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Six Marketing Methods to Get Your Message OUT

By Lynda Kavanagh

All good marketing plans access six methods to get your message out. Let's take a quick look at each of these from most effective to least effective.

#1 Personal Sales: This is not cold calling; this is sitting down to research and identify people/ businesses/ groups who can benefit from your speaking/ training/ products. Once you have identified these target audiences, objectively ask yourself how they would benefit from your speaking/ training/ products. After you have some solid rationale on how they would benefit, pick up the phone and make an appointment. If you do not have solid rationale on how they would benefit, leave them alone.

#2 Advertising: This refers to targeted advertising; not shotgun advertising. It includes researching all your old and new media mediums to identify which ones your target audience pays attention. Then it requires investing a sufficient budget into those mediums to make an effective campaign. Buying cheap advertising is not necessarily smart purchasing.

#3 Online: Online marketing means having a professional website, accessing social networking sites, enhancing your search engine optimization, and connecting with group marketing opportunities. While it means "marketing to the masses," online marketing is absolutely essential for your personal sales and building your brand recognition.

Note: #1 and #2 above are considered "aggressive marketing." If you want to make money fast, these are the two methods to use. #3 can be aggressive depending on what you have to offer to the "world masses" but it is still passive in that meeting planners have to "find you".

#4 to #6 are what I call "passive marketing." They are marketing techniques and activities that need to be done, but are passive because you have to sit around and wait for someone to pass your message on. I don't know about you, but I don't want my business left passively in the hands of others. I believe the majority of your time should be spent on #1 personal sales and the other methods used to support it.

#4 Personal Networking: It's not sales. It's not sales. It's not sales. Have I made my point? Networking is a

face-to-face activity and is all about getting a piece of someone's brain. That means providing them with information about what you do and how you can help them. Networking is not about cornering someone and trying to sell to them. Networking's job is to create trusting relationships so people will retain your message and pass it on.

#5 Referrals: While referrals are one of the best forms of marketing, you have to ask people to give them to you. That's not so hard if you are good at what you do, but you still need to "encourage" clients and audience members to pass your name along to others, which is not so easy. Consider this--when was the last time you purposely phoned someone to tell them to hire someone else? People have the best intentions but they just don't have or make the time. Ask for referrals.

#6 Word of Mouth: Interestingly, while this is the sixth most effective method to get your message out it is the number one method used by most small businesses. Why? Because some business people are lazy and don't want to do anything. Granted, some professional speakers are so spectacular on the platform that word of mouth is all they need. But if we were to be honest many of us rely on word of mouth because we don't want to go out and do personal sales. We may believe advertising doesn't work and we have not set an advertising budget. We wait around for someone to say something nice about us and our presentation. If you rely on word of mouth, my question to you is, "Can you control what people are saying?" Your answer is probably, "Not really." Realistically, how many people do your audiences and clients tell about your services? Are enough people helping your business move forward? If not, move up to marketing method #1 and #2 with #3 to #6 as supports.

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