

Top 10 MOST IGNORED Rules of Marketing

#8 – Claim It First and You'll Own It

When Schlitz Beer hired the legendary ad man Claude Hopkins, they were 5th in U.S. market share were going south fast.

The first thing Hopkins did was take a tour of the Schlitz brewery. Here is what he found:

- plate-glass cooling rooms where beer was dripping over pipes. The rooms were filled with filtered air, so the beer could be cooled without introducing impurities.
- Huge, expensive filters filled with white-wood pulp for superior filtering
- pumps and pipes that were cleaned twice daily
- a sterilization process applied to each beer bottle four times before a single drop of beer ever went inside.
- 4,000 foot deep wells dug to the cleanest and purest water available

Finally, Hopkins was shown the mother yeast cell, the result of nearly 1,200 experiments to bring out the robust flavor. All of the yeast used to make Schlitz beer was grown from that original yeast cell.

The ad man was beyond impressed, he was amazed. "Why don't you tell people these things?", he asked.

Evidently, every manufacturer made beer it the same way.

Hopkins' next move was pure genius. He created an ad campaign to explain all the painstaking steps Schlitz took to make sure their beer was pure. It was the same story any brewer could easily have told – but they hadn't. Hopkins and Schlitz told the story first and Schlitz's became the beer known for its quality and purity. Sales went through the roof vaulting Schlitz from 5th in market share to 1st in just five months.

If you're looking to grow your business, all you've got to do is stake your claim on a process or product that your competition has decided is too insignificant to fight for.

It really doesn't matter what you stake out as your territory. You just have to separate it, define the boundaries, and stake your claim. For example, you can claim:

- **processes** – Claim the process or processes you go through to make an item, to ensure quality, to enhance the customer's experience, or to ensure good follow up. Describe the process in detail and highlight just how each step benefits the customer. It doesn't matter if your competition uses the exact same process. If you claim it first... YOU OWN IT.
- **products and services** – Restaurants can claim special dishes or desserts. Dry cleaners can claim processes it uses for delicate items. A ski shop near where I live puts videos on their website to explain the features and benefits of their top products. They tell you why one product is better or different than another – why you would want to choose one over another. Viewers can see just how much the people at the shop understand the specific equipment and how it can improve their technique. It doesn't matter that other ski shops carry the same merchandise. This shop has effectively claimed the product and product knowledge first... now THEY OWN IT.

- **markets and niches** – You can claim seniors, families, kids, professionals, soccer players, or even better – professionals with kids that play soccer. Every dentist probably handles senior patients. But, a good dental marketing campaign could promote the dental procedures an office has for seniors, their staff's efficient handling of Medicare billing, the follow up that they do for senior patients. Every dental office does all that stuff but the first local office that promotes it will effectively become THE SENIOR DENTIST in the minds of its prospects and customers. They claim it... they'll OWN IT.

BTW: If you're using social network marketing this turns out to be a **no brainer**. Once you define your niche social networks let you easily target your marketing to the applicable social networks. Sites like **FaceBook** and **MySpace** may already have groups that match your niche.

Here's what's so great about this rule. Since it's on this list of the *Top 10 Most Ignored Rules of Marketing*, you can bet it's being ignored. Because it's being ignored – your opportunities for staking your claim are endless. And, since you're using free or nearly-free internet marketing tools (email, social networks, blogs and articles, etc.), you can plant your company's flag of huge number of processes, products, or markets at a minimal cost.

It's like the European explorers taking off for the “new world.” Your opportunity is endless, your competition is non-existent, and the wealth and riches you can gather is immeasurable.

So, go forth! Stake your claim on this “new world.” It's yours for the taking.