

Thoughts About Impact

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Throwing a bigger rock in the pond creates longer lasting ripples.

Impact is a concept that is sorely needing to be revisited in our "face in the gadget" society.

On top of that, impact is a concept that marketers and advertisers need to pay more attention to.

Why?

Unless your piece has a sound, lasting impact on the consumer ... you can forget the chance for response (remember, "face in the gadget").

In the marketing world, we need to quit producing lackluster, "machine-generated" pieces that fail to have a targeted impact on the reader (not just any impact will do).

Gimmicky, slick, "one-shot" advertising and marketing isn't enough anymore. Branding advertising? No impact (btw ... when will Coke, McDonalds, etc... understand they are NOT getting a substantial ROI from that stuff?).

You have to produce the type of marketing that leaves a targeted and more importantly, lasting impact on the reader.

How?

I start by thinking about **3 E's**...

- **Event,**
- **Experience,** and
- **Eventuality.**

Here's what I mean (without writing an entire book)...

Event is defined by two things ... the "big idea" behind your ad or marketing piece, and the specific relevancy of that big idea to the person reading your piece.

And that relevancy is important.

You can have a great big idea, say "*The Plan To Convert To Renewable Energy by 2030*" ... but if you're writing to an audience mostly of "climate deniers" ... your done before you begin.

Plus, relevancy is also defined by the list of people you're marketing to. A lot of companies forget that it's people that read their stuff, not robots.

People with emotions, problems, their own "stuff" to deal with.

This leads me to Experience.

Did you know that if you get someone's attention, that your ad could potentially make someone's life better?

Did you also know that reading your piece can be a distraction from that person's everyday, boring life?

And finally, did you know your piece could almost guarantee future sales for your business?

Your piece could do all of these things and more, if you keep the person's experience in mind while you're writing (creating, producing etc...) it.

Most businesses, eyes glossed over by the potential of short-term revenue that can be generated by your piece ... forget about the long-term potential of future, repeat and bigger revenues that creating an "out of the park" experience can deliver.

Show them powerful mental images, create an "escape" from reality that they will never forget, and of course show them their trust in you is well-placed.

A ton of businesses (way too many) including McDonalds and most other big brands forget that a person placed trust in you when they chose to consume your piece.

These businesses (which is, most businesses) violate that trust by short cutting the experience they can provide for the person consuming their piece.

How do they short cut a person's experience?

By staying superficial with the content of their piece, not providing a satisfying and deeper content experience (helping them learn, showing them how to improve their lives etc...).

By being "stupid." People don't care about random red couches and silly music. They also don't care about gimmicks and tricks. They've either seen them all before, or IF you fool them, you'll only fool them once.

By failing to keep the experience specific and relevant to their lives. Straying too far off the path by blinding the person with science (unless your audience IS scientists), or by straying too far from your simple big idea.

There are many other ways to fall way short of a satisfying experience, but keeping the above points in mind will put you MILES ahead of other businesses.

Folks, people for the most part lead boring, mundane, repetitive lives.

They generally go to work at a job they hate, come home to hear the "same old, same old," and watch TV until they fall asleep. Throw a two week family vacation in there once a year and you have most people's lives.

Your piece can change that.

If it does, and if you do all of the **Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action** stuff right (A.I.D.A.), you'll get the sale or generate the lead at the highest conversion percentage possible.

Problem is, about 70% of ads (or more) fail **miserably** at attaining both A.I.D.A *and* impact.

Some people are of the school of thought that impact is part of the "Interest" ... but thinking about impact in your piece actually allows all 4 pieces of A.I.D.A. to happen (the Action part is easier if your piece made an impact).

But your whole piece has to set the tone for the next sale (or sales).

"What's next?" is the third E...

Eventuality ... or thinking of and setting up the mentality for the next parts of your marketing process as it pertains to impact, is critical.

Here's what I mean...

Most business owners (or executives) don't even think about how the impact of their marketing piece will prepare the person reading it for the next step.

For example ... if the big idea for your piece is gimmicky, or centered around a controversial topic (like sex, politics, or religion), it might convert to a sale.

Great, right?

Not necessarily. In fact I think this is where the biggest opportunity lies after you've done the work of gaining trust with your piece.

Think about the congruence between how you're selling what your selling now ... and what you'll be selling next. Think at least two products ahead of what you're currently offering (even if you're "only" generating a lead).

Did you use trickery to get the lead, get the click, get the open, or worse ... get the sale? If so, you'll have a hard time selling the next thing with the trust that has been lost. Trickery is not congruent with any next step in the marketing process, ever.

Did you use, say, a topic like religion for the big idea of your piece?

Good luck selling much else with effectiveness further down the sales funnel. Unless it's religion-based, that is.

As with anything, there are exceptions.

Did you fail in any way to over deliver on the promises made in your piece? This includes product quality, experience (again), and tying your current sale to the next one without losing congruence.

Does your product's content and delivery seem congruent to the marketing piece the person just consumed?

An important thought here ... tie everything together for the person who placed their trust, and in some cases their credit card, in you.

It's your job (not theirs) to figure out your sales process for them ... and keep "the flow of things" smooth for the person who is traveling your sales process.

Anything less ... and your impact is lost.

And lost impact cannot be regained.

And all of this applies whether your ad or marketing piece is for branding or direct response, is a short piece or long piece, is placed in a magazine or online etc...

A short ad has to have enough of a positive impact on the person viewing it to move to the next step ... a branding piece needs to have an impact that strengthens the brand (no random red couches) ... the impact of your piece needs to overcome the media form it is placed in.

But impact can also apply to life in general as well...

Do you think you're making a positive impact when you're face to face with someone having a conversation and you take a phone call or answer a text from someone else? (Seriously?)

Do you think you're making a positive impact when you take a sick child to an event full of people and get other people sick?

Do you think you make a positive impact on our society when you write hurtful remarks or threaten someone directly online?
Offline?

You get the point, to have positive impact on others in life, not only do you have to think about your own "3 E's" ... you have to think beyond the present (the bigger ripples), but be mindful of the present.

I hope that reading this has made a positive impact on you, because the quote that started this article was once taught to me by someone very wise.

I hope you take it to heart.

Until the next time we look in the mirror together...

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