbound Marketing Isn't Measurable

You may have heard that it's impossible to measure the ROI of inbound marketing, but it's actually quite easy to track analytics and see where your traffic comes from. If you seek leads from sources such as social media, they have their own analytics to show you which ads are most effective.

In fact, marketing teams who used automation software and checked analytics a few times a week saw 20 percent more ROI than those who didn't. Instead of assuming you can't control inbound marketing, stay on top of your results. Study what works and what doesn't to convert browsers into leads.

2. It’s Impossible to Set Specific Goals

You might think it’s impossible to set specific marketing goals, because you never know how a campaign might go, but this simply isn’t true. Those who set goals are 429 percent more likely to find success, and top marketers document the processes they use and determine which ones are successful and which ones aren’t.

Instead of avoiding goals until you see how successful a campaign is, set specific goals for what you want to achieve and then figure out how to get there.

3. You Can’t Buy Their Love

You may have heard that promotional products don’t work. People who want something free will take your products and you’ll not get any return from it. However, people tend to view a brand more favorably if they receive an eco-friendly or made-in-America product. About 85 percent of consumers remember a brand that gave them apparel, such as a T-shirt or hat.

Promotional products do work. The key is finding the item your customers will keep and display proudly. This turns the customer into a walking billboard for your brand.

4. Local Businesses Don’t Need Online Marketing

If you run a small mom-and-pop shop, you may assume your online presence doesn’t really matter. After all, most of your business is foot traffic, right? Not having an online presence, even for a small local business, is a mistake.

About 30 percent of all mobile searches tie to a location, and around 28 percent of searches for something near the person turn into a purchase. Instead of ignoring your online presence, figure out where your target audience spends their time and reach out to them via social media.

5. All Millennials Think Alike

Millennials often get a bad rap for being self-absorbed and broke. While they have faced some challenges generations before them may not have, today's millennials are simply savvy with their money. They also can't all be pigeonholed into a single description.

Instead of assuming you can create a blanket marketing campaign that covers all millennials, take the time to get to know your customers on a personal level. Understand they are each unique and must be marketed to as individuals.

6. Mobile Readiness Doesn't Matter

Mobile internet traffic is about 51.2 percent, and some users only access the web via their mobile devices. As more people purchase smartphones and wireless networks adopt 5G and faster mobile internet service, expect to see the percentage of mobile users creep up even higher.

Mobile readiness matters, and Google even penalizes your site for not being friendly to smaller screens. Instead of ignoring your mobile presences, embrace the small screen.

7. Email Marketing Is Dead

Some business owners think email marketing isn't a wise investment of time and resources. Thanks to loads of spam, people just delete any email that lands in their inbox, don't they? The truth is that email has a high ROI compared to other

forms of marketing. You just have to take the time to get the tone and the offers right.

About 77 percent of consumers prefer email as the No. 1 method of communication by 68 percent over the next nearest method. An email list also belongs to you rather than being controlled by a social media platform. If you aren’t building an online mailing list, you should.

8. Get on All Social Media Platforms

Myth No. 8 says you need to have a presence on as many social media platforms as possible. If you’re going to post on one, you might as well post on them all. However, each platform is a bit different in tone and audience, so a post you created for Facebook may not translate well on LinkedIn.

A presence on social media takes time and resources. Instead of trying to be everything to everyone, choose the social media site that attracts your typical customer type. You can always expand into other platforms later.

9. Every Lead Is Valuable

This myth states you need to just collect leads. However, this isn’t true. A good lead is someone who is right in your target audience and most likely to purchase your product or service. Simply gathering names is a waste of time and money.

Instead, narrow down your focus so you attract only those people who are most likely to be interested in what you have to offer. If a lead will never buy your product, then it isn’t worth your time.

Overcoming Marketing Myths

Whether the myths you’re following are from other marketing experts or personal truths you’ve adopted over time, spend a few minutes thinking through which ones are accurate and which ones should be ignored. With a little foresight, your marketing will rise to the next level and you’ll avoid the pitfalls other marketers disappear into.

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