

The one thing that will kill your marketing efforts

You may have a great offering, beautiful marketing collateral, an interactive website, a robust presence on social media and yet, you are not achieving your marketing objectives. There could be many causes for this, like a poor economy or poor pricing or too much competition, but it could also be that you are **being too aggressive**. You are turning people off.



Bullhorn by spDuchamp
from Flickr

Telemarketers are especially bad at understanding that aggressiveness does not build customer trust. Quite the opposite. It builds distrust and worse, dislike. Calling repeatedly at all times of day and night does not make a potential customer or donor enamored of your product or cause.

Perhaps this is the divide between marketing and sales. In marketing, you are trying to build interest in your product and service by using tools such as the “Four Ps” (pricing, promotion, product, placement), whereas in sales you are trying to achieve quotas, generally measured in revenue.

Say you are shopping for a new car. The marketing function will get you to consider the new XYZ hybrid sedan from the big car manufacturer. You are intrigued by the miles per gallon or the comfort or whatever other attribute. You walk into a showroom and immediately a sales representative is there, trying to get you to buy. If he or she is too aggressive, chances are good you will walk out without making a purchase. The marketing worked but the sales pitch didn’t.

Brad Phillips of Phillips Media Relations had such a thing

happen to him with a PR service. He discussed it yesterday on his Mr. Media Training blog, and received a lot of support (read the comments). He signed up for a service that is marketed to people like him, but then was assaulted by a too-aggressive sales person trying to sell him other products and services. The problem was not the offering as much as the aggression.

Are you being to aggressive in your pitch? Here are some instances of marketing (and sales) aggressiveness:

- Calling too much/ too often
- Sending too many emails (including enewsletters)
- Invading privacy (such as asking Google or Facebook to scan private messages for keywords)
- In traditional advertising, opting for frequency over reach (have you ever watched a TV program where the same ad is shown multiple times?)
- Send enewsletters out without prior opt-in, and without an easy opt-out.
- Loud (literally) advertising (even though it has been regulated, I am still hearing ads that have a higher volume than the programming)
- Bait-and-switch tactics

What results from these tactics is that people feel attacked or overwhelmed or frustrated. They can't lower the volume and they resent it. They feel that your sales pitch is invading their private space.

Can you think of other aggressive behavior? How do you react to aggressive marketing? Do you think the results justify the means?

Blogging workshop next week!

There's still time to register for my How to Blog Workshop, which takes place next Thursday, February 28 in Silver Spring,

MD. Visit howtowriteyourblog3.eventbrite.com for more details and registration.