

## Summary

Marketing mistakes can be costly. First through the dollars spent on the marketing effort. Secondly, because of lost or missed opportunity. Avoiding these simple mistakes can bring heightened awareness and revenues to your business.



## ACTIVTips

Summary information or practical advice for business leaders, ACTIVTips represents best practices for businesses seeking new opportunity, predictable growth, and leadership excellence. Integrating ACTIVTips into your business can help you consistently **“Lead Like Never Before.”**



the **afterburner** group

## Marketing - Top Mistakes

Marketing is often viewed as a ‘necessary evil.’ This perception is primarily because marketing is an area where loads of money can be spent without much to show for it. It doesn’t have to be this way. Marketing is an effective business tool to accelerate sales effectiveness and drive customer behavior. To do this, though, there are some common mistakes which need to be avoided:

**Poor Value Proposition:** Companies often mistakenly believe that if they have something which is better, faster, cheaper, that the market will beat a path to their door. This simply is not the case - especially in today’s world of so many choices. Successful companies have a clear, differentiated, easy to understand, and measurable value proposition.

**Not Targeting:** Not everyone wants or needs your product or service. So, don’t market to them. Instead, crisply define a target group which has demonstrated need or desire and fit your marketing plans to that audience.

**Bad or Unclear Messaging:** Determine to go into the marketplace with a clear, easy to understand, and differentiated message. Messages which are too complex, confusing, subtle, artificial, or too long will miss the mark. Messages that sound too much like your competition don’t work either. Think like and message for your target audience - not for yourself or employees.

**No Integration:** It is important that marketing be fully integrated into the business - especially the product and sales organizations. Integrate marketing activities with each other, with what sales is doing to close deals, and with what the product/service groups are looking to deliver to the market.

**Ignoring Brand:** Brand is your identity. It is what makes you unique and is a large influence to buyer behavior and loyalty. Business needs to spend equally on brand and tactical, demand oriented marketing so as to link the company to the product to the benefits in the mind of the buyer. Get the customer to attach to your brand to retain your customers longer and capture more revenue.

**Ignoring Repeat Business:** A fatal mistake to business is to solely focus on new business. Customers, your “certified proven spenders” are ready to spend more with you, at a lower cost of sales. Never ignore current customers and continue to market to them by presenting new solutions and value.

**Being Late:** The clock and market are relentless. Marketing requires advanced planning to take advantage of trends, events, seasonal holidays, product introductions, or buying cycles. Marketing is never a ‘just in time’ exercise. Make sure that you’re planning and executing well in advance to maximize opportunity.

**Ignoring the Customer:** Marketing is not an inside out exercise - where the company defines and the market consumes. Successful marketing includes customers in the planning of product/service, campaigns, promotions, and the like. Bringing the customer into the process increases impact and loyalty.

**Inconsistency:** Customers gravitate toward predictability. Make sure that all your marketing campaigns, sales tools, advertising, promotions, etc. all have a consistent appearance. Doing this builds your brand and allows the customer to quickly and easily separate you from the competition.

**Narrow Delivery Focus:** Businesses will tend to primarily focus in one area - print, on-line, television, etc. Successful marketers understand that customers gather information from and expect to hear from you across a variety of sources.

**Over Marketing:** Resist the temptation to represent your products or services in a manner which is inconsistent with the businesses ability to deliver. Over marketing creates a credibility gap which, ultimately, destroys your reputation and your revenues.

**Looking for the Silver Bullet:** Marketing builds awareness and demand. Sales sells and closes deals. Don’t burden marketing with having to sell and close deals. Consistent, good marketing builds momentum in the market which can last for many years. Make sure you allocate your marketing spend across multiple activities over the entire year - not just for things which are fast and short in duration.

**Not Improving:** Marketing needs to be measured and changed for improvement. Constantly. Find ways to link your marketing activities to leads, to prospects, and to closed deals. Spend where there is the largest return on your investment. Kill what doesn’t work.