

Live by the Calendar

Marketing is a habit and habits take practice



Marketing is such an important part of your business that it must be practiced daily, much like a habit, in order to really get the attention and momentum it deserves.

Doing that can be a tall task for a lot of business owners because so many other things call out for your attention.

The surest way to keep your focus on the important task of marketing is to schedule it like you might appointments with best customers. When you have an appointment blocked off in your calendar, it's pretty certain that you will keep it.

Making marketing appointments, and creating a systematic approach to marketing scheduling, is a great way to ensure you take a near and far term approach to building marketing momentum in your business.

Here's the plan of action for your new marketing scheduling routine.

Annual - Create a large wall size annual marketing calendar that allows you to look pretty far forward and schedule the big things you know you need to do. Redesign the web site, hire a marketing assistant. You should look at this as an annual strategic planning exercise that combines nicely with the creation of a compelling set of marketing goals for the year

In addition, use this strategy session to create a marketing scorecard. Your scorecard is a list of simple tactical actions that, if performed routinely, will move you in the direction of your goals. So if your goal is to obtain five referral each month then a scorecard item tied to that goal might be to attend a networking event or send a handwritten note to a customer. (Create this scorecard and I'll tell you how to use it in a minute.)

Monthly - When you start big picture planning things can get, well, big, and you can get overwhelmed. Take each month of the year and assign a theme of focus. Make December your PR month and determine that you will get that part of your marketing humming along in December, while January is blog month and so on.

Weekly - If you plan to accomplish your assigned theme goals each month then you will need a weekly plan of action with steps and accountabilities. Going back to our PR theme example might mean that week 1 that month is focused on building a killer media list for your industry and community, week two might be set aside to tackle the creation of a media kit. Now, the key to making this work though is to schedule marketing appointments throughout the week with yourself, your staff or an outside resource to make sure the action steps get moved forward.

Daily - For your daily marketing plan you've got two tasks. One is look at each day as you are planning your to-do list for the day and prepare for and keep your marketing appointments.

The second is to consult your scorecard we described above and see how many items on your scorecard can be done today. To make it even more fun you can assign a score to each item and set a daily point goal.

If you can keep marketing this front and center as you go about your day you will be amazed at how easy it becomes a part of the air you breath.

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