

10 Common Marketing Mistakes...and how to Avoid them

Mistake	Ask yourself	Action for This Week
1. Lack of Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Where does our solution offer the greatest value – which market, what kind/size of business –If you do not know, find out! ➤ Where does the competition focus? ➤ Where do we have a reputation/contacts? ➤ Where are our 'best customers'? ➤ What kind of company do we want to do business with – local/national etc? 	<i>Draw up a list of your 5 'best customers' – what does this tell you, how are you going to find more like them?</i>
2. Poor Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Do we understand the needs of target customers? ➤ What are most appropriate marketing tactics? ➤ What is our budget?- Stick to it! 	<i>Talk to 2 of those 'best customers' about what are their business issues, why do they buy from you, why are you different from your competitors.</i>
3. Being unrealistic about your business differentiators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How do we honestly compare against the real competition? ➤ Does our proposition build on all the assets of the business? ➤ In which market do we have the greatest advantage? Go for it. 	<i>Use the information from customers to make an honest assessment of where and why you are going to succeed.</i>
4. Choosing the wrong tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Are our tactics appropriate to the target market and messages? ➤ Should we divert from the plan? Will a new marketing opportunity be more effective and therefore should it replace a planned activity? 	<i>Stop spending money on marketing until you have planned your tactics – even if the plan is just one page of A4.</i>
5. Talking in the wrong language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is all our communication material written in the language of our customers? ➤ Do we talk more about their business/ their issues than about ours? ➤ Can we ask a 'friendly' customer to review our literature/website etc? ➤ Are we customer friendly in the way we communicate? 	<i>Review your website and marketing literature – how much do you talk about your customers' business and how much about yours? What language is it written in?</i>

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6. Not Asking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Do we always raise the issue of case studies/references at the earliest opportunity? ➤ Are our case studies of value to the client organisation as well as our own? 	<i>Ask your most recent customer for a testimonial or permission for a case study.</i>
7. Assuming that prospects understand/remember what you have told them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Do we plan our communication so that the customer receives the message several times? ➤ Are we exploiting all opportunities to reinforce messages – e.g. Email signatures? 	<i>Review opportunities to reinforce your message to customers - emails, business cards etc.</i>
8. Failing to Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When planning any activity e.g. an event, a mailshot – do we always think about the follow up plan? ➤ Do we follow up in ways which will make us stand out? e.g. a handwritten note, some useful information 	<i>Follow up every one you meet this week with a personal note or email.</i>
9. Not keeping your Website up to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When did we last update the website? - there are always new things to add – new customers, events etc ➤ How regularly should we update the site? e.g. Make a diary note to update the site each week 	<i>Book a time slot to update your web-site.</i>
10. Not measuring what you spend or the results achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have I taken all the costs of marketing into account? - man-time, hotels etc ➤ How can I measure the effectiveness of planned marketing activity? 	<i>Review your most recent marketing activity - what did it achieve – e.g. new contacts made, business opportunities. Make a record and set your measures /targets for next time.</i>