



Three Key Elements of Your Marketing, PR and Business Development Mix

You have done your strategy work. You have defined your target market, developed compelling positioning, conducted a competitive analysis, and packaged your products and services in a clear and relevant way. Now you are ready for the fun stuff – the marketing and PR mix: social media, email campaigns, brochure, website refresh, press releases, advertising campaigns, media and analyst relations, and other tactics to achieve return on your marketing/PR investment.

However, translating your strategy into an effective, efficient and affordable marketing and PR plan is often the hardest part. Understanding the mix is critical to knowing what you are doing well and where you can improve. Based on my experience auditing client marketing/PR plans and programs, in almost every case, one or more of the following elements is in need of work:

Consistency: It is important that everything looks, feels, and sounds the same way. In order to get the benefits that repetition provides, this element is critical. If your clients and prospects hear the same message over and over again, the same way each time, they are much more able to spread the word in the way you want it to be spread. This is where the “and they tell two friends” becomes your most powerful marketing tool (viral marketing). Audit all of your marketing and PR communication pieces, as well as other client touch points (invoices, fax sheets, email signatures, and so on) for consistency of brand and message. Where not consistent, fix immediately.

Frequency: Frequency makes a difference. But how often is frequent enough? It truly does depend on your market, your business goals, and your offer. However, there are some guidelines. Once you have prioritized your first, second and third tier of clients, I recommend that you “touch” your primary markets on a regular schedule – e.g., your first tier market two times monthly, your secondary market one time monthly, and your third tier market one time quarterly. Without this frequency, your momentum is lost between marketing touches and the impact severely diminished. Unfortunately, as humans, our memory is somewhat short, so constant reminders that you exist and have something to offer is necessary to establishing the brand awareness you are hoping to achieve.

Variety: Do not put all of your eggs in one basket. Consistency is good and frequency is even better, but if your marketing and PR mix lacks variety, your efforts will suffer the consequences. Relying on only one or two vehicles (e.g., press releases, email campaigns, social media) lacks the power of “touching” your audience from the many ways they use to review their options. A combination of activities – e.g., a quarterly email news summary, a focused “great story idea” emailed to targeted media, targeted ad placements, press releases, speaking and panel presentations, etc. – all work in concert. These activities enable you to develop a relationship with your prospects long before you ever meet them. In addition, the variety of channels used should include both value-added content and promotional content and not be too heavily weighted on either.

Designing the marketing and PR mix to support your business development and sales strategies is much more than just picking the communication vehicles you will use to “get the word out” and engage target audiences and individuals. You must also be sure that your implementation plan includes all three of the above elements. Audit your own marketing mix for these elements, making adjustments as needed, and you will be on your way to more effective and efficient marketing and PR activities – and successful, revenue generating results.