

Top 10 MOST IGNORED Rules of Marketing

#6 - "Everybody" is NOT a Target Market

I'm not telling you anything you don't already know.

As businessmen and businesswomen we know that we can't be all things to all people. We take seriously those ideas about market segmentation, specialization, niche marketing.

We know we should have a good sense of our target demographics:

- age
- gender
- marital status
- level education
- household income

Unfortunately, there's something else we know but seldom talk about:

The most profitable target market is full of aggravated individuals who need help to escape from their everyday problems

YOUR target market is aggravated and needs YOUR help escaping from problems YOU (and your business) can solve. For example:

Business	Aggravation	Problem	YOUR Solution
Dry Cleaner	Favorite clothes need cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns about quality of care• Trip to the cleaners is inconvenient	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your experienced personnel and state-of-the-art equipment ensure the best quality service• You'll guarantee they'll be in and out in 2 minutes or less
Dentist	Unflattering smile	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dull teeth• Chipped/Malformed teeth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tooth Whitening• Porcelain Veneers
Restaurant	No good place to eat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same "old" food• Restaurants are boring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regularly changing menu of unique entrees• Local talent nights (bands, artists, poetry readings, etc.)
Outdoor Apparel	Hiking gear needs replacing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need it fast• Needs to be tough, durable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full line of hiking gear from head to toe (hats to footwear)• Ironclad guarantees on all merchandise

So to get a really good handle on our target market, we need to know more than the standard demographics. We really should know:

- what books/periodicals they read
- their political affiliations
- their choice in entertainment
- which of your competitors are they aware of
- their dreams and aspirations
- the one thing that keeps them up at night

"Political affiliations? Dreams and aspirations? The thing that keeps them up at night? You gotta be kidding me."

Nope. I'm not.

If you don't know these things about your customers and prospective customers, you'll never be able to find them or sell them your product or service. And you certainly won't be able to make the comfortable (See Rule #1 - Good Customers Don't Want Sales)

I know of one company with a Forex trading product that determined their best clients tended to be Republicans. They upped their presence on Republican-leaning websites, forums, and blogs and increased their customer base quickly and substantially.

We can also use our dentist above as an easy example. First, though, let me remind you that there is **no limitation on the number of target markets you can define** for your business. Defining a target market isn't a **limiting exercise** – it's a **defining exercise**. It'll help you more easily decide what your business should look like and how, when, and where your marketing dollars should be focused.

There are easily three target markets for our dental practice:

1. Families with young children
 - **Target** – parents
 - **Dreams and aspirations** – to have their kids grow up healthy and happy
 - **Lose sleep over** – not doing all they can to give their kids the best opportunities
2. Single Adults
 - **Target** – Young, single adults that are probably dating
 - **Dreams and aspirations** – to find the right person to share their life with
 - **Lose sleep over** – not being attractive to that "right person" when he/she appears
3. Seniors
 - **Target** – Adults over 55
 - **Dreams and aspirations** – to live out their lives in health and happiness
 - **Lose sleep over** – the ravages of the aging process

You're probably already on top of the products our dentist should offer (periodic checkups, whitening and straightening, disease prevention and dentures) and the internet sites (parenting sites, social sites (MySpace, FaceBook), Senior and Retirement sites) where the practice should have a presence.

I may be re-hashing stuff we all already know. But it bears repetition because once you've determined exactly who your market is, it's a whole lot easier for your marketing campaigns to

- find them
- provide the information and education they crave
- satisfy their comfort needs
- make them the most appealing offers
- cultivate a long, satisfying relationship that profits everyone

If you fail to define your market specifically and develop your business for "Everybody", your venture will flail **pointlessly** and in all likelihood **profitless**-ly along.