

MARKET

Settings

A newsletter directed to SMS clients and prospects to communicate topics of common interest.

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Don't Blame Your Advertising or Promotions if the Number of Inquiries Generated is Falling.

Maybe Your Store is to Blame...

It could be that your ads and promotions are bad, of course; but it is unlikely that the precipitous fall in inquiry levels across many markets over the past three or four years is the result of a reduction in advertising or promotions quality. The publications are still delivering the readers that you want to reach, and mailing lists still work, so what's happening? The internet is happening, and it is impacting many traditional marketing and sales tools.

Inquiry levels from advertising and direct mail promotions haven't really changed all that much. In fact, response may actually be somewhat on the increase. The problem, then, is not generating insufficient inquiries. It is how to capture the inquiries so that they can be followed up and sold. It can be done.

Here Are Some Tips

The movement of prospects preferring to go to the internet for more information is a growing movement that will only increase in the future.

Given that scenario, it follows that those of us who depend on inquiries from our promotions to supply our sales channels with leads need to adjust our promotions to not only accommodate the change, but also take advantage of this change to lower our selling costs and increase sales. Again, it can be done. Here's how:

Review your web site to see if it is a "telling" or "selling" web site.

1. Does it allow prospects to quickly find the product or service they are looking for? Quickly, means almost immediately, not after 5 or 6 mouse clicks.
2. Does it allow prospects to easily get the information they need?
3. Does it capture the prospect's contact information?
4. Does it entice the prospect to look at other products and services that may be helpful—as in cross-selling?
5. Does it feature other important products and services that the prospect might be interested in?
6. Does it allow rapid, intuitive movement between product and service areas with the prospect in complete control?
7. Does it reinforce the promotion and the message that got the prospect onto your site in the first place?
8. Does each promotion or ad drive prospects to your site?

There are more things that an effective web site must do if it is to be a successful sales and marketing tool, but if it doesn't accomplish a "1" through "8" above, chances are it is not efficient and isn't really helping your selling efforts...in fact, it could be hurting your sales efforts. Who needs unidentified "hits"? True, they may result in sales at some time in the future, but in the meantime where did the "hit" come from? Which promotion is most effective? How can you follow up the "hit"? What do you send to your dealer, salesperson, or representative? How much time did the "hit" spend on your

site, and where did they spend the most time? All of these questions—and more—need answers and the only way that can happen is for all of us to stop thinking of our web sites as a separate entity, and start thinking of our web sites as an important part of EVERY PROMOTION.

A good web site is a functioning selling tool not a static repository of data.

Like it or not, you now own a store

If you want to increase inquiries and sales, think of your web site as your "store" and take a walk through it. Is it the kind of place you'd like to keep coming back to?

Your web site is your store, and the best stores not only have good products, well displayed and organized, but also efficient signage and helpful sales people who save you time and offer the kind of assistance that keeps you coming back. They make it easy to find and buy what you need.

How does your "store" measure up?

Does your "store" welcome every prospect and quickly guide them to where they want to go and get their names and addresses? Does your "store" attractively display your products and services? Does your "store" offer things that will keep prospects coming back? Is your store kept up-to-date with your promotions, products, and appearance? Does it have attractive display windows to draw customers in? How often is it remodeled? Is it in the right areas (search engines) to get the best traffic? Think about it, and give us a call if you'd like more buying traffic through your cyber aisles and better ways to make your "store" buyer friendly. That's marketing, and that's what we do. In fact, it's our middle name.

The above article is set in Formata Light.



SMS ADDS SHORT-RUN DIGITAL PRINTING CAPABILITY TO SERVICE CLIENTS

SMS has added short-run digital printing capability as an additional service to our clients.

According to Bob Norton, "This in-house capability permits our clients to inexpensively pretest data sheets, brochures and other promotions to specific markets, at sales meetings, and at trade shows, before committing to final content and design for larger, more expensive, commercial printing runs.

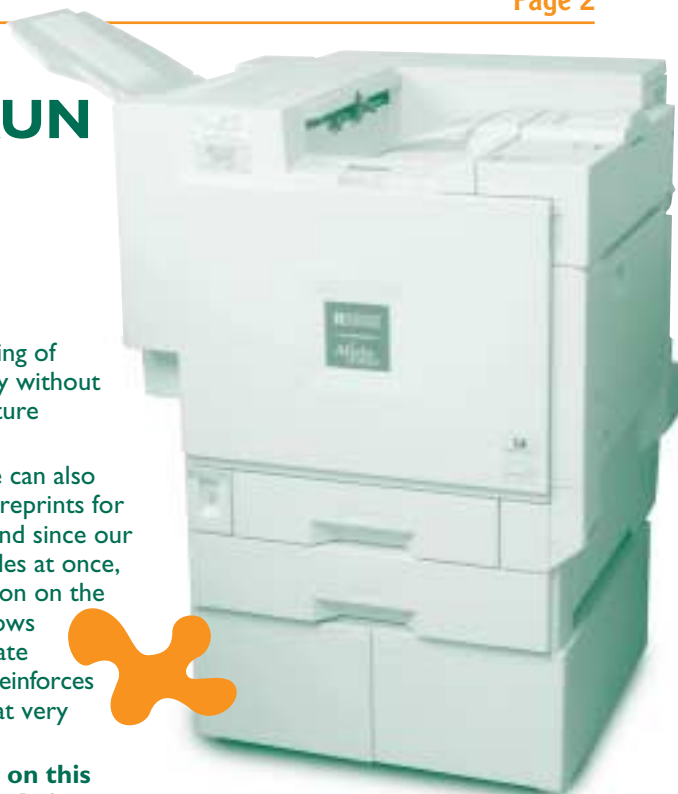
We are now able to offer clients rapid turnaround on short-run promotion, and clients do not need to inventory larger literature quantities on limited demand products and services.

This service allows updating of literature more frequently without costly obsolescence of literature inventories."

Bob went on to say, "We can also now offer advertisement reprints for use in direct marketing, and since our equipment prints both sides at once, putting product information on the back of the ad reprint allows our clients to quickly create response literature that reinforces their advertising message at very economical prices."

For more information on this or other SMS services, Anita would be glad to help you!
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The above article is set in GillSans.



...Printed at SMS using MONEY-SAVING Digital Printing Technology and recyclable paper...

Before You Put That Recession Revolver to Your Temple (...or Your Budget).

Sometimes the gloom and doom can be contagious, and some of your customers might catch it and freeze some orders or delay some purchases or perform some other dastardly deeds.

Your best response is to be strongly positive in both your approach to your customers and to your market.

Unless you are in the unique position of being the sole supplier to a declining market, you're still in good shape—in fact—you may be able to make some hay while the gloom shines. Your market still offers you growth even if it remains static or shrinks, but you may have to redirect your efforts and target some products or accounts that "belong" to your competitors. Don't wait for it to come to you. Take advantage of the gloom to move stealthily into your competitor's accounts or their markets—at a time when they're cutting back or not being aggressive because they believe the gloom and doom.

Don't buy off on the national malaise. Use it to steal market share. It's a tryers market and the spoils and the dollars eventually go to the bold. Be positive about your growth potential, adjust your directions, and step out smartly.

Every recession or downturn in every market creates people and companies who sail right through them to higher ground—at the expense of those who buy off on the wisdom of the economists.

This country was made great by people who had no alternative but to succeed.

Oh yeh. What about Luck? A bright man once said.....**"The harder I work, the luckier I get."**

Get Lucky.

—Bob Norton

The above article is set in Clearface Regular.



THE BUCK'S STUCK HERE.

An outstanding marketing/sales tool that works.

Need to know how your market views or ranks your company or products? Want to know how much budget is allocated to your kind of products? Would you like to ask 8 or 10 questions to important buying influences in your market about what makes them buy or what service they expect? Like to know what new products they'd like to buy?

All of these questions, and many more have been asked and answered by and for SMS clients who have used the SMS "The Buck's Stuck Here" market research mailers.

Our clients needed an effective method to not only find out important facts about their markets, competitors, and products; but also to identify viable prospects with budgets and authorization to purchase. The answer has proven to be "The Buck's Stuck Here"—an easy, economical way to sample existing, new, or emerging markets and get important selling information.

Outstanding Performance

"The Buck's Stuck Here" is a simple 8 to 10 question questionnaire that prints in one color, goes out in an envelope, and returns as a self-mailer. AND DOES IT RETURN!

—an easy, economical way to sample existing, new, or emerging markets and get important selling information.

Amazingly, the dollar bill affixed to the outside of the mailer (hence, the name) and the brief message inside have resulted in response rates that range from 18% to an astounding 44%!

SMS clients use it to sample new and emerging marketplaces by mailing to a relatively small sample (500-1000 names); and the responses, which are also leads, are used to create and direct everything from sales promotions, to selling techniques, to product development. It really works; and,

typically, a mailing to 500 names costs less than \$800.00 complete. Of course, clients have to pay 97¢ for every returned questionnaire, but none have complained about that cost given the performance they get.

So, if you're thinking about fine tuning your sales or selling efforts, adding to your product line, extending your services, or need to know how your market feels about anything at all, you might want to consider the SMS "The Buck's Stuck Here". It lets you sample the market, get good, solid leads, and doesn't cost an arm and a leg. Also, since it's sent under our name, the market doesn't know—or care—who's asking, and sometimes that can make for some surprising—but important answers!

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Don't Read This UNLESS you Want More Leads for Your Trade Show Dollars?

Here are some important facts...

Fact: Most prospects miss your booth

For every prospect that enters your booth, looks at products, asks questions, and signs up for a follow-up, 10 or more never see you.

Fact: That's only the tip of the iceberg

Thousands of prospects regionally, nationally, and internationally don't even attend the show.

Fact: Now you can attract hundreds of new prospects to your booth before, during, and after each trade show ALL YEAR LONG

How?

With an **SMS Near-Virtual Reality Trade Show Booth** on Your Web Site

Fact: Your web site booth can increase your trade show effectiveness, and reduce your cost per inquiry.

SMS can economically recreate your trade show booth in an interactive, near-virtual reality format that allows attendees and nonattendees to "walk" your booth at their convenience, aisle by aisle, and product by product, and get complete information on any and every product or service offered...while collecting live names and addresses.

Fact: Here are just a few more advantages to this interactive SMS Electronic Salesforce™ Tool

- * Easy to update
- * Opportunities for pre and post show sales
- * Products are available worldwide
- * Dealers, reps, and direct sales people use it as an interaction sales tool

Fact: A call to SMS at 856/697-1257 can get you more information on this exciting sales tool. Ask for Anita.



SMS Toon Town

Need something or someone to help you stand out?

Over the years SMS has created several characters, corporate mascots, and cartoons to help differentiate our customers from their competitors. Used in everything from giveaways to mailers, these fun characters help grab a prospect's attention and get noticed! You should consider one for your company, too!

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