



MARKETING

SCHOOL

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How To Read This Book:

This book is divided into three parts, and they really should be read in order.

First, we're going to talk about the *concepts* of good marketing. The concepts are the thoughts, the high level stuff. They're the "why". If you don't get the concepts, you're hosed no matter what you do.

Next, we're talking about *strategies and tactics*. Strategies are the plans, the big picture of what you're doing — they're the "what". These are more specific than the concept stuff, but they're still not going to tell you exactly what you should be doing. That's the tactics, which are also in this section, but closer to the end.

Don't skip to the end just to do the tactic stuff.

Why? Because you'll screw it up.

Last is the bullet points. They exist because no book on marketing is complete without *1924 Marketing Tips To Rock Your IttyBiz* or some such nonsense. It's a rule.

Now, onto my lecture about exercises.

You know when you're reading a book — self-help books are the worst for this — and they're chock full of exercises? And the author's all, "you won't get what you want to get out of this book if you don't do the damn exercises?" And you think to yourself, "Whatever. I don't need to get to the exercises! I'm a smart person! I can comprehend this basic stuff — get to the good stuff."

And you know how you get to the end of the book and there's no good stuff? No big epiphanies, no top secret information, no juicy tidbits or insider tricks?

You know why?

It's because you didn't do the exercises.

Epiphanies come when you take the theoretical and turn it into the practical. "Hmm, that was alright" comes when you leave it in the theoretical.

Marketing is not rocket science. (It is a widely known fact that most people with marketing degrees got them because they couldn't get into rocket science.) It's fairly simple, actually. Understand features and benefits, target demographics, throw a call to action in here and there and you're really pretty much off to the races.

Marketing consultants charge hundreds of dollars an hour not because they understand marketing – my ten year old understands marketing – but because they know how to apply marketing concepts, strategies and tactics on a business by business basis. You bought this book because you have a business and you want to market it effectively. Learning just the concepts is not going to help you worth a damn.

By the end of this book, I want you to be at the point where you can see other people's marketing, know what they're doing and why they're doing it, and know how to apply it to your own ittybiz. We want you to think "e-mail campaign" and inherently know what that means for YOU. We want you to see a banner ad rate on a blog somewhere and already know if it's worth the money.

If you leave the concepts in this book in the theoretical realm, you may as well just burn your money. (Plus, if you come whining to me asking for your money back, you damn well KNOW I'm gonna want to see the completed worksheets. Just sayin'.)

PART 1:

**MARKETING
CONCEPTS**

The Definition of Marketing

I didn't spend a whole lot of time at school but in the short time I was there, I did notice that at the beginning of a course, they told you some stuff. And one of the things they told you was what you were there to learn. (It is entirely possible they did this to ensure you were in the right classroom, but whatever. I'm doing it now anyway.) Therefore, without further ado, here is the definition of marketing, IttyBiz style:

mar • ket • ing [mahr-ki-ting] (n.):

The stuff you do that makes people buy your stuff.

That's not so scary, is it?

A lot of people think of marketing as a highly organized and detailed plan or set of activities. X falls under the umbrella of marketing whereas Y does not. People think marketing is advertising. They think it's direct mail. They think it's, well, it doesn't matter what they think it is because they're wrong.

Marketing is simply the stuff you do that makes people buy your stuff.

A couple of other definitions to think about:

“The art, science and process of helping your Right People *a.* find you, and *b.* feel safe saying yes to the thing you have, know or do that will make their lives better.” *Havi Brooks, FluentSelf.com*

“The profitable identification, attraction, getting, and keeping of good customers... Identification, attraction, and getting are pre-sale functions. Keeping includes all post-sale functions.” *Jeffrey Fox, [How To Become A Marketing Superstar](#)*, which, by the way, is a very good book.

(For the record, Princeton University defines marketing as “the commercial processes involved in promoting and selling and distributing a product or service”. Aren't you glad you bought my book instead of theirs?)

The funny thing is, you're already marketing. Whether you have an ittybiz or not,

you're already doing some of the stuff you need to do to sell it:

You're already sending emails, and they probably already have signature lines.

You're already answering the phone.

You're already on some kind of social networking site like Twitter or Facebook.

You're already commenting on blogs or getting involved in online communities.

You already go to the garden center. You already pick your kid up from Baby Salsa. You already mix with your peeps.

If you do have a business, you probably already have a website and it already has copy on it. It has pictures. A logo. Maybe a photograph of you. Somehow, somehow, people are already finding you. Maybe there aren't a lot of people right now, but that's what's beautiful about all the stuff you're about to learn. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. You don't have to go from zero to sixty. All you need to do is ramp up what you're already doing.

And that's not scary at all.

So. Onto helping people buy your stuff. Doesn't this sound fun?

Why People Buy Stuff

In order to sell stuff, you need to know what makes people buy stuff.

People buy stuff because they want it.

You also need to know what makes people NOT buy stuff.

People don't buy stuff because they don't trust it.

To understand how to sell people stuff, all you need to do is look at your own trip to the mall. When you go to the mall, there are a few things you buy and lots and lots of things you don't buy.

The things you bought were the things you wanted and trusted. The things you didn't buy were the things you either didn't want or didn't trust.

“Didn't want” is an easy one to understand. If you take a size nine and they only come in a six, well, you didn't want it. It doesn't matter how nice the lawnmower is, if you don't have a lawn, you're not going to buy it.

“Didn't trust,” on the other hand, is something most people don't stop to think about. When we think about lack of trust in the buying process, we think about the used car salesman, out to charge you five figures for a vehicle that'll self-combust ten miles off the lot. But most “didn't trust” reasons that people walk away are not nearly as in-your-face as that one.

If you thought that the return process might be a pain in the ass, that's something you didn't trust. If you thought you might be able to get it cheaper somewhere else, that's something you didn't trust. If you thought you needed more time to make the decision, that's something you didn't trust.

A lot of marketers — especially the consultant kind who are looking to take your money — really like to complicate marketing. They like to make it sound like it's all about research and testing and planning and execution and all manner of hard

If they don't want the stuff, you're hosed. And if they don't believe you're one to sell it to them, you're hosed. Effective marketing comes down to convincing people that you have something they want and that you're not going to screw them.

things you think you can't do on your own. Those activities can come into play, sure, but if you have stuff that people want and they trust you, you don't really have to do much else.

Find people who are likely to want your stuff. Make them aware that your stuff is worth having. And don't set off alarm bells in their heads.

There you go. **Secret to riches, right there.**

This is not neurosurgery. On some level, everyone understands this. But they get so caught up in the details of things like "closing the sale" and "creating a call to action" and "branding" that they forget the basics.

They spend all their time pushing their stuff on people and no time showing them it's safe to buy it. Or they spend all their time showing what a nice guy they are and no time building up the desire to buy their stuff.

What this book is going to do is teach you how to convey these two things. (Sadly, it will not teach you how to BE those two things. If your product sucks, it sucks, and no amount of marketing is going to fix that. And if you're an asshole, well, you're an asshole.)

But if your product DOESN'T suck and you're NOT an asshole, this book will teach you how to communicate these two things. Hurray!

Handy Sidebar Tip:
You'll sell a lot more stuff if you focus your marketing efforts on people who already want what you're selling and already think you're cool, but we'll talk about that later.

Figuring Out The Goal Of Your Marketing

The big goal of marketing is something called *conversion*. Conversion is when you want someone to do something and they do it. *Conversion rate* is the percentage of people who were given the chance to do it and actually did.

At its most basic, it's when I try to sell you this book and you buy it. You converted.

Conversion can be a purchase, but it doesn't have to be. Most times it's not, actually. Sometimes you don't want them to buy right away, so you get them to sign up for a newsletter or request a free report or answer a survey. (If your product or service is expensive, you're not going to get them to buy right away and you're not going to get them to buy at all if you push too hard for a sale on first contact.)

You want to do everything you can to increase your conversion rate and get the greatest number of *good people* to do what you want them to do.

Conversion is when you want someone to do something and they do it.

What's a sales cycle?

Your sales cycle is the time and/or process between your first contact with your customer and when the sale is made.

Cars have long sales cycles. Chocolate bars have short sales cycles. Notice the difference in marketing between cars and chocolate bars.

Your marketing needs to consider three types of conversions:

Short term conversions are what you want them to do right now.

Medium term conversions are what you want them to do later.

Long term conversions are what you want them to do in the future.

For example, if someone comes to my website today, I'm going to try to get them to sign up for one of my e-courses. That's the short-term conversion. They get five little lessons by email, then maybe a bonus lesson a few days later. Then, a few days after that, I'll try to sell them something — probably this book. If they buy that, that's medium term conversion.

But if I stop there, I have a problem:

I'm burning thousands of dollars.

Sure, I'd like their name on my list. Sure, I don't mind taking their fifty bucks. But what I really want is their devotion.

I want them to become a fan. Fans buy lots of stuff. Fans tell their friends. Fans fly across the country to spend a few grand on a seminar.

Those are the people I really want, and those are the people you should want too. You don't have to give seminars, but you do have to give them lots of different things to buy and lots of different ways to send you their money.

But why do I need short-term conversions?

Can't they just come back and buy it later?

I get this question a lot and I have a feeling there are a lot of people thinking it but afraid to ask it. To answer it for you, I want you to think back over the last year or so and envision all the things you almost bought.

Did you get a web design done? How many people DIDN'T you hire? Got a manicure? How many DIDN'T you get? Bought a car? How many DIDN'T you buy?

And those are just things that you ended up buying from someone eventually. Now think of all the things you thought about buying and didn't buy from anyone. There are probably a lot of factors that went into your decision not to buy, but the decision was made because you forgot or because you changed your mind.

If you don't have short-term conversion goals, **you are giving all your power to the customer.** You are giving your little pitch and then holding your breath and crossing your fingers.

You're crossing your fingers that their wife doesn't have objections that you can't address because you're not there.

You're crossing your fingers that somebody else doesn't come along with a better

offer of the same product or service.

You're crossing their fingers that somebody doesn't come along with a better offer of *something completely different*. (I was going to buy a gym membership but I figured I'd buy an Xbox instead. How many times does THAT happen?!)

And, most of all, you're crossing your fingers that they don't just forget.

This is colossally stupid. You may as well just TELL them not to buy. You're escorting them out the door anyway — at least that way you're not wasting time, emotional energy and marketing resources in the process.

Assignment time!

You need to start thinking of some potential conversion goals. It's too early in the book and your marketing career to carve them in stone, but you have to come up with something. I want you to come up with five potential goals for your own business in each of the three categories.

Do not think and think and think about this — you're not committing to anything. You're just thinking of five things you *could* want them to do. If you don't have products or services for them to buy yet, that's fine. Use hypotheticals.

One of the biggest objections to this exercise comes in the long-term category. Most people don't know if they want to do seminars or write books or travel the world doing missionary work. They just know they want to fire their boss. If this is you, just make some up for now. It's not important to hammer out the details. What's important is that you start thinking about how to accomplish a short-term, medium-term, and long-term goal all at the same time.

Conversion Goals Assignment

1. Think of five possible **short-term** conversion goals.

e.g. Have them sign up for my newsletter

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2. Think of five possible **medium-term** conversion goals.

e.g. Have them contract a logo design.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

3. Think of five possible **long-term** conversion goals.

e.g. Have them join my Widget of the Month Club.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What To Do With Your Conversion Goals

Now that you've brainstormed different possible conversion goals, you're going to ignore them. Why? Because they're probably wrong. And having five different goals at once is a recipe for the welfare line. But you need to have more than one idea in the pipeline in case your one idea sucks.

Most people, upon creating a handy list of five short-term conversion goals, will squeal with glee and run to present them all to their potential customers. Really, there's no good ending to that story. A bunch of different things can happen and they're all bad:

- Your customers get overwhelmed and run away crying.
- Your customers aren't overwhelmed and happily make a choice, but they all pick different things and you're running in all directions at once, trying to make sure your newsletter and your blog and your free downloads and your podcasts and your vlog are all just as good as each other. In the process of trying to kick five kinds of ass you kick no kinds of ass and lose everyone.
- You do all of the things insanely well but shortly burn out and end up institutionalized.

Nothing good can come from too many options.

Time for a story. I have a two-year-old son. He likes to say "no" a lot. (He's for sale, in case you're interested. My email address is at the end of the book.)

While he likes to say "no" in most situations, his favorite time to say "no" is at breakfast. I want him to eat Rice Krispies. He wants to do anything but eat Rice Krispies.

If I offer him Rice Krispies, toast, or blueberries, he's going to do one of two things. He's going to rudely decline all of them, or he's going to choose one. If he DOES choose, two out of three times he's not going to choose the one I want him to choose.

Those are really bad odds at breakfast, and my kid's breakfast is not exactly important in the grand scheme of my business.

The more options you give them, the less likely they are to choose one. And even if they do choose one, statistically speaking they're probably not going to choose the one you want them to choose

Losing customers is very important in the grand scheme of my business.

So right now, all you're going to do is give yourself a nice pat on the back for doing the brainstorming exercise and you're going to keep reading.

Interesting aside: All other things being equal, children are most likely to choose the last option you present. So if you want them to choose Rice Krispies, your chances are highest if you make them the last item on the list.

Adults, on the other hand, are equally likely to choose the first or the last. This is because some people are lazy and pick the first one, and some people are messed up with indecision and they pick the last one for the same reason my kid chose the Rice Krispies. It's the freshest in their mind.

All other things being equal means price is not a factor — if they're choosing between three things that are all the same price, like a newsletter, a blog, or a free download. If price IS a factor, they're most likely to choose the middle one.

This is why many businesses offer one product or service that is wildly expensive. They know nobody's going to buy it, but it makes the next highest priced item a lot more appealing because it looks cheaper, but not the cheapest.

Figuring Out What Rocks and What Sucks

Let's do an easy quiz.

Which is better?

- a.) newspaper advertising*
- b.) television advertising*
- c.) word of mouth*

Obviously, this question is rigged. There's no right answer. Why? Because marketing decisions cannot be made in a vacuum. Try this one:

Which is better?

- a.) a great newspaper ad*
- b.) a not bad television ad*
- c.) a poorly executed word of mouth campaign*

Still can't answer because it's still a vacuum. We could play this game all day and I could make this book fifty pages longer, but I think you get the idea.

Marketing decisions are absolute. Your business is relative. Until you know the relative circumstances, you cannot make absolute decisions. You just can't.

A great newspaper ad might be theoretically better than a poorly executed viral campaign. But if your target customers are hippie eco-freaks who think newspapers are evil and wrong and they boycott anybody who advertises in them, well the answer changes, doesn't it? What's better in the vacuum isn't better for your customers.

And if a well executed newspaper ad costs \$10,000 and you only have \$1000, it doesn't matter that customers would like it because they're never going to see it. What's better in a vacuum isn't necessarily better for you.

*And while we're on the topic of money: **Never, ever, ever borrow money to market.** Marketing, and especially advertising, is far more art than science. There is no guarantee of a return, even when you're brilliant at it. And if you bought this book, you're not brilliant at it. If you don't have money, either find some, or do some of the free or cheap stuff until you do.*

Good marketing is about finding what's good for your customers and your business. That's it.

The first step to finding this out is to do what's called a SWOT analysis. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. You might have heard of SWOT when you bought that book on business plans and then used it to prop up your coffee table. The document you're about to create is an integral part of any marketing plan.

Banks think SWOT analyses are the bomb. They heart SWOT. No bank will give you one thin dime if you don't have a damn good SWOT for your biz.

But I don't want funding!

You know what? Neither do I. But I know that banks tend to know a little something about what makes a business fail and businesses fail when they don't do their SWOT.

Strengths and Weaknesses are internal. They're about you and your biz.

Opportunities and Threats are external. They're about the outside world.

Strengths and Opportunities are the things going for you.

Weaknesses and Threats are the things working against you.

When you know your strengths and weaknesses and you know the situational opportunities and threats you can make really smart decisions. When you don't, you're trying to make marketing decisions while knowing nuthin' about nuthin'.

Here are a few examples from IttyBiz:

Strengths:

- Strong sales funnel, leading customers from free to paid products

- Over 300 affiliates and lots of inbound links

Weakness:

- Customer service leaves something to be desired.
- No one-on-one consulting, lose clients who need individualized help

Opportunity:

- Recession making people scared for their jobs.
- Big conference coming, can break into previously inaccessible markets

Threat:

- No barrier to entry in online publishing so competition will likely skyrocket.
- Credit crunch means less accessible spending for lower income customers

I did that in less than two minutes, and it's hardly exhaustive — a true SWOT would list everything. But in simply looking at that alone, it's easy to make a few marketing decisions.

S: I should be creating a much more strategic affiliate plan and provide them with more resources like training and banners. I should focus more on getting new leads into free product pipeline because they eventually become paying customers.

W: My literature should not encourage people to get in touch with us by email, so an alternative should be brainstormed. I should consider teaming up with someone who does do one-on-one consulting and working out some kind of profit sharing.

O: Products should be positioned as things that will help keep people safe from the recession. Business cards and conference gear becoming high priority.

T: Aggressive branding is critical to secure place in the market before competition arrives. Time to start offering payment plans.

See? Eight decisions, just like that. Notice that I didn't decide to START offering one-on-one consulting just because it was a weakness in my business plan. I'm not changing the entire IttyBiz structure based on one weakness. What I did, and what you should do, is analyze the weakness or threat and adopt a method of dealing with it.

Assignment Time!

It's time to come up with your own version. List as many as you can in the space provided, just to get you started. You really should do a full one of these but a true SWOT analysis would take you most of the day. Since you want to get on with kicking ass, just give seven each. There's time to do the rest later.

It's important to note that this is a morally neutral exercise. You're not going to completely eliminate weaknesses and you'll never fully predict threats. That's fine.

And while we're talking about weaknesses and threats remember... this is not a job interview question. This is not the time to say your major weakness are that you care too much about your customers and you work too hard. (Unless you're a codependent workaholic, in which case those are weaknesses indeed.) **By lying to yourself, you are doing your business an almost unrecoverable disservice.**

Think damn hard. Write down all seven weaknesses and threats. If you've only got one or two in each category, you're not thinking hard enough and it's going to kill you later.

Also, SWOT analyses should be done REGULARLY. Go find your calendar and put a note six months from today to come back and do this again. Why?

Because things change. You might start out kicking ass at customer service and start to suck as you get busier. You might be operating in a weak economy and that economy will change. New competitors, new offerings, new staff... all of these changes should be reflected in your SWOT.

SWOT Analysis Assignment

STRENGTHS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

WEAKNESSES

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

OPPORTUNITIES

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

THREATS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____