

CHAPTER

1

Executive Summary

The Five Core Principles for Turning Clients and Prospects into Raving Fans

Perfect clients” are those who will pay for the full value of your product or services, rave about what you do, and go wild for anything that you offer. Lots of businesses have *good* clients, but only an elite few have passionate, loyal, vocal clients. This type of client is one that not only keeps coming back for more, but also finds the need to share you with family, friends, and even strangers. Perfect clients are often what drive a firm’s explosive growth. And although the perfect client is found only in a perfect world (which doesn’t exist), there are many businesses that can enjoy the enthusiasm of the *nearly* perfect passion of their clients.

I have observed companies large and small through the eyes of my consulting firm; conducted extensive research; and read literally thousands of business books in search of commonalities and concepts for repeatable professional success. I have ultimately been searching, as many of us are, for the “secret sauce” that some businesses have mixed together to create incremental success. And although I am trained in marketing—and this is a marketing book—it is not one that lists or explains the basic concepts and textbook theories of marketing approaches. It is instead filled with the lessons and premises of a variety of business success stories—many

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that have never been heard before—to illustrate effective and unique strategies for attracting loyal fans and advocates.

There is no shortcut to obtaining success. No amount of marketing budget can get people to love you. Spending money is *truly* overrated; thoughtful strategy is not. People nowadays are far less likely to become loyal, given the overwhelming noise of the countless marketing messages they face. The objective is to get clients into the game—*your* game. And to accomplish this feat in today’s “new media” world, businesses are being forced to change. This has never been more evident, as many of the largest companies are no longer only measuring advertising return on investment. In fact marketing today is being measured by taking into account the crucial free media and word-of-mouth efforts, as well as traditional strategies. Success simply doesn’t come the way it used to.

Businesses that have effectively created a loyal following of passionate and vocal clients have followed some, if not all, of *five fundamental marketing principles*. When you adopt even some of these principles you can bring more success to your business and a following of clients who simply go wild for what you do.

In Part I—“The Principles,” of this book, I go over each of these five principles in detail. The following is a summary of the principles for marketing success.

First Principle

What Are You Doing that No One Else Is Doing? *Build Client Delight Through Differentiation*

In order to gain exposure, it certainly helps to be unique or offer something unique—or do something that no one else dares. And although standing out from the crowd definitely gets people excited, it is probably the riskiest of the five principles. However, it is perhaps equally risky to run a conservative, under-the-radar firm today that may just cause you to become something of the past. Instead, successful firms find ways to be *so* exciting—while sticking with their values—that people don’t have a choice but to pay attention . . . and buy. In Chapter 2, “First Principle,” examples of companies that truly stand out in the market include a gas station, a printer, and a toy store, as well as a multilevel marketing firm for men only, and a rubber duck company. *Really.*

Second Principle

Focus Your Marketing on Benefits, Results, and a Call to Action ***What's Really in it for Them***

People don't buy features—they buy the benefits of those features. In fact, to make it even more clear, people buy *results*. There is a significant lack of clarity surrounding what businesses sell, however. People rarely make buying decisions based on all the features of a product or service, yet that's what most businesses promote over and over again. Many companies just assume that their customers *know* what the benefits are, and exactly why to buy their product or service. They leave it up to the prospect to figure out the benefits. Many businesses make the mistake of emphasizing features. Examples of companies that have focused successfully on their benefits and included a strong call to action include a hotel, a "sales hunter" firm, a beverage company, and a card store, which are highlighted in Chapter 3, "Second Principle."

Third Principle

Go Viral! ***Create Memorable Impactful Messaging Worthy of a Pass-Along***

At its core, viral marketing is about the rapid spread of a way of thinking about a product or service—and how it affects those interested. It generates exponential growth in a message's exposure and impact, and has proven to far outperform the results that other types marketing produce. In Chapter 4, "Third Principle," you can read about companies that have created profitable viral marketing campaigns that have transferred into extraordinary impact and sales, including a book, a government, a search engine, a nonprofit, a film—and even guitar lessons.

Fourth Principle

Leverage Your Business Network for Incremental Growth ***Find and Cultivate Centers of Influence to Move Your Message Fast***

Thankfully for salespeople everywhere, strategies for leveraging *themselves* exist as well! It takes a plan, but putting current relationships to work can be the miracle answer to the typical grind of cold calls and prospecting for

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new business. Advocates, centers of influence, and clients will give you referrals and introductions that are critical to expanding your reach and incremental sales growth. But who wants to connect you with others? Lots of people do; it simply takes finding out what's in it for them. In Chapter 5, "Fourth Principle," there are specific examples of successful leveraging strategies employed by a child author, a spa, a real estate agent, a QVC star, and a salesperson.

Fifth Principle

The Critical Importance of Execution in Your Game Plan *Good Execution Is Better than Good Strategy*

In today's fast-moving, completely networked world, superior execution is clearly driving success for business. Small business owners are great at adopting many new marketing ideas; what they are not so great at is finishing. The best marketing strategy is the one you can pull off completely.

Think of it this way: Any marketing strategy you choose—and stay with until it's executed fully and with precision—is actually the best marketing method for you. It is the execution that makes a good strategy look great. Examples of great execution include football, a speaker and author, an accounting firm, and an insurance company.

The next five chapters provide a complete description and examples of how to use the five fundamental marketing principles. Then, in Part II—"The Playbook," you find 13 chapters filled with online and traditional marketing techniques that are working today. I also provide you with a template that you can use to structure a complete marketing and action plan.