

Spicing Up Your Small Business Marketing

3 Tips To Tweak Your Marketing

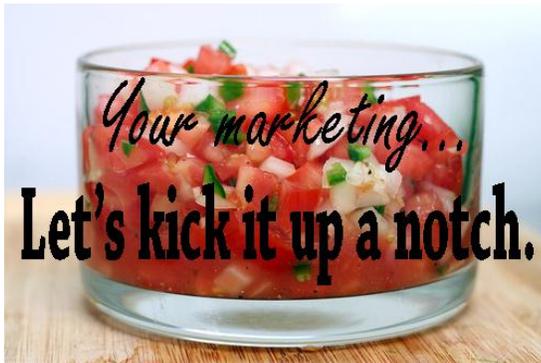


This White Paper is brought to you by your friends at The Fulcrum Group, Inc.



It's a great time to spice up your marketing.

The ready access to technology we all enjoy means we have a smorgasbord of consumer information literally at our fingertips, 24/7.



Because the public is so much more in control of the how's, why's, what's and when's of a potential purchase than ever before, smart marketing of the products and services your small business offers really needs to be on point, to keep up with consumer behavior.

Yesterday's marketing strategies don't appease today's consumer appetites. Traditional practices like print/media advertising, billboard/banner ads, paid or rented lists, tradeshow booths, seminars and direct mailings are costly, and increasingly intrusive to consumers who are eager and quicker than ever to educate themselves about their buying options. The differences between a newer style of marketing ("inbound marketing") and traditional (otherwise known as "interruptive" or "outbound") marketing were discussed in this month's newsletter. **Inbound marketing** – a newer way of looking at marketing that focuses on earning peoples' interest in your company by building relationships with customers and sharing meaningful information with them through various channels – is the most effective way to engage today's marketplace.

Here are 3 tips we've used this year to kick our own marketing up a notch:

1. **Time.**

Invest some *time* into studying your customers' behaviors.

View studying your customers kind of like a fun sociology experiment – we've discovered interesting things like which topics peak our customers' interest most. Those things tend to include security topics of any kind, technology and gadget reviews and/or new product reviews, and above all, our SPOTlight articles which share a little "behind the scenes" or more personal info with our friends and customers about our Fulcrum Group employees.



We've observed which days of the week (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) and times of day (mornings) facilitate the most activity on our social media channels. Also, we've discovered the social media channels in which our clients and partners engage with us the most are typically LinkedIn and Twitter.

We believe this investment of time allows us to "season" our marketing just right - with when and where clients want to see and hear from us, and what information appeals most to them.



2. **Test.**

Test the best marketing strategies for your company.

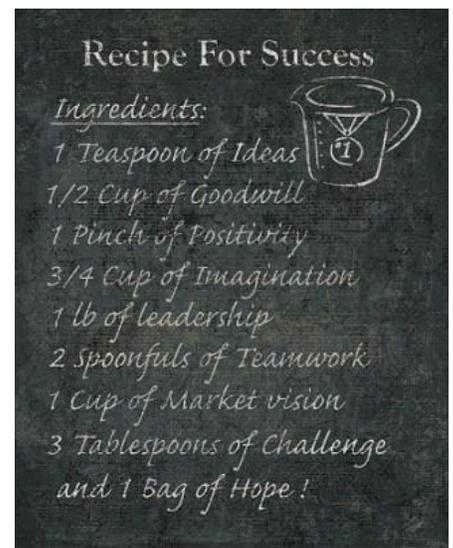
Over time and with much experience behind us, we have found the inbound marketing strategies that best engage our clients tend to be:

- ***Useful, written information we can share in a variety of ways*** and
- **Regular, real and personal communication.**

Here are some examples:

- By providing custom content – we can share general relevant technology information on a regular basis in blog articles and other areas around the fulcrum.pro website. Our online monthly newsletter and more in-depth white papers (such as this one, and more on a variety of topics) are shared via email and archived on our site.
- By participating in thought-leadership groups we've headed on social media marketing channels, such as LinkedIn (including our Fort Worth IT Professionals Group and DFW Healthcare Security & Compliance Group) and several vendor online discussion groups.
- By developing real relationships with people. More than anything, we enjoy actually getting to visit with our existing and potential customers (and business partners) face to face, so in many cases, we often partner up with complementary businesses for opportunities such as our seasonal Lunch & Learns, where we (and our partners) provide lunch and an earful of good information on ways we are qualified to help our fellow Dallas and Fort Worth area businesses grow.
- By making it easy for others to engage with us. We have worked very hard on refining the effectiveness of our company website. We've custom-created content and tools to help our clients connect with us efficiently and we've invested significant time and effort into optimizing our pages to be better found by those searching for the services we provide.

What kinds of strategies do you have in place to regularly engage, help and communicate with your customers? Give some consideration to your particular "recipe for success" and do some of your own "taste testing" to determine what strategies work best for you and those you serve, and what you might need more or less of.



3. **Tools.**

Having the right tools makes a real and measurable difference.

Some great tools we've come across and utilize to measure the success of our marketing efforts include:

- We turn to **VerticalResponse.com** for managing our contact lists, creation and scheduling of various e-campaigns (like our monthly e-newsletter and this white paper) and measuring reader engagement. Vertical Response provides great webinars and regular newsletters packed with valuable tips and helpful info.
- **Google Analytics** has helped us learn so much about our audience and can help you know yours - who visits your website, where they come from, which pages peak their interest the most and so much more...
- **HootSuite.com** – With HootSuite, you can choose, schedule, manage (and even collaborate with others) regarding your social media postings – all of your social media channels managed in one central location. HootSuite even provides a weekly activity report with feedback reported from your connected social channels.



We hope we've brought you some useful advice that will help you tweak your marketing strategy this summer!

For more information on marketing your small business in the tech-rich consumer landscape of today – including website development and online marketing, social media marketing, search engine optimization and more - do not hesitate to reach out to us.

