

Is your business stuck in the mud with its marketing plan?

A good marketing plan should be like a network of well-paved, clearly marked roads shooting out into the world and leading back to your company. But, all too easily, a business can get stuck in the mud while trying to build these thoroughfares, leaving its marketing message ineffective and, well, muddled. Here are a few indications that you might be spinning your wheels.



Still the same

If you've been using the same marketing materials for years, it's probably time for an update. Customers' demographics, perspectives and expectations change over time. If your materials appear old and outdated, your products or services may seem that way too.

Check out the marketing and advertising of competitors, as well as perhaps a few companies that you admire. What about their efforts grabs you? Discuss it with your team and come up with a strategy for refreshing your look. You might need to do something as drastic as a total rebranding, or a few relatively minor tweaks might be sufficient.

Overreliance on one approach

While a marketing plan should take many avenues, sometimes when a business finds success via a certain route, it gets overly reliant on that one approach. Think of a company that has advertised in its local phonebook for years and doesn't notice when a competitor starts pulling in customers via social media.

This is where data becomes key. Use metrics to track response rates to your various initiatives and regularly reassess the balance of your marketing approach. Unlike the business in our example, many companies today become *too* focused on social media and ignore other options. So, watch out for that.

Inconsistent message

Ask yourself whether your various marketing efforts complement — or conflict with — one another. For example, is it obvious that an online ad and a print brochure came from the same business? Are you communicating a consistent, easy-to-remember message to customers and prospects throughout your messaging?

In addition, be careful about tone and taking unnecessary risks — particularly when using social media. It's a difficult challenge: You want to get noticed, and sometimes that means pushing the envelope, but you don't want to end up being offensive. Generally, you shouldn't run the risk of alienating customers with controversial material. If you do come up with an edgy idea that you believe will likely pay off, gather plenty of feedback from objective parties before launching.

Reconstruction work

A marketing plan going nowhere will likely leave your sales team lost and your bottom line suffering. Maybe it's time to do some reconstruction work on yours. Contact us for more information and further suggestions.