

JOSHUA HARMENING

THE FOUR STEP
MARKETING
BLUEPRINT

The Marketing Guide Your
Competition Hopes You'll Never Read

The Four-Step Marketing Blueprint



The Four-Step Marketing Blueprint

**The Marketing Guide Your Competition
Hopes You'll Never Find**

by

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with the FSMC Community

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For the entrepreneurs burning the midnight oil.
You've tirelessly innovated. May you soon enjoy
the fruits of your labor.



Introduction

Man's Search for Marketing

If you've been searching for the answer to business growth and are completely confused by all the conflicting information out there, you are certainly not alone. In the last ten years, digital marketing options have exploded making it overwhelming for most businesses. Marketing expenses? Well, they've also skyrocketed due to demand and competition. With so many options, costing so much money, the world of marketing has now become gridlocked. This overwhelming confusion has forced many companies to surrender their campaigns to marketing agencies. Small businesses unable to afford the local marketing agency fees have become DIY marketers, running their businesses, building websites and managing Google AdWords all at the same time. This little book will provide a solution for man's search for marketing. But before you are willing to embrace a solution, you must realize that there are indeed major problems in the world of marketing.



Problem 1 - The Giants Control Advertising Rates

Have you seen Google's stock prices lately? How about Facebook? For that matter, check out the growth of any Internet content company who sells digital advertising. You'll see their revenues are growing at unfathomable rates. Pay per click traffic that used to cost thirty-five cents, now costs five dollars. Have you seen your AdWords account lately? You'll find not all of your ads are showing. Why? Your ad isn't on the first page. Your quality scores are low. Your expected click through rate is low. The same goes for Bing, Yahoo!, Facebook and any other digital pay per click platform. Organic traffic? It's changed as well. Your listings in the search engines move by the minute, making it extremely dangerous for any business to solely rely upon. Social media? Though businesses have invested small fortunes into their social presence, their return on investment continues to diminish. Even Internet traffic from the local search has been hijacked resulting in less listings and paid placements.

What about mainstream media? Print advertising, television and radio have also changed. With more people cutting the cable cord, the networks' reply is to charge more for commercials. Though radio ads are expensive, they barely move the needle with so many people streaming music, talk shows or podcasts through their smartphones. Magazine and newspaper subscriptions are also down. That's not what the salesman told you though. He told you about distribution and readership right? When was the last time you saw someone reading a magazine in a doctor's office? Do you still receive a printed newspaper? Most of us take the yellow phone book from our front door and bring it right to the recycling bin



without a second thought. Though society is still listening and reading, they now do it through their favorite mobile device. If most people have no need for phone books, magazines, or newspapers, why have advertising costs continued to increase?

We'll warn you ahead of time, your company isn't strong enough to face these media giants. No matter how rich your marketing budget, they will continually raise the cost of advertising until it is out of reach. Consider this: when Google introduced Adwords, their pay per click system, it scarfed up billions upon billions of business advertising dollars. Did your traditional advertising costs decrease? No way! Their response was to raise the rates to offset their losses. With Facebook's IPO and the revolution of social media advertising, businesses invested billions into a new form of marketing. Did you see your expenses go down on other digital marketing channels? Not a chance! The response from the other digital giants including Google, Yahoo!, and Bing was to also increase advertising rates. Ironically, even though the marketing dollars spent with the giants continue to be less effective, the costs continue to increase.

Problem 2 - Novices are Controlling Your Marketing Campaigns

For the small business owner doing everything yourself, you already know how complicated things can be. When you started out, you didn't think you'd be learning analytic software, website coding, social media and pay per click marketing. Not only do you have to run your own business, but also you're tinkering with websites, ad campaigns and a whirlwind of other technology. Your marketing dollars are going out each month but the question



remains; do you really have everything set up correctly? What business opportunities have you neglected so you can tinker with your own marketing? Most do-it-yourselfers already realize the complexity of the situation and would hire help if they could only afford it.

Bigger businesses fare only slightly better. Complex campaigns are passed off to Pedro, the new guy in Marketing who replaced Jim, only last month. By the time Pedro figures things out, he's received a better offer from another company and there's another hole to fill in the marketing ship. For the company that is housing a large marketing team, there are multiple groups fighting for marketing dollars in hopes the CMO will notice their work. Fortune 500 corporations with large advertising budgets see marketing as a line item, money to be spent without regard for results. Even marketing executives, if they were truly honest with themselves, would admit that they struggle to find a cohesive strategy within the complex world of marketing.

Finally, some frustrated businesses look to local marketing agencies for expertise, believing there must be a better solution. Tim, the agency salesman, is extremely knowledgeable. He's warm and friendly and confidently guarantees huge results for your business. Six months and thousands of dollars later, little progress has been made on the campaign. You call the agency and ask to speak with Tim. After a brief hold you learn he no longer works there and are transferred to a generic voicemail box. Three days later you receive a phone call back from your assigned project manager. Excuses abound and you realize that you're just another number in a long line of struggling businesses.



Problem 3 - One Thousand Options and Zero Solutions

You open your email inbox and there are two emails in your spam folder from India. They're offering SEO for two hundred dollars a month. Checking your voicemail you receive a message from your local Yellow Page Company telling you it is time to renew. As you hang up the phone, a staff member tells you there's someone from a new magazine wanting to feature your business. After two minutes, you realize he's selling ads. Your nephew Mike just started a business designing websites, he texts you offering a redesign for five hundred dollars. As you log into LinkedIn, a message pops up from Kyle. He is requesting an appointment to go over industry related email marketing software. We could go on here, but you already know how many options are available for your business. Our libraries are littered with marketing books by arrogant authors who've rehashed the same content over and over. The problem still remains. Everyone selling you something has something to gain. While some of the marketing might be a piece of the puzzle, it doesn't provide you with a solution.

Enter Four-Step Marketing

Does the world really need another marketing book? Perhaps you're wondering if the picture we've painted about the problems in the world of marketing are really that bad. After all, there are smart small business owners who have their campaigns set up well. No doubt, some staff members are loyal and do great work.



Obviously, not all marketing agencies are incompetent. While the world might not need another marketing book, we believe that businesses do need a simple and clear marketing blueprint. We've written this short book to be a fast, straight forward, easy read. To help everything really sink in, we've created a few graphics to help you learn as you read. As we outline each of these steps, you'll see that there really is a simple solution for growth that can be measured and integrated into every business. Though it is extremely simple to understand, it's likely to be different than anything you've seen before.

Lastly, before you dive into this book, you might be curious about our background or why you should listen to us. More importantly, is this free book, or the Four Step Marketing idea, really worth your time? In short, we are an unusual breed of entrepreneurs and consultants. Chances are good that you've never heard of us, or the Four-Step Marketing process before. Though extremely successful, we fly way under the radar and prefer it that way. We see no need for hype, noise, or flamboyant marketing tactics. Our growth continues by practicing the Four Step Marketing process in our business. You'll find we openly disagree with many of the so-called "marketing experts" and in some circles are considered black sheep because of our lack of emphasis on branding. We hate high-pressure sales and are closed most Fridays. When we are working, you'll find us wearing jeans and t-shirts, casually strategizing with clients all over the world. We don't have clever slogans, cool brands or flashy websites. We don't employ sales people, carry business cards, or have fancy trifold brochures.

Sales gurus would argue that our Four Step Marketing process is too soft. Madison Avenue branding agencies would insist that marketing couldn't really be measured.



Marketing agencies would conclude that the process couldn't be applied to every industry. Other marketing consultants might even dismiss us completely for making the whole process entirely too simple. Fortunately, we don't care. We didn't write this book for them. We wrote it for you, the business owner and executive. You see, we realize something our critics don't and it comes with a huge payoff. When a business embraces the principles in this book, growth happens. Business revenues become a faucet that can be controlled. Whether you realize it or not, you hold these principles in your hand right now. This is the blueprint to Four Step Marketing. We also understand that the world of marketing is over-bloated with hype. Rest assured, this isn't one of those books. If you're willing, let's get started with step one.



Chapter 1

Unique Selling Points

Say the RIGHT Things with Your Unique Selling Points

The first part of our journey will help you understand your overall marketing message. If your business is indeed sending a message at all, it is likely unclear. We find that most businesses initially created their marketing message by copying what their competitors have written. For the most part, companies ignore this key aspect of their business perhaps changing things only slightly over the years. For example, if we were to stumble across an advertisement about your business, what would it say? Here's one way to discover your marketing message. If we were considering engaging your business and you had only 15 seconds to convince us, what would you say? Stop and think about it. You have only 15 seconds to tell us why we should pick you. The majority of our readers and their staff would probably say something like this:

"You should work with us because— well, we're better! Actually, we're the best. Look how nice we are too. We're friendly and we smile a lot. We have great service. Also, we're a family owned business. We've got 'great' prices. In fact, my guess is nobody beats



our prices. We're also honest. That's right, honesty and integrity is our policy. We're reliable and dependable. Yes, we have a professional service guarantee. We're willing to help you, we're fast and we're local. We do it right the first time too. We care and really love our customers. We also have other options to choose from in our great selection. Did I mention that we were established in 1901?"

We could go on, but you get the picture. Though we've exaggerated a bit to include different industries, chances are good your business couldn't give us some solid "whys" within 15 seconds. If you have any printed ads, read them and determine what they say. Take a look at the homepage of your website too. It's probable that your content is flooded with fluffy words that are so commonplace that we've come to totally ignore them. They go in one ear and out the other without a second thought. We find that most businesses are saying all the things that customers have already come to expect. Your customers and prospects expect you to be good, friendly and honest. After all, that's why they're paying you. If you don't deliver, they'll find someone else who will. If you really screw them over, they'll sue you. Still, over 95% of all businesses continue to use meandering and boring platitudes almost as placeholders for their advertisements.

Increasing Your Market Share

As marketing consultants, one of the most often asked questions we receive is "how can I increase conversions?". In other words, businesses are looking for a way to take market share away from their competitors. Step 1 in Four Step Marketing deals with just



that, increasing conversions. Our goal is to clearly identify all the ways you're better than your competitors. We'll identify these as your *Unique Selling Points*, or the unique angles to your business and industry. This list of *Unique Selling Points* will then become your overall marketing message and built into every aspect of your Four Step Marketing campaign. Simply put, your *Unique Selling Points* should "wow" your customers so that they see your company as the clear choice to do business with! To say it another way, when you build strong *Unique Selling Points* explaining why you're better, heads should turn and people should take notice. Conversions will increase because more people want to do business with you instead of your competitors.

Why Being the Cheapest Isn't Always a Good Thing

If you're a business owner, be prepared to get a little uncomfortable. If you "wow" customers with why you're better, they'll be willing to spend more money to buy from you. It comes down to the value you provide them. Unfortunately, most businesses are only willing to compete on price alone. They are the cheapest and can't understand why sales aren't pouring in. They rotate promotions, discounts and coupons with little changes in revenues all while taking a hit on their profit margin. Often times, being the cheapest means you've cut so much profit out that you're unable to add any more value to your customers in other areas. The end result is that someone will eventually undercut you, making things even more difficult.



The biggest problem with the "cheapest" mindset is that money isn't the only thing that is important to most of us. Most people buy based upon overall value. If we all value different things, being the cheapest doesn't necessarily guarantee an increase in your business. For example, because we value our time, many have decided to skip the trip to the store and order online. Because we value our relationships and social experiences, we don't always eat at the cheapest restaurants. We value service, our children, good health and dozens of other things used to filter every single buying decision. Some might disagree with us and believe that price determines everything. While the price does influence a decision, the truth is, people will only pick the lowest price if everything else is exactly the same. Do you utilize the cheapest form of transportation in the world? That would be walking, right? Probably not, if you value your time. When you purchased an automobile, did you only purchase standard features? Or did you add the power seat with lumbar support and a back-up camera? Do you always stay at the cheapest hotels? Do you live in the cheapest house in your city? From the houses we live in, to the places we shop and visit, we do the things we do filtered through the lens of what we value.

Showing Off Your Company's Value

We can ignore the truth about why people buy or use it to our advantage. By clarifying all of our *Unique Selling Points*, we're able to quickly explain differences in our company versus our competitors. While it sounds simple enough, the sad truth is that most businesses don't have strong *Unique Selling Points*. The majority of businesses have also never sat down long enough to even think about their message. They say the same old thing over and over



again. "We're nice, we're good, we're friendly. We love our customers. We've been in business since 2001." On top of that, they'll throw in a catchy slogan or perhaps a jingle. Can we offer a quick reality check? People don't care about you or your business. If you're saying what everybody else is saying, that's just noise. They want to know what's in it for them. What benefit will they receive from working with your company compared to the guy down the road? If they are currently your customers, should they stay with you or leave? They want to know the "WHY". Are you faster? Do you have a better warranty? Are returns easy? Is the service better? How about better technology? Do you have a guarantee? Are there any special bonuses when we buy from you? What makes you different? In other words, what makes your business unique?

The Death of Customer Loyalty

What about customer loyalty? Sorry friend, but it's gone. It died the moment we all started carrying around computers in our pockets. Prospects and customers are now educated and they've got loads of options to choose from. They've read your reviews and are deciding if they'll buy, keep buying or leave. If for any reason they're not quite sure, they'll ask their online friends for suggestions and receive an outpouring of responses. Be forewarned that if you're not continually improving and giving customers what they want, they will eventually become someone else's customers. After all, haven't you done the same thing? What store did you used to frequent until that day they really ticked you off? What did you do? You stopped shopping there. If we're honest with ourselves, all of us have stopped buying one brand and



switched to another brand at some point. Did we call the company and tell them we were leaving? Probably not, we just left. Knowing this is our nature, what leads us to believe our prospects and customers won't do the same thing to us?

Warning - Ignoring This Step Causes a Miserable Slow Death

Yes, building strong *Unique Selling Points* takes work, planning and determination. Innovation can be expensive. But what's the alternative? If you don't deliver value, you're digging your company's grave. Prepare to get buried alive by your competitors who are willing to innovate and change. You see, right now, your competitors are burning the midnight oil. They're working harder, longer and are investing in their future. They are well capitalized and are studying you. They're planning their attack on your industry. They'll slowly gain market share until they suffocate you. Now is the time to prepare. Now is the time to improve your offering. If you're really honest with yourself, you're probably like most businesses and have never even thought about your *Unique Selling Points*. Have you ever sat down and studied your competitors? Can you email us a detailed list of why you're the clear choice when it comes to your industry?

Consider this. Blockbuster Video, the world's largest movie rental company, employed over 60,000 people and had over 9,000 stores at their peak in 2004. They had the opportunity to buy Netflix for a measly million dollars and declined. Netflix gave consumers what they wanted and shipped movie rentals to their door without LATE FEES. Redbox entered the scene allowing us to pick out our movie rentals outside of retail outlets and convenience stores. Netflix, Amazon, Apple, Google, and several other players added live



stream movies by subscription. While Blockbuster Video did eventually join the bandwagon, it was too late for them. They filed bankruptcy and closed because they didn't give their customers what they wanted. It's a sad story, but all hope isn't lost for your business.

Dialing in Your Unique Selling Points

So how do you give customers what they want and dial in to your *Unique Selling Points*? It starts out with research. Though you probably can't give your customers and prospects everything they want today, understanding what they want is paramount to keeping them and attracting more. Here are a few things you can do immediately to better understand your customers and prospects:

- a. Profile Your Ideal Prospects/Customers
- b. Survey Prospects/Customers
- c. Research Competitors and Their Offerings
- d. Industry Research

Though it sounds simple enough, even big companies aren't gathering this insight. You're probably not profiling your ideal prospects and customers either. We'd also guess that you've not surveyed prospects or your valuable customers. You may know what's going on in the industry, but who are the top players? Why are they winning? What's new with technology? What are they doing differently? Most people think that coming up with *Unique Selling Points* is difficult. It isn't. It's all about listening. You simply need to ask your customers and prospects what you could do



better. Then take a hard look at your competitors versus your business and ask yourself what you should do to improve.

Integrating Your Unique Selling Points into Your Marketing

Defining your Unique Selling Points is a critical prerequisite to the other steps you'll read about. Once you have your Unique Selling Points in place, the Four Step Marketing process will help keep your business in front of your customers and prospects. Your Unique Selling Points will become central to your business. They will be your core marketing message. Utilize your *Unique Selling Points* to continually educate customers and prospects why they'd be crazy to go anywhere else. Integrating them will create a tipping point. *Unique Selling Points* are why customers choose your brand over the competition time and time again, because of the value you provide. Even if you ignore the other marketing steps listed in this book and only completed this step, you'd still see growth due to an increase in conversions.

There's more good news! Sometimes coming up with strong *Unique Selling Points* takes work and innovation. Sometimes it doesn't. Each year we meet companies who have great systems and services in place for their customers and prospects. They already have amazing *Unique Selling Points* and are the clear choice when it comes to value. The problem is that they haven't done a good job at sharing them openly. As crazy as it sounds, these remarkable businesses have kept their marketing message a secret and have left money on the table. For businesses like this, the solution is



fairly simple; integrate their *Unique Selling Points* into every area of their sales and marketing channels.

Companies with amazing *Unique Selling Points* have gone through the painful process of innovating. They are leaders and entrepreneurs who constantly think about how they can increase the value of their products and services. They have worked tirelessly to improve their inside reality. Rather than tell prospects about how nice they are or how long they've been in business, they tell the customers why they should select their business for the products and services they desire! Companies who practice step 1 have telepathy when it comes to their customers and prospects. They already know who they are and what they want because they have surveyed them. Successful businesses ask themselves what they could do better every day. They package this information up beautifully and insert it into the other steps you'll learn about in this book.

As you can see, developing your *Unique Selling Points* isn't a one time process. Like anything worthwhile, it is a journey of continual improvements, changes, and adaptations. Your *Unique Selling Points* will evolve over time. After going through the research stage, you should have a clear understanding of your prospects' and customers' wants and needs. You can then decide what improvements to make, starting with the easiest to deliver but most valuable option.

As you continue to improve, you'll share your newly improved *Unique Selling Points* in your marketing. This will enhance your customer loyalty, conversions and revenues. In summary, your mom explained *Unique Selling Points* perfectly. Remember what she used to tell you when you were little - "If you don't have anything



good to say, then please don't say anything at all!" It's good advice. When an organization develops their *Unique Selling Points*, they'll have plenty of good things to say.



Chapter 2

Platforms and Offers

Grow Your DATABASE

Using Platforms and Offers

Most businesses have similar goals. We want everyone who isn't a customer to become one. When they become customers, we want them to keep buying from us for life. It sounds nice and all, but it doesn't happen automatically. If we're going to increase conversions with prospects and stay connected with our customers, we'll need an effective system to communicate our *Unique Selling Points* to them. But there's a small problem. In order to communicate with our prospects and customers, we need them to give us permission to contact them as well as their personal contact details. For example, in order to send an email explaining a new innovation, we'll need their email address. In order to have a sales associate call and share about how we're better, we'll need their telephone number. If we want to send a postcard highlighting a new service guarantee, we need their mailing address. Logically, this only makes sense. In this chapter, we'll outline how to get your prospects' and customers' contact details as well as permission to communicate with them.



The Age of Information and Educated Customers and Prospects

In the old days, pushy salesman would walk you through a five-minute pitch. After a quick pitch, they'd expect prospects to be ready to buy. If that didn't work, added pressure, sales gimmicks and even the enlistment of the manager were used to close the deal. This is still used in some industries such as some car dealerships and timeshare sales. The majority of you reading this would probably agree that those strategies are dying. In today's world, people don't like to be pressured. They don't want to be sold on something. Instead, they want to be educated so they feel like they are making the best buying decision. The same rules apply with your current customers and prospects. Right now, they are deciding. Prospects are asking themselves if they will buy. They are weighing their options. Customers are asking themselves if there is something better. Will they remain customers? In our last chapter, we learned about *Unique Selling Points* and that overall value is the biggest reason why someone decides to make a purchase. However, your business should also master the psychology of WHEN prospects buy and WHY customers will remain faithful after their initial purchase.

The A-Z Buying Spectrum

From a small pack of gum to buying a franchise, your customers and prospects are feeding on information to determine if they will buy, pass or try something new. From friendships, mainstream media, news or even their gut feeling on the inside, they are looking for signals to support their decision. All data affects their decision to buy. For prospects to convert to customers, and customers to remain loyal, they must continually feel like they are



making the right buying decision. We learned in our last chapter that *Unique Selling Points* are key pieces of information to increase conversions and overall customer satisfaction. *Unique Selling Points* are the WHY! Consider the A-Z buying spectrum; it is the decision making process that we all go through before making any purchase. The Z position represents a buyer and a committed customer. The A-Y positions are prospective positions. For example, "A" would mean someone who is not very likely to become a customer. "Y" would mean the prospect is close to converting. If they're an existing customer, "Y" would mean that they're likely to buy again. No matter how big or small the purchase, everyone goes through the A-Z spectrum before deciding WHEN to buy. Sometimes this process takes weeks and other times it happens within 30 seconds. Regardless of the decision you make, your brain evaluates the data and information it has and then makes a decision.

Are you considering dining out and selecting a restaurant? Your brain thinks of past experiences, the mood it is in, and then blurts out a thought. Want a candy bar? Your brain says you're hungry and you compulsively put it on the counter jumping right to the "Z" position without thoroughly considering the decision. Are you thinking about selling or purchasing a home? The first time the thought came to you, you were in the "A" position. For six months you've been thinking about it and looking at new homes. You're now at the "L" position. The real estate agent visits your home and tells you that you could get \$20,000 more than you thought if she listed it. You're now sliding down to the "T" position and are more likely to move closer to the "Z" position, which is when you sign the papers and close on your home. In summary, the A-Z buying spectrum is a timeline for when people buy.



We Googled You...

Here's What We Found Out

Did you know you're in the education business? That's right, you're providing an education to prospects and customers about your business and services. Whether you're a family owned operation or a fortune 500 company, people are researching and becoming educated about your business. Prospects are sifting through your business online to decide if they're going to work with you. Customers are analyzing your services and products and deciding to stick with you or go elsewhere. What few businesses realize is that there is indeed an education process that led these prospects and customers to you— or sadly, away from you and to your competitors. You see, before a prospect or customer ever comes in contact with you, they've likely already researched you, your competition and have some preconceived ideas about who they will work with. Before you even know who these people are, they've already read your online reviews. They found a blog post from two years ago highlighting a bad experience. They've Googled you upwards and backwards and read the first two pages of information. Lastly, they've even posted on social media to get feedback from their friends. What you might not realize is that everything that exists online about you is part of their education process. Remember, they're judging you based upon what they can find out without contacting you or committing to a business relationship.

It isn't just online though. The education process goes even further. Every experience they've had with your staff, whether good or bad,



is also part of that education. From how your staff treats them when they enter your location to how you package your products is all part of the ongoing education. Was someone rude to them? Did they have to wait a long time? Was the person who answered the phone nasty? Were they offended by something that happened? Remember, they're judging you, right or wrong, based upon their experience. Each experience pushes them in a direction on the A-Z buying spectrum. Good experiences point them to the "Z" position. Bad experiences move them away. Finding a positive review points them to the "Z" position and finding a complaint with the Better Business Bureau pushes them back the other way. Unfortunately, very few businesses realize they're indeed in the education business. You see, they're learning all about your business without you. It should only make sense then, to take control of the educational process and own it. After all, nobody knows your business and the value you can bring like you do.

Owning the Educational Process

The goal of step 2 is actually very simple. To aggressively pursue a relationship with prospects and customers and gain permission to communicate your *Unique Selling Points* to them. So, instead of hoping they find something nice about us, we'll proactively create a marketing process that shares our *Unique Selling Points* with them on a consistent basis. These proactive pieces of information, shared at specific times, will help your prospects move along the A-Z buying spectrum until they become buyers. Customers who have purchased from you will receive specific information encouraging them to become life-long customers and advocates for your business. This process doesn't happen by chance or luck. It



is a system your business creates to nurture relationships. Your message and communication will be consistent so that no one slips through the cracks. You'll learn about this communication system a little later in this book when we discuss *Marketing Automation*. Right now, the important thing is to focus on how the relationship is formed.

Getting Permission to Communicate

In order to effectively communicate in this relationship, we'll need our customers' and prospects' permission. Additionally, we'll need their personal contact details such as their name, address, phone and email address. While this is pretty logical, you might be wondering why people would give up this information. After all, how many times have you been to a website inviting you to join their email list. It might as well say, "This is a Space Filler" because on average, less than 3 people out of 1000, opt-in to a mailing list. However, that's not what we're talking about here. Remember, this is a relationship. To get permission to communicate with our prospects and customers, we need to do something better. We need to think about what interests them. What do they care about? What intrigues them? To gain permission to communicate, we need to think about what would be almost irresistible for them to pass up. In other words, we're going to BAIT THEM in order to get their contact information. Did we say BAIT THEM? Really? Yes, but we're not talking about anything unethical or in poor taste. You can call it "incentivizing" if that makes you feel better, but in order to start this relationship, we need something good to give away.



Baiting Them with Your Offer

The first part of step number two is your company's free *Offer*. The *Offer* is something that you give away for FREE without any sales pressure, requirements or gimmicks. The only caveat is that your customers or prospects must share their personal details to claim the free *Offer*. They'll also be giving permission to communicate. This is the bait we'll use to continually increase your ability to communicate. In other words, you'll start off by finding something to give away for FREE that provides real value for your prospects and customers. This will be your company's *Offer*.

The free *Offer* can be almost anything. The secret is finding something that is perceived as valuable. Even though the *Offer* might be valuable to your prospects and customers, that doesn't mean it should be expensive to produce. It means the contents are perceived as valuable. It can be a free e-book, printed book, information package, DVD, Audio CD, one time coupons, videos, food, beverages, gift cards, trial offers and any number of other things which fit into your business model. For example, a restaurant might give away a free dessert as their *Offer*. A bar might offer a coupon for two beers for 10 cents. A retail outlet might give away a 30% off coupon that can only be claimed once. A lawyer might send a DVD outlining the three secrets to maximizing an injury claim. Obviously, the *Offer* is something that is unique to that business. Remember, the free *Offer* is given away without strings attached or any future obligation to buy. Our goal is to simply build a system, which allows us to gather their contact details for future follow-up.

Everyone who requests your free *Offer* will be stored in your company's database. Don't let the word "database" scare you or



confuse you even for a minute. We're talking about somewhere that you will securely store your customers' or prospects' information. There's a wide variety of easy to use and even free applications to manage your database. Just think of a database as a bucket containing prospects' and customers' information. By now, hopefully you understand that the free *Offer* is the starting point. You'll use it as the bait to grow your database. As you continue reading, you'll see why your database is so critical to your success.

Identifying the Best Fishing Spots

Every business is unique and interacts with their customers and prospects differently. Part of the strategy in step 2 is to clearly identify all the places your business comes into contact with prospects and customers. Think of these as the best places to go fishing with your free *Offer*. We call these fishing spots *Platforms* because they serve up our free *Offers*. To simplify everything, just remember that *Platforms* are anywhere you provide an *Offer* and gather information from a prospect or customer.

In case you're wondering - yes, your business has *Platforms*. Indeed, every business has at least one *Platform*. For example, if you have local clientele with walk-ins, then your business location is a *Platform*. Your staff has the perfect opportunity to point out your *Offers*. When the *Offer* is requested, their personal contact details go into your database and they're given the option to claim the *Offer* immediately. It could be a coupon, free food or perhaps a combination of a few things. Your website is also a *Platform*. When someone visits your website, they should be offered something valuable there as well. This could be an e-book, video series or free



trial. Do prospects and customers call your business? If they do, then that's another *Platform*. You see, when someone calls your office with a question, it's the perfect opportunity to share your free *Offer*.

Growing Your Database on Purpose

Obviously, the implementation of *Platforms and Offers* serves one purpose— database growth! Prospects' and customers' personal information are stored in your database and should be treated like gold. Smart businesses realize that every customer or prospect that goes in the database represents future revenues and referrals. It's a virtual bank account that will continue to pay you as prospects convert into customers and customers remain loyal to your brand. By providing value through our *Offer*, we've received permission (at least for a time) to educate and communicate with our prospects and customers.

It's probably best to end this chapter by giving you a few gentle words of caution. If you stop reading here, you're going to miss the big picture! We understand that entrepreneurs and business leaders are extremely busy. More than likely you've thumbed ahead to learn more about the Four Steps. Based upon our experience with entrepreneurs, we know you're probably feeling a little skeptical. *Unique Selling Points? Platforms and Offers?* Do I really need to give something away for free? How does any of this work together? How long will it take to work? Obviously, it doesn't all make sense just yet. There are still two more steps to cover. If you keep reading, everything will make sense.



Chapter 3

The Marketing Arsenal

Measure and Leverage the Marketing Arsenal

Step three is probably the most exciting step. When companies have strong *Unique Selling Points* (step 1) and have baited their *Platforms* with free *Offers* (step 2), there is an explosion of growth when they turn on the *Marketing Arsenal* (step 3). The *Marketing Arsenal* includes all the various forms of marketing exposure that exists. Though these methods are always changing, the *Marketing Arsenal's* sole purpose is to give your business exposure. Most businesses are familiar with the *Marketing Arsenal* and you'll likely recognize some of these marketing concepts as ideas your business has tried in the past. Unfortunately, most businesses manage the *Marketing Arsenal* the wrong way. Remember, the *Marketing Arsenal* is only part of the Four Step Marketing equation and shouldn't stand alone. Additionally, most businesses rarely measure their marketing effectiveness like you'll learn about in this chapter. Thus, a company's results can be drastically different when they implement the *Marketing Arsenal* as part of a complete Four Step Marketing system.

A Weird But Fitting Name

For as long as man has roamed the planet, war has been waged. It started out with clubs and sticks. Wood was molded into bows so



archers could rain down terror on those who would dare attack their cities. When wood was no longer enough, the metal sword dealt a punishing blow by knights riding on horses. Catapults launched huge boulders crushing walls. Then someone had a novel idea - let's launch balls of fire from our catapults. With the invention of the cannon, black powder rifles and the revolver, war evolved even further. Today's modern warfare includes all sorts of drones, heat seeking technology, and various ballistic missiles. Whether you want to admit it or not, your business is at war with your competitors to win and gain market share. Each battle is unique based upon your industry, business and geographic location. For some industries, television marketing is the standard. For other industries, internet marketing reigns supreme. Some businesses need global reach. Others need to target prospects right in their own backyards. Regardless of your industry or business, each battle is unique. In summary, the weapons in the *Marketing Arsenal* are all the different methods to wage a marketing war.

The Marketing Arsenal Weapons

Here's a short list of some of the marketing methods that could be implemented and measured in a *Marketing Arsenal* campaign. Because every situation is different, not every form of marketing would be implemented into your company's campaign.



Online Marketing Arsenal Weapons

- Search Engine Optimization or SEO
- Local Search Marketing
- Content Marketing
- Video Marketing
- Social Media Marketing
- Video Marketing and Optimization
- Pay Per Click Marketing
- Pay Per Conversion Marketing
- Content Network Marketing
- Visitor Remarketing
- Referral Campaign Marketing
- Affiliate Program Integration
- Joint Venture Marketing
- Podcasting
- SMS or Text Message Marketing
- Mobile App Marketing
- Public Relations Marketing

Offline Marketing Arsenal Weapons

- Direct Mail Marketing
- Radio Marketing
- Billboard Advertising
- Event Sponsorship
- Television Marketing
- Magazine or other Print Marketing
- Direct Sales Marketing
- Telemarketing



We realize that these concepts will be familiar to most readers. You might even be tempted to dismiss step 3 as something you already know or have tried with previous campaigns. The angst you feel when looking at all the various forms of marketing is normal. You've been jaded by past marketing misfires. Like bombs that never hit their targets, you'll see that most businesses have totally wasted their *Marketing Arsenal* efforts. Regardless of your past experiences, you're going to learn a new way to use the *Marketing Arsenal*. This methodical and systematic approach guarantees you'll hit your target. But before we layout this plan, it's important to understand why most marketing campaigns fall dreadfully short.

The Lie Most Businesses Believe About Marketing

It might sound contrary to popular belief, but most businesses don't need to build a bigger brand. And No, you don't need to "get your name out there" to grow sales. We've been taught this for years, but with most businesses, it simply isn't true. Guess who told you that repetition, slogans and your brand's exposure would grow sales? You guessed it— the marketing agencies. Yes, the same companies who takes your money for marketing services and don't measure for effectiveness. They've sold us the bag of goods that marketing can't be measured and to see it work, you simply need to give it time and do it over and over again.

The problem with "getting your name out there" is that it doesn't work with today's consumer. Haven't we all become experts at dodging commercials, ads and telemarketers? Though there's more media now than ever, it's never been harder to capture attention.



As more and more people tune out, traditional marketing is becoming less and less effective. Thus, the marketing that worked for your company last year isn't as effective today. To win back the lost attention, businesses seek out more outlandish ways to be remembered in the future and keep investing in marketing hoping to see a return. To that end, we keep spending and spending. We have no idea what is effective and what isn't, so we don't dare stop for fear the whole thing might fall apart. Like mixing hundred dollar bills with mud, we throw our marketing dollars against the wall and hope that something sticks. We are told to be patient and give it time. Remember, Albert Einstein defined insanity as "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

The Mistake That's Killing Your Marketing Budget

This is going to be painful for most readers. Especially if your company has heavily invested in marketing over the years. Ready? Based upon our experience, we estimate that the average company flushes almost 2/3 of their entire marketing budget down the drain every month. That's right, more than half of all marketing dollars spent bring in very little return for most businesses. You may find that hard to believe. How in the world can there be that much waste? The reality is that most businesses don't correctly measure their marketing results. You might feel confident and believe that your company, or perhaps the marketing agency that set up your marketing, is tracking your results. Sadly, we find that almost every business, especially large corporations, fall miserably short when it comes to accountable marketing. Though you may not want to hear this, chances are very good that your business is also not measuring marketing correctly. We'll define the best practices here



shortly; based upon our experience, over 95% of all businesses are totally wasting money on ineffective marketing activities that are completely ignored.

Let that soak in for a minute. How much did you spend on advertising last year? How about over the last ten years? What if you had 2/3 of all that capital back right now?

Better yet, what if that wasted money was applied to something that was actually working. It's a painful thought for most business leaders, but over the years we've seen measurable marketing save companies millions of dollars in wasted advertising costs. Though they've saved small fortunes, it wasn't at the expense of their growth. In fact, because their marketing became 100% accountable, they continued to grow while spending considerably less money. Imagine if you applied all the wasted money to effective marketing? Your marketing would be 300% more effective with the same exact marketing budget.

Measuring the Marketing Arsenal's Damage

Typically, there are two different arguments we'll hear. First, many businesses tell us that it's impossible to measure their marketing's effectiveness. Second, some businesses tell us they're already measuring all of their marketing. To see how well your business stacks up, let's clarify how the *Marketing*



Arsenal should be measured for effectiveness. For simplification, we'll discuss online and offline marketing. Online marketing will relate to marketing services that are digital or electronic. For example, online marketing would include Google AdWords, search marketing and social media. Offline marketing would then include items such as print advertising, television or radio commercials, and direct mail. While there's several ways to measure the *Marketing Arsenal*, we'll break this down into the very simplest forms. Keep in mind that the collection of this data is 100% legal, ethical and entirely invisible to your customers and prospects.

Measuring Website Traffic

To measure the visits you receive to your website, a specialty tracking code would need to be installed. The majority of websites do indeed have some form of website analytics installed on them, but that doesn't mean they're measuring their marketing. In order for website traffic to be measured, the business must use tracking links for all of their advertising. That means, when a visitor comes to the website, they secretly pass along tracking data telling how they found you. Ready for this? Website traffic coming from online and offline marketing can be measured. Yes, you read correctly. A television commercial that drives website traffic CAN and SHOULD be measured with tracking links. That goes for all forms of marketing. From ads in the Yellow Pages to social media marketing clicks. When done correctly, you'll see where all of your website visitors originated. The second part of measuring website traffic is to create conversion metrics. For example, when a visitor comes to your website, what is the main objective? Is the objective to purchase a product, request a quote, request your free *Offer* or call your company? Each website visitor's actions should be tracked and



the referring marketing compared to determine what is most effective.

Measuring Phone Calls

Before you insist that a website's analytical data doesn't reflect true metrics, keep reading. Both online and offline marketing should also measure the inbound phone calls generated if your company receives phone calls. For example, your business places an ad in a magazine. How many phone calls did it generate? When someone sees your television commercial on late night cable, did they pick up the phone and call you? You can only determine if this is working if you track your inbound phone calls. What if someone calls you while visiting your website? Good question. If prospects visit your website and then call you, your website should also be equipped with a call tracking script that automatically changes the phone number based upon their marketing source. That means, visitors coming from Google AdWords will see and call a different phone number than visitors coming from your television commercial.

Mind Blowing Measurable Marketing

For those of you with complex marketing campaigns, you might not be convinced just yet. You might argue that this tracking is "general" information and doesn't reflect an individual's actions. For example, what if Facebook is driving the majority of the leads but Google organic traffic is actually driving all the sales? In other words, what if you want to know the marketing source for the customer who spent a million dollars with you. Ready for the nail in



the coffin? You should realize that every new lead or order received can automatically and secretly capture the original marketing source and tie it to that user's account. When pulling their contact record in your system, you should be able to see the marketing that drove them to your company.

In summary, every *Marketing Arsenal* weapon can and should be measured. Every website visitor can be traced back to their original marketing source. Remember, this includes website visitors coming from offline marketing methods as well. Additionally, each of your marketing methods will have call tracking integration. When done correctly, you'll be able to see how the caller first found you, even if they're visiting your website for the first time. Depending on your business model, micro-level measuring can be implemented which ties the marketing source to your prospects' or customers' contact records. There are other measurable marketing methods for retailers and businesses with walk-in traffic. We should point out that this is a high level overview of measurable marketing and may be less or more complicated depending on your business model, marketing budget and industry. Regardless, the main point is to realize that marketing transparency is possible. Though all of this might sound complicated or expensive, let us assure you, it is neither.

Oblivious or a Conspiracy?

It's in our human nature to dismiss something when we don't fully understand it. We stick our heads in the sand trying to keep everything the way it is. After all, if measurable marketing exists to the extent we have just explained, why haven't you heard about it? If you've heard about it, why haven't you implemented it? Why hasn't your marketing staff explained this further? Why hasn't your



marketing agency demanded a meeting and insisted you stop everything in order to figure out what's working? There are some well meaning marketers who truly don't understand the full spectrum of measurable marketing. However, that's not the conspiracy. The conspiracy lies with those who've suggested and sold us the media. These billion dollar media giants profit from our ignorance. If we don't measure correctly, we'll never realize that the bulk of our marketing budget is being flushed right down the toilet.

The Small Business Self Sabotage

Almost all small businesses and new start-ups ignore the principle of measurable marketing. Many believe it is too complicated to set up and not needed for their small shop. Though they're still spending money on advertising, it's just a line item on their business plan. For the most part they depend on their location and word of mouth to drive sales. Sure enough, foot traffic and a booming economy sustain them for a couple years. However, there's a problem. Remember, the world is changing. Soon a competitor will expand and move in, just two blocks from your once ideal location. They'll be well capitalized, invest heavily in marketing and put you on the brink of bankruptcy. Just then, when the economy hits a bump, your best customers will spend less. You'll remember portions of this book and decide it's time to start measuring your marketing.

The Big Business Botch

Big businesses, yes companies spending millions upon millions of dollars every month, also botch measurable marketing. Television



advertising swallows huge portions of their advertising budgets without ever being tracked for effectiveness. These same companies fork over millions of dollars to Google, Facebook and other advertising agencies without ever really knowing what's happening. Advertising costs continue to rise while the return on investment is never discussed. The big business continues to spend because it believes spending is the only way to stay on par with their competition.

Yes, there is a better way. When a business sets up conversion metrics, the data becomes crystal clear. There's no more guessing. No more hoping. The business can now see what is driving revenues and what isn't. It can stop wasting money and apply the wasted funds to marketing that is generating a return. Keywords are cut from pay per click campaigns. Some print advertising is cancelled. The social budget is pulled back. Changes aren't implemented ignorantly. No, these changes are coming from the data that is guiding the ship. What a powerful feeling to be able to tell the salesman from the Yellow Pages that he's fired because the thousands spent with his marketing only generated 15 calls and 2 sales last year. How wonderful it is to cut half your pay per click budget without missing a single lead! You can now fire an ad agency that doesn't deliver because you're NOW MEASURING everything. You see what works and what doesn't.

Wait! What's that sound?

As you replace wasted dollars with effective marketing dollars, you'll feel the business start to rumble. With each marketing adjustment, you'll see an increase in sales, leads and traffic. Money that was wasted will be allocated to campaigns that are driving



revenues. At last, your business is in control of your marketing dollars. Like a faucet, you can turn on your marketing and control its flow and thus control your growth. Implementing measurable marketing just makes sense. Even if your company had lousy *Unique Selling Points*, and bypassed database building with *Platforms and Offers*, it would still save you a boatload of cash. However, for companies who follow the other steps, there's even more good news when it comes to the *Marketing Arsenal*.

Driving Sales for Today and Tomorrow

Obviously measurable marketing will increase your exposure and sales. Immediate results can be felt, but that's not the only benefit for businesses that practice Four Step Marketing. Because the *Marketing Arsenal* (Step 3) is measured, it drives prospects and customers to your organization's *Platforms and Offers* (Step 2). Because you've provided this incentive, they share their personal contact information and give you permission to follow-up in the future. As you'll learn in our next chapter, we'll create a system for sharing your *Unique Selling Points* (Step 1) thus increasing conversions and customer loyalty.

For example, a radio ad (*Marketing Arsenal*) might encourage listeners to call (*Platform*) a local dentist for a special FREE turbo-cleaning toothbrush (*Offer*). Every prospective patient who calls the company would be asked if they'd like to receive this amazing FREE gift just for calling in. Obviously, the staff would also ask them if they'd like to make an appointment. Regardless of booking the appointment, the prospect's name, email, phone number and mailing address would be added to the database when they request the toothbrush. Another example might be a



local magazine ad (*Marketing Arsenal*) pointing readers to a local restaurant (*Platform*) to receive a free dessert (*Offer*). Or perhaps a coffee company uses a remarketing ad (*Marketing Arsenal*) to provide a free sample (*Offer*) when they click over to the website (*Platform*). You see, the *Marketing Arsenal* does drive immediate sales, but it also provides exposure to your company's free *Offers*. We're not done yet though as we still have one last step to discover. You'll see how everything comes together, and how your *Unique Selling Points* will be continually communicated to your customers and prospects. Get ready for the light bulb to come on.



Chapter 4

Marketing Automation

Automate Your Follow-up with Marketing Automation

Let's recap. Four Step Marketing businesses realize the importance of their marketing message. They study their customers and gather feedback through surveys. They compare themselves to competitors and look for ways to do things better. Innovation leads them to identify or create powerful *Unique Selling Points*, which become their overall marketing message. They create free *Offers* that are shared on their *Platforms*, or everywhere the business comes into contact with its prospects and customers. The *Marketing Arsenal* is launched with purpose. It is carefully measured. Any form of marketing that doesn't generate a return is scrapped. Wasteful marketing dollars are then allocated to marketing with a better return on investment. The *Marketing Arsenal* drives sales, but it also points prospects and customers to the company's free *Offer*. As prospects and customers request the free *Offer*, they consent to receiving communication from the company and their personal contact information is securely stored in the company's database. That leads us to step 4, *Marketing Automation*, and the systematic process for how we'll follow-up in the future.

In step 4, *Marketing Automation*, we'll implement a communication system, ensuring no one slips through the cracks. The truth is, most



businesses know they should be doing a better job following up with prospects and customers. The reason they don't follow up is because they simply don't know where to start. The first obstacle is building a database. We covered that in chapter 2, *Platforms and Offers*. We learned by giving away a great *Offer*, customers and prospects will be willing to share their personal contact information. Now, everyone who requests your free *Offer* will be added to your database. The second obstacle that businesses face is how to manage, segment and automate their communication. That's what we'll cover in this chapter.

Marketing Automation Doesn't Just Mean Email

First of all, *Marketing Automation* isn't limited strictly to email. Whatever personal information that is provided when someone takes you up on your *Offer* can now be used for follow-up communication. In other words, if we have their email address, obviously we can email them. If we have collected their mailing address, we can follow-up by sending direct mail. If we have their phone number, we have the option to send texts and voicemail messages. Remember, they gave us this permission to communicate when they requested our free *Offer*. Even though we own this information in our database, we realize that if it is abused, we'll ruin the relationship. So, we won't email them every day. If we do call or text them, we'd better have something very good to say. If we're sending direct mail, our message must be precise and on target. Regardless of our communication method, it is critical to remember that they gave us permission to reach out. Whenever we communicate, we must provide value or they'll revoke our permission to communicate. What then will we be saying? Ah—remember chapter 1? That's right! Whenever we speak we'll be



sharing exactly what prospects and customers care about with our *Unique Selling Points*.

At this point, you might be shaking your head in disbelief. In fact, some readers don't follow up with prospects and customers on purpose. Your excuse is that you believe that they don't want to hear from you. The truth is, you're right, not everyone wants to hear from you. However, don't throw the baby out with the bath water. If you've provided value with your free *Offer*, then the law of reciprocity is already at work. Most good hearted people will allow you to communicate with them if your communication is personal and continues to provide value or information they care about. Believe us! We've heard all of the objections and excuses before, and we know that proactive communication is like walking a tightrope. It must be done correctly or you'll plummet to your death. That being said, if you have objections to following up, it's because you've probably been on the receiving end and have experienced it being done incorrectly.

The Two BIG No-No's in Marketing Automation

The first no-no that most businesses are familiar with is over communicating. Though we have their contact information and permission to follow-up, we won't abuse it or use high pressure tactics to get them to convert. Just like in any relationship, acting in this manner would hurt our chances and drive them further away. In fact, when we do communicate, we'll be abundantly clear that they can STOP us from communicating if they're sick of hearing from us. That's right. We'll openly give them the option to reject us and break off the relationship through an OPT-OUT mechanism in



each piece of communication we send them. Because they can opt out through email, direct mail, voicemail, and every other type of communication, we must be precise in what we share. This sounds like common sense, but we're always amazed how billion dollar businesses allow their marketing teams to send out emails every single day. Though each industry's follow-up schedule will be different, please realize that your business should NEVER use automation to contact their database every single day.

The second no-no is ignoring your database. Remember, they gave us permission to follow-up and shared with us their personal email, cell phone or perhaps even their mailing address. This is the honeymoon stage! We've provided them with something valuable and it is our window to engage them. If we neglect the relationship and seldom communicate with them, we're showing them that they're not that important. Worse yet, if we don't communicate, we risk that a competitor who is communicating, will court our prospects and customers. So failing to follow-up with our database is almost as bad as over communicating. Both will damage the relationship and actually have a negative impact on your business.

Having a Plan in Place: The Marketing Funnel

So what's the balance then? The secret is planning out your communication ahead of time. If we're going to follow up and share our *Unique Selling Points*, we'll need a plan of action. This plan is called a marketing funnel and it is the communication plan your business will follow. Your marketing funnel will nurture prospect relationships with your *Unique Selling Points* until they become customers. If your business only has a customer list, or prospect list converting to customers, we'll also create a plan. The customer



marketing funnel would carefully communicate new special offers and other customer benefits. Our goal is to encourage them to stay committed to the relationship and become lifetime customers. A marketing funnel is simply an outline of your company's communication. Here's a sample *Marketing Automation* plan for a company that has prospect relationships.

Sample Prospect USP Campaign

Instant Delivery - Email - Thank you & Offer Delivery

Day 4 - Post Card - USP 1 - Special for New Customers

Day 5 - Email - USP 1 - Special Bonus Postcard Reminder

Day 9 - Voicemail - USP 1 - Special Bonus Voicemail

Day 12 - Email - USP 2 - Company Comparison Chart

Day 13 - Letter - USP 2 - Company Comparison Chart

Day 17 - SMS Message - Personalized Text Message

Day 21 - Email - USP 3 - Our Technology is Better

Day 25 - Personal Call - Sales Call Follow-up

Day 27 - Email - USP 4 - Personalized Service

Day 31 - Post Card - USP 3-4 - Technology

A Call to Action for All Communication

We're not communicating just for the sake of talking. Remember, we're following up because we want prospects to buy and customers to buy more often. Marketing funnels can be longer or shorter depending on your industry's buying cycle. If your business



model only has customers then you wouldn't need a prospect funnel as well. The main point is that all communication is timed out in advance with crystal clear objectives. Every time we communicate, there should be a visible call to action. When we communicate with prospects, we'll share our *Unique Selling Points*, but also point them to the next step in the relationship. Communication for customers might include specials on new products, services, and perhaps even asking them for an online review. No matter who we are communicating with, there should always be a clear next step, which is your call to action.

The Who, What, When and How of a Marketing Funnel

So how do you plan out your marketing funnels? It really comes down to your business model. However, in every *Marketing Automation* campaign, you'll need to clarify and understand four key components before getting started. These four components will help you build your marketing funnels and ensure you're saying the right things, to the right people.

The Who - Who is receiving the automation? Is it prospects? Customers? Depending on the business, this could become very complex. For example, are we communicating to prospects interested in red widgets? Or perhaps communicating to customers who bought blue widgets? In our sample marketing funnel, we created a campaign that was targeted for general prospects. While each industry and business is different, the main point is to realize that each marketing sequence and marketing funnel must have a target audience.



The What - What are they receiving? In our example, we listed out what type of communication was being used and what was being said. For example, the "what" might be an email with the company's second Unique Selling Point. Each marketing funnel documents what will be received. It is important to note that *Marketing Automation* may include various forms of communication as listed in our example. However, you'll only be able to communicate by phone, direct mail, and email if you have collected that information.

In other words, you can't send direct mail if you don't have the prospect's mailing address. Obtaining that information is handled in step 2, *Platforms and Offers*. Prospects and customers will only give up their personal information if the *Offer* is valuable. The more personal information you request from someone is directly comparable to the value your *Offer* must provide.

The When - When will the communication be delivered? What is acceptable in one industry might not be acceptable in another. Every business model will have a different timeline for follow-up with prospects and customers. For example, the first couple weeks of prospect follow-up might be more intensive if that is typically when a buying decision is made. The sequence might then slow down substantially after that period and become less intrusive. Customer follow-up sequences will also be scheduled according to the industry. For example, it may be perfectly fine for a coffee shop or retailer to communicate every week because their customers buy more frequently. However, if a real estate agent sent out weekly or daily updates, it wouldn't be received well because buying a home isn't a weekly event. Obviously, scheduling your follow-up is more of an art than a science. Minor changes and



tweaks will be required based upon feedback. Every business should measure their churn rate, or the rate at which their database is adding and losing subscribers.

The How - How are users moved to different marketing funnels? Remember, every time we follow-up with a prospect or a customer, there should be a clear call to action. For example, when we communicate to one of our prospects with a Unique Selling Point, we'll point them to the logical next step. So what happens when the prospect buys? Obviously, they should no longer be treated as prospects or receive prospect communication. Instead they should now be treated as customers and go into the customer marketing funnel. For *Marketing Automation* to work effectively, the how must be clearly defined. When a prospect buys, how are they removed from the prospect funnel and added to the customer funnel? Is this an automated process? Is it manual? Regardless of how it happens, it must be consistent so that everyone receives the correct communication. Without getting into the technical weeds of automation, remember that the "how" will be the trigger that moves them from one marketing funnel to another.

Simplifying the Marketing Automation Solution

We realize there's a lot of misconceptions and confusion when it comes to *Marketing Automation*. Few businesses realize how powerful and personal it can really be. *Marketing Automation* also doesn't have to be complicated to be effective. Think of your database as a bucket that's hosted on the internet. When prospects and customers request your *Offer*, their personal data is automatically stored securely online. Additionally, it's very easy to



automate the delivery of your free *Offers*. Think of this system as rules that are programmed ahead of time. When someone joins the database, they're scheduled to receive communication according to your marketing funnel plan. The technology is actually fairly simple and there's dozens of mainstream and affordable applications that will help you communicate. For the sake of simplicity, we call it *Marketing Automation* and it includes the database software that sends the emails, letters, postcards, SMS messages, and even pre-recorded phone messages. When used correctly it makes your follow-up process bulletproof and ensures your prospects and customers can clearly see your *Unique Selling Points*.



Chapter 5

Summary

Integrating Four Step Marketing

So now that you've learned the Four Step Marketing process, you might be disappointed that there's no magic potion or easy marketing hack to triple your revenues next year. The truth is, good marketing is like good business. It takes work and careful planning. Four Step Marketing is no different. It isn't based upon hype, luck or any new digital marketing fad. Its foundations are the golden rule and truly caring about your customers. Integrating the Four Step Marketing process isn't something that happens overnight. Rather, it is a progressive movement towards a set of values that govern your marketing and business. We've tried to present the Four Step Marketing method without fluff, drama or iconic stories of success. Though these stories do indeed exist, our goal was to logically explain the blueprint for creating a Four Step Marketing campaign.



Step One - Unique Selling Points

Say the Right Things with Your Unique Selling Points

You have clarity on your ideal customer profile. You've surveyed them and know exactly what they want. You've researched your industry and competitors. The research leads you to a plan for innovation. You're delivering more value and don't compete on price alone. Your *Unique Selling Points* are strong and when compared to any competitor, you're the clear choice. Your marketing message is clear, concise and ready to be shared.

Step Two – Platforms and Offers

Grow Your Database Using Platforms and Offers

You have clarity on your *Platforms*, or where you come into contact with prospects and customers. You've asked prospects and customers what they'd be interested in receiving for free. With their help, you've come up with a truly amazing *Offer*. You booby-trap your business and your database starts to grow. Website visitors claim your free *Offer*. The person who answers your phone is even giving away stuff. Everywhere you turn, your database is growing because of your free gift. You now have permission to follow-up.



Step Three – The Marketing Arsenal

Measure and Leverage the Marketing Arsenal

You have clarity on marketing weapons you'll use for your business. You begin to measure all marketing efforts to see what works and what doesn't. You track online and offline marketing. You measure your website traffic. You measure your inbound phone calls. The data becomes clearer. You realize you've been wasting marketing dollars. Without flinching, you immediately cut the waste out of your marketing budget and re-allocate it to what's providing a better return on investment. These changes are increasing sales, but your database is also increasing because of the exposure to your free *Offer*.

Step Four – Marketing Automation

Automate Your Follow-up with Marketing Automation

You have clarity on how to automate the entire follow-up process. Prospects receive personalized and timely messages delivering your *Unique Selling Points*. Prospect conversions increase. Customers receive personalized and timely reminders about other products, services and other exclusive customer opportunities. Customers are now spending more money. They have become loyal.



Who Should Implement Four Step Marketing

Not sure if Four Step Marketing is right for your business? Allow us to ask you a few questions to help you decide. What are your *Unique Selling Points*? In other words, if your price is exactly the same as a competitor, why should anyone do business with you? If you have an answer for us, are you communicating that answer to your prospects and customers continually? Secondly, if someone comes into contact with your company, what free *Offers* will they discover? Are there ebooks, videos, information packages, coupons or other giveaways enticing them to give up their personal contact information? If you do have free *Offers*, are they located on all of your *Platforms*? Does your customers' and prospects' private information go into the database immediately? Thirdly, do you measure your marketing dollars? Do you measure inbound phone calls? Do you measure your website traffic and conversions? Do you track offline marketing? Can you tell us which form of marketing provides the best return on investment? Lastly, how are you following up with prospects and customers? Is there a detailed system for communication in place? Do you know the who, what, when and how of your marketing funnels?

Can You Imagine Spending Nothing on Marketing?

This may sound impossible, but when a business implements all Four Steps, they have the opportunity to see a marketing phenomenon if they continue their efforts. It's called the Four Step Effect. Remember, the fuel for all Four Step Marketing campaigns starts with the *Marketing Arsenal*, which drives exposure. However,



as a company grows, their customer database will also grow. The phenomenon occurs when the company's reputation and loyal customers begin to drive the company's growth. Because the business has strong *Unique Selling Points*, their customer base becomes advocates and walking testimonials. These raving fans drive word-of-mouth and referral marketing to the company's *Platforms and Offers*. *Marketing Automation* continues to nurture all relationships. The cycle continues until the business is running at max capacity. To control the growth, they're forced to slash the *Marketing Arsenal* budget to maintain customer service standards. When no *Marketing Arsenal* activities remain, the business has achieved the Four Step Effect and will continue to grow based upon their customer database alone.

The BIG “Ah-Ha!” Moment

If you haven't had one already!

By now, you might realize you're smack dab in the middle of a Four Step Marketing campaign. The book you're holding is part of our system. Stop and retrace your steps for a minute. Somehow, you stumbled across our website. Was it luck? Not hardly. You see, because we measure our marketing, we know exactly how you found us. In fact, we could look into our database and tell you the website and even the ad you clicked on. Some people say that the free *Offer* concept doesn't work. Unfortunately, you can't say that can you? You're reading this because you requested our free *Offer*! Obviously, not everyone requests the book, but you did. When you requested the book, you had to confirm your email address and grant permission for future communication. That triggered the *Marketing Automation*. Though there are many personal touches in our follow-up system, it was completely automated.



If you recall, we started the journey by explaining that our business practices might seem a little odd to most. We shared how we're ultra low profile marketing consultants. We have basic websites, don't carry business cards, and don't do sales presentations. We're actually terrible at sales. We don't knock on doors looking for new business. We don't have telemarketers in the back room prospecting. You see, companies like ours who implement Four Step Marketing don't need an Indian rain dance to conjure up growth. We're using the system. The untrained eye sees our marketing efforts as lackadaisical. The marketing agency tells us to be more flashy. The sales guru demands more calls. The brand agency encourages us to get our names out there. The media giants just want us to spend more money. We smile, thank them for their advice, and walk away.

Whether it's their traditions, education, or influence of the media giants, most marketers just don't get it. Be prepared! To keep you as a client, they'll tell you everything you want to hear. "Sure, the marketing is working, you just need to give it time." They'll come up with something clever and spend ungodly amounts of your company's money without ever measuring a return. What about the free *Offer*? They'll reject it, insisting it would hurt your image. Sure, they'd like you to follow-up, but without first gaining permission, there's nobody to follow up with. One by one, they'll dismiss the principles in this book and tell you that Four Step Marketing doesn't apply to your business. Their hope is that you never discover this little book and if you do, you'll also reject it.



STOP! Please Don't Read This.

Looks like you're still reading, so here it goes. Perhaps you're curious if Four Step Marketing is right for your business. If so, we'd like to offer you a free consultation— no hype, pressure or hoopla included. We'll spend 30-45 minutes talking shop and learning about your business. We'll ask you a few questions and try to figure out the easiest way for you to implement a Four Step Marketing approach. But before you schedule a call with us, here are a few things to expect. What we're about to share is almost unheard of in our industry and we think you'll find it refreshing.

Brutal Honesty - Not everyone likes this, but it's our policy to be gut wrenching honest on every call. If you're violating the best practices in marketing, we'll tell you. That means we might not say what you want to hear, but you'll know it's the truth based upon our experience.

Free Help - We've already prepared a set of questions to ask about your business. We'll use our time together to learn more and offer free advice. Because we love entrepreneurship and seeing businesses grow, we'll give as much free help as possible during our time together.

Zero Sales Pressure - As you know, we use Four Step Marketing in our business. There are thousands of these little books floating around. We're always busy and sometimes even have a waiting list. That means no high- pressure tactics, gimmicks or hype to get you to work with us.



Expert Advice - Your scheduled phone call will be with our CEO or one of our top-level executives. We understand business and are experts in the Four Step Marketing best practices.

Straight Forward Options - If you're interested in moving forward, we'll happily offer some simple options to work with us. From consulting, to campaign implementation, you'll hang up the phone knowing the next steps we suggest.

Trick or Treat - You Decide

If you're feeling a bit skeptical, we can sympathize. After all, we've shared how we baited you with this book as part of our Four Step Marketing campaign. You might feel like you've been tricked or that you fell into our marketing trap. There's no easy way to say this, but you're exactly right. We did bait you. Grant us a little grace though. You only found out that this book was the bait because of what we've openly shared on these pages. We certainly weren't trying to take advantage or be deceitful in any way. Please don't feel obligated to schedule with us. Our greatest desire is that this book has been helpful and informative. We hope you use it and the principles shared here to build a masterfully crafted, Four Step Marketing campaign.

Schedule a free 30 minute consultation today at www.HarmeningMarketingSolutions.com, or call 1 (888) 342-2028.



THE FOUR STEP **MARKETING BLUEPRINT**

What will be your excuse today? We're talking about the reason you keep giving yourself for not reading this book. Don't have the time? Too busy? After all, isn't this just another marketing book?

Though this book is rather skinny, it's anything but conventional. Call us crazy, but we decided to omit all the fluff, hype, and dramatic stories. All that remains is the blueprint.

It will take you roughly an hour to read this book. If you do, you'll discover a new way to market your business using the Four Steps of Marketing.

Though widely accepted and perfectly logical, over 90% of readers are completely ignoring these principles. How about you? Are you ignoring the Four Steps? Whatever the excuse has been until now, it's time to think differently about marketing.



Joshua Harmening

Josh Harmening is the founder and CEO of Harmening Marketing Solutions, LLC. With his incredibly creative ideas and enthusiasm for marketing, Josh offers marketing consulting and services grounded in a no-nonsense, four-step, holistic, trackable approach that will lower marketing costs while dramatically improving impact, and helping your business grow.