

E-LESSON #4: Explaining Marketing to a Direct Client



GENERAL AGENDA

HOW TO EXPLAIN MARKETING TO A DIRECT CLIENT

By Paul Weyland

Think of **MARKETING** as the entire effort a client makes to provide a product or service to consumers. Marketing would include the client's concept, pricing, packaging and location. Marketing would include the client's sales force. And, marketing would also include the client's advertising strategy. But although advertising is a very important part of the overall marketing process, it's often the part that's the least understood.

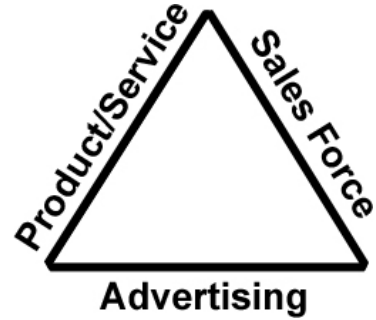
Advertising is a mystery to most clients

If a business in your signal coverage area is even thinking of your station at all as an advertising venue, where do you think he's coming up with the budget that he's willing to "gamble" with you? Let's face it. Most businesses **PERCEIVE** that advertising is a crapshoot. Many business owners actually believe that advertising is a complete waste of money. So when a client is planning his budget for marketing his business, how is he coming up with the amount he's willing to invest in advertising? Is it possible that most clients pull that number right out of their rear-ends? Absolutely.

For most clients, advertising is the most mysterious part of business. It is often the most difficult business expenditure to justify. For many businesses, broadcast advertising is an intangible concept like insurance. You can't touch it. And broadcast advertising is usually the hardest part of the budget to qualify and quantify. It's **VOODOO**. That's why when business gets tough, the first thing that gets nixed is **ADVERTISING**. This of course, is completely illogical. "Oh, the economy is getting soft! So, the first thing we'll do is **STOP** teaching people **WHO** we are, **WHAT** we do and **HOW** to get in touch with us."

This is a mistake. How difficult is a client making it for people to do business with him if they don't know **who** he is, **what** he does, or **how** to get in touch with him? Advertising is fully one-third of the importance of the health of any business. Here is a wonderful way to show a client, in language that he will understand, how important advertising is to his entire business strategy.

Draw an equilateral triangle on a piece of paper. This is a triangle with three equal sides. On the left side of the triangle, write **Product or Service**. On the right side write **Sales force**. On the bottom, write **Advertising**.



Point out the following, using the pyramid with the labeled sides, to the client.

What if for example, you have a great product or service, great advertising and no sales force? Your business would be in trouble. If you had a great sales force and good advertising...but the product or service was poorly conceived or poorly priced or badly packaged or not available, then the business would also be in trouble.

And what if you had a good product or service...and a good sales force, but no advertising? How difficult would you be making it for people to do business with you if they didn't know **WHO** you were, **WHAT** you do or **HOW** to get in touch with you?

In a perfect business, all three sides of the triangle are equal. Therefore, advertising is one third of the importance of a successful business. Ask your client, "What does your business triangle look like?" I'll bet it's far from looking like a perfect pyramid. Most clients' business triangles look more like a witch hat than an equilateral triangle. And the side that says ADVERTISING is usually the "*Weakest Link*."



Invisibility

How invisible is your client's business? Have you ever had the experience of driving the same route to work every single day and then one day noticing a new building in the last stages of construction? "Where in the heck did that come from?" you might ask. "Why didn't I notice that before?" Somehow to you, that construction project might as well have been wearing an invisible cloak.

A friend of mine owns a jewelry store. He is constantly frustrated about losing business to big box stores. He doesn't understand why people would buy anywhere else but from him. He is convinced that he offers finer merchandise at better prices than his competitors. He has very little faith in the advertising process and is bull-headed in his idea that just because he built it, "they will come."

What he can't see is that in this over-cluttered world, his store is becoming increasingly overlooked and even invisible to consumers. It is possible that soon he'll join the thousands of other local direct clients that have been driven out of business by huge out-of-town competitors.

We must explain to our clients that logically and statistically, provided their business isn't seasonal and doesn't have **MARKETING PROBLEMS**, a percentage of the viewers or listeners in your signal coverage area **WILL BUY** what your client is selling, either from him or one of his competitors this week. The question becomes, how can these consumers even consider buying from your client when they are not even thinking about who he is, what he does or how to get in touch with him? Just how invisible is your client to your audience?

Advertising will not cure marketing problems

At this point, remind the client that even the best advertising campaign in the world cannot help a client with marketing problems. Advertising a business with marketing problems is like putting lipstick on a pig. In other words, good advertising will not cure a business if the product or service is poorly conceived, overpriced, hard to get to or not easily available.

It is very important for the media salesperson to identify marketing problems and to ask the client questions about them **before** a campaign begins. Remember: If the client's product or service doesn't make any sense to you, then how would you explain it to your listeners or viewers? For example, it would make very little sense to advertise a smoke alarm with a snooze feature. That just doesn't make logical sense. Or, what if Depends came out with a new THONG model? If the product or service is flawed and you don't point it out, chances are the client will eventually blame your medium when his advertising campaign "didn't work." If you don't suspect that your client has marketing problems act like Colombo and ask questions.

Here is an example of what can happen when a media salesperson doesn't point out obvious marketing problems early on to a client. I had a friend that was ready to advertise his new internet site. He'd spent a considerable amount of money trying to consolidate the promotional products business all at one big internet address. The problem was that his business model was so confusing and complicated that he couldn't easily explain it to me, or his potential clients. But my friend still hired an advertising agency and ran a big campaign. When the campaign didn't work, guess who he blamed? The media.

So you see? Even a great advertising campaign cannot help a client with severe marketing problems. Use the business pyramid model to help draw out potential product or service problems before a campaign begins.

Show the triangle to clients

Show this triangle to your clients. It's good for two things: First, you're teaching your client that what you do, ADVERTISING, is very important to the success or failure of their business. Chances are that right now most businesses are concentrating a vast majority of their time, resources and money on the other two sides of that triangle. What a shame. Our side, the side that says ADVERTISING, is probably the side that deserves more attention and certainly in most cases, more budget.

The second reason to describe the business triangle to a client is to try to bring MARKETING PROBLEMS to the surface. Often, marketing problems are not addressed by the media salesperson. And when the campaign fails, you and your station get the blame.

What does your business triangle look like?

Here's another thing to ponder. As a broadcast salesperson, what does your business triangle look like? What percentage of the businesses in your signal coverage area even have a clue of who you are, what you do and how to get in touch with you? How invisible are **YOU**?

There is an on-line companion video provided with this lesson.

Paul Weyland is president of Paul Weyland Training Seminars. Please call him with any questions regarding this session. He can be reached at (512) 236-1222 or www.paulweyland.com