



The Don Hutson Report

Global Expert on Sales & Negotiations

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An awesome advantage for you... Marketing Differentiation

(This is part 5 in an 8-part series on Don Hutson's 7 Types of Differentiation.)

When everything you and your competitors offer customers is basically equal, a superior marketing approach can win the business for you. So, what does a superior marketing approach look like in today's ever-changing market place?

For starters, your company's *traditional* marketing approach should be empowered by first rate sales, advertising, public relations, and promotional methods and materials that truly generate an aura of value for your products and services from your customers' perspectives.

The other prime component of a modern marketing approach is the integration of *web-based initiatives* into the implementation of the plan. Anyone who does not include Internet marketing and social media in the mix today is short-sighted, since effective command of this incredible resource will be a difference-maker – *now and from now on!*

Two issues come into play on each differentiating factor; your uniqueness and your offering's relevance to each customer. And the perception and appeal of each can vary widely from customer to customer based largely on five elements. Let's cover these one at a time.

Advertising - Is your company building a solid brand and reputation with advertising that is positively impacting, creative, and appealing to your customer base? If the sales and marketing team at your company can ascertain what the top five "value points" are that cause people to buy from you, they will have a strong basis for ad development that will capture the attention of your prospective buyers and cause them to take action - *in your favor*. William Wrigley of chewing gum fame, was known to have said "Half of my advertising spend is useless; *I just don't know which half!*" Today we have the ability to measure key metrics in a more viable manner to appropriately target the right people.

Promotional - Does your company periodically offer special promotions, coupons, or "sales" that compel your customers to buy more or try new or updated items? If not, you may want to give it a try to gain new revenues and more of a following from people who have not been compelled to buy these items from you previously. It can be a tool for increased market penetration. But, be careful not to

sabotage previously top-selling items in your line in the process. I advise my customers to form marketing committees who can get together to brainstorm options. The collective intellect of those from multiple disciplines within any company can come together to formulate solid, creative promotional approaches.

Public Relations - What kinds of messages are you sending through press releases and special notices, and in the case of larger companies, your annual report letter, that might positively impact your sales? What kind of grade do you give your company on finding excellent ways to inform the marketplace of your latest and most advanced products, services, and customer support technologies? In most industries, customers are becoming more discerning and competition is getting keener than ever, so go after every market advantage you can through well thought out P. R.

Sales - Do your sales team members' skills exceed those of your top competitors? You will either be at an advantage or disadvantage in this regard, so management's inclination to provide the sales team with the best, up to date, quality sales training is key for gaining – *and maintaining* - the advantage. Are you being encouraged to use outdated sales techniques and approaches that evoke resistance rather than acceptance? *"Always be closing"* is a concept that should be eliminated from your company's vocabulary! Whenever possible, a win-win, collaborative approach is preferred. That way, you are more likely to get the order today and build a bridge to future business.

Social Media - If you are like most professionals today, you visit the web sites and Social Media platforms that offer information of vendors seeking to do business with you. Odds are that prospective buyers of your products and services perform the same kinds of immediate due diligence. Don't fall behind your competition on this front! Your digital footprint is critical today! So, be certain that the appropriate people in your company are busy making positive electronic impressions and guarding your corporate reputation with insight. Social Media can easily be your light at the end of the tunnel and *not* a train.... unless you ignore it. In that case, it very easily *could be* a train in the form of your competitor whose digital footprint overshadows yours!

Recognize that light as a beacon of opportunity! Seize it, and get on the cutting edge of Social Media and the other elements that make up Marketing Differentiation. Then, capitalize on all of the traditional and contemporary advantages currently available to you rather than becoming a victim of them!

This article is Part 5 of an eight-article series on the subject of "Differentiation". For your copy of Parts 1-4, [click here](#) to request them via email.

If you haven't already, you can get Don Hutson's book "Selling Value" for Free (just cover shipping & handling). You can get it using this link: <https://www.sellingvaluebook.com/free-ship-optin>

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