

4 Essential Elements of a Marketing Campaign

Marketing efforts can be costly when sufficient attention has not been paid to the following vital questions. Most small businesses do not have the budget to allow for expensive marketing campaigns so it is critical to answer these questions with honesty and clarity.

1. Is the **need** for your product or service obvious?

If the need for your product is obvious, then it is important to let people know about it! What if the need is not so obvious to your target market? If your customer doesn't *really* need what you are offering, you will have a tough time trying to sell it.

When you can show how difficult your customer's life will be without your product, then you create the *want*. Some marketers are quoted as saying, "You don't get rich by fulfilling needs. You get rich by fulfilling wants."

Marketing efforts, then, need to be spent on creating the want and desire for your product or service.

People buy products that make them feel good and help to alleviate their fears. If you can meet that criteria, you will make sales.

The present economy is creating an environment where consumers are revisiting needs and wants. For instance, a family has the **need** for groceries and the family shopper **wants** ways to stretch the family budget.

2. What is your **offer**?

It is so critical to be able to communicate your product or service offer in two sentences. Learning to do this is time well spent. We aren't talking here about a 'special offer' or facts about your company: in business for over 20 years; leader in quality; on time, every time. These bragging points are not part of an offer and do not serve to move your customers to buy. We all know that business does not happen until an offer is made and accepted. Every purchase of an offer is an investment. If your customers feel that their investment in your product yields a positive return, then they will continue to do business with you. There are ways to add value to your offer that will enhance customer appreciation. These value adds need not subtract from your profit margins to be effective.

3. Are you making your offer to the **right audience**?

Let's say your service is a new day-care center for pre-school children. Who is your target market? Families with parents who work would be the likely clients.

How will you focus your offer to this audience? What radio and TV stations would these parents be likely to listen to or watch? What printed media will reach them? You can create the world's best offer but if you don't present it to people who are hungry for your product or service, you are wasting your money.

4. Is your marketing message delivered through a **cost effective system**?

There are countless ways to deliver your message including: direct mail, radio and TV ads, newspaper and magazine ads, the internet, seminars, teleconferences, special reports, bulletin boards, business cards – just to name a few. Whatever media you choose, be sure to measure your ROI (Return on Investment).