

Renegade Marketing for the Tree and Landscape Industry

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INTRODUCTION

5 REASONS WHY MARKETING FAILS

Everybody knows that marketing is necessary. It's the thing that generates interest, which in turn generates leads. And leads are what we need to make sales.

Marketing gets your name out, gets people thinking about you, makes you the one they call when they need services like yours. Yet, as important as marketing is to growth, it is probably the most misunderstood and under managed part of many businesses. Because of this, marketing fails more often than it succeeds.

It doesn't need to be this way. Marketing really is an essential part of growing your business, and if done right, it will generate plenty of leads and sales for you. This book is about mastering and managing marketing so that it does just that.

Before we start, though, let's look at why marketing fails for so many of us.

At the root of it all, there are five basic reasons why businesses don't get traction with their marketing:

- i. No plan.
- ii. No consistency.

- iii. **No completion.**
- iv. **Procrastination.**
- v. **Doing nothing.**

Consider these more closely.

- i. **No plan.** Success *never* happens by accident. Not once. If you keep doing what you've always done, you'll keep getting the results that you've always gotten. You've got to plan. If you don't have a plan, any road will look right, but you'll never achieve success. You must plan success. If you don't plan to succeed, you're certainly planning to fail. Plan how much you want to make and what strategies you are going to use to make that much. Planning isn't a big secret — it just takes time and commitment. Some people say they don't want to plan because they might change their minds. That's absurd. You can always alter your plan. Make your goals higher or lower. Pick a completely different goal. But if you don't have a plan, you'll never get anywhere. It's very important that you plan to succeed.
- ii. **No consistency.** One of the reasons the market strategies in this book work so well is, they are systems. You need to do every part of the system to get it to run correctly. People are shocked when they just do the first step, and it doesn't work as well as they want it to. Well, would you be surprised if you put a tape in your VCR and nothing happened? Of course not — you know you have to plug it in, hook it up to the TV, put the TV on the correct channel and then press "Play." Then it plays. Not before. Well, it's the same with any system, including a marketing system. There are several parts that make the system work. And they do work — you just have to work with them. So you've got to be consistent.
- iii. **No completion.** This is another big reason people fail. They get all excited about marketing strategy, and start a whole

bunch of initiatives at once. They never give enough time to each one. They do all of them half way, then wonder why it's not working. If you have too many things going at once, none of them will be profitable. Stick to five things to start with. Concentrate on one at a time. Get that one working, and then start another. Once you have all five of those things going, then pick another five. Don't try to do too much at once.

- iv. **Procrastination.** Putting things off is a common reason marketing fails. "I'll get around to it tomorrow" has destroyed more businesses than you can imagine. Avoid making excuses like, "I don't have these tree or landscape evaluation forms made up, so I can't send out a letter," or "I don't know which neighborhoods are good, so I'll just wait," or "I don't know how to do this exactly right." So what if everything isn't perfect? It's much more important to do something than to wait for everything to be perfect — that won't happen. Do your best, give it a shot, then learn and improve. Procrastination is deadly. Don't wait — do it today. Do it right now. Pick out five actions, start on one, and get them going. Do not procrastinate.
- v. **Doing nothing.** This is the number one reason why marketing fails. The business owner or manager doesn't do anything — this is the killer. How can anyone possibly succeed if they don't do anything? They can't. So why do so many people do nothing? I think it's because they're afraid to fail. They think if they try something, they're going to fail. Most people are afraid of failure. The thing is, everyone fails. I failed many, many times before I learned these marketing strategies. Even now, when I try something new, sometimes it fails. It doesn't bother me. Most of what I do succeeds — I definitely make a lot of money from the successes, but I learn more from the failures. There's nothing to be afraid of. If I never failed, I would have never succeeded; it's that simple. Don't be a victim of not doing anything. Do something. The

main thing is do something, because doing nothing, you certainly will not be successful.

This book is about eliminating these five root causes of failure and giving you the tools to get your marketing up, running, and growing your business. The 99 strategies I've covered are based on my own experience and success in the tree care business, and I know they work.

If you need help, go to my website, *www.treecaresuccess.com*, and you should find plenty of help. Or shoot me a question, I'll be glad to help you out.

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SECTION 1: FIRST THINGS FIRST

MARKETING FUNDAMENTALS OF GROWING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

Marketing success depends on more than just the mechanics. There is an intangible side to marketing that needs planning, preparation, and ongoing education. And because marketing needs be happening throughout your whole company, success also relies on your own abilities as a leader and manager. Therefore, it is really important to talk about the fundamentals that make your marketing work.

This section is divided into four parts:

1. Know where you are, and where you are going.
2. Be a marketing expert.
3. Be a great manager.
4. Be a leader.

Every strategy listed in this section will set you up to win at marketing, now and in the future.

KNOW WHERE YOU ARE AND WHERE YOU ARE GOING

STRATEGY 1: HAVE A MARKETING PLAN.

The most important thing about marketing is to have a marketing plan. Most tree or landscape business fail because they do not have a plan or goal.

You should have a detailed marketing plan of what you want to accomplish and how you are going to accomplish it. Do not be vague about it. Do not state things like “I want to make more money than I can ever spend” or “I want to be rich” or “I want to make \$10,000 a month.” These are not plans. They are too vague, and they simply will not help you get there. Be specific.

As you go through this book, pick at least five items to start with and write them down. Write down how much you are going to make on each idea this week and this month. Then do a three-month plan and a six-month plan. Once you start using the first five ideas, and then add another five, then another.

Soon you should be using almost all of the money-making marketing strategies in this book. I say “most” because there might be one or two that are just not for you. That’s okay. Use the ones that

you are the most excited about to begin and then branch out. Your plan should include many goals.

Your plan does not need to be put into a computer. It can be handwritten on paper. Do whatever works best for you and will allow you to keep track.

The important part is that you do a plan every single week and keep on top of things. Here at our business we have a weekly meeting of all of our sales people and staff. It goes for two hours from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm. We meet to review our numbers. We meet to review any complaints. It gives us a time each week to review what happened last week, what is happening with each sales person, and any conflicts that may exist between office staff and sales people.

It keeps things running, but also keeps you abreast of where you have been and where you are headed. That little strategy will certainly increase your numbers. So it is a good thing to get started pretty quickly.

STRATEGY 2: PUT NUMBERS INTO THE PLAN.

Try to put your money goal in net to you, not gross. Gross is what you are used to thinking in, but net is obviously more important. If you run \$500,000 in gross, it sounds impressive. But if you only net \$35,000, its not very impressive compared to gross.

First examine your current numbers. Most tree or landscape owners or managers do not know how many clients they get a month. That is a deadly sin. You must know how you are doing currently. You should know how many new clients you get each month, how much you make from each client, how much it costs you to acquire a new client.

Here is an example: Joe is a fictitious tree or landscape business owner. He has been in business for two years. He gets most his clients from lowballing his prices and a few here and there from his Yellow Pages ad. He grosses \$25,000 a month. His average job

is \$500; therefore, he does approximately 12 jobs a week. His net is 50% of gross or \$3,000 a week.

Now Joe wants to double his net income in two months, triple in four months, and I do not blame him. Consider that Joe does not know any of our marketing secrets; he will have to get twice as many jobs to double his business. His goal then would be 24 jobs a week. He currently gets eight to nine jobs from his lowball, low cost advertising and two from his Yellow Page ads. But he gets 18 calls a week from his lowball ads and five from his Yellow Page ads. So he currently closes 50% of his prospects. If he does not learn any of my methods to improve his 50% closing ratio, then he will have to get 48 prospects to do 24 jobs. Here is his plan to get 48 prospects: 15 consumer messages, five Yellow Pages, five network newsletters, 19 prospecting newsletters, three from his referral program; that is 51 prospects. Well, that is three more than his goal.

You should have a weekly plan. Schedule 15 minutes out of one day to make up your weekly plan and see how you did the last week. Schedule this time and keep to it. Do not do any appointments during this time. Keep it strictly for planning. If you do only this and nothing else I've provided here, you could easily double your income in 12 months.

Now, let me say it again, plan weekly, scheduling maybe 15 or 30 minutes out of one day to make up your weekly plan, and then check and see how you did last week. Schedule this time and keep to it. And, yes, you can very easily double your income in 12 months just by doing this and knowing where you have been and where you are headed.

Of course, Joe did not know any of our secrets to double the profit of all his jobs. If he did both, double his profit on each job and double the amount of jobs, he would quadruple his business in less than two months.

Your weekly plan should include the following:

1. A goal for the total net income.
2. A goal for the number of new clients.
3. A goal for the number of repeat clients.
4. A goal for the number of referrals.

You should have an average net income from each client. You should know the number of prospects you will have to generate to reach your goal. You need to know that number. You should also have a detailed plan to generate the number of prospects you need.

Why do it alone? Go to treecaresuccess.com and sign up for a FREE 3-Month Membership Trial of my “Millionaire Maker” Inner Circle Program.

STRATEGY 3: DEVELOP YOUR UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION.

Your unique selling proposition (USP) is a precise statement of why your company is special. It should answer the prospect’s question: Why should I do business with you versus any or all of your competitors? And you can expand on it: Why should I do business with you versus any or all of your competitors or doing it myself? Don’t worry if you cannot answer that question now. I will go over how to formulate your unique selling proposition.

First, I want to tell you how powerful a USP can be.

There was this college student who had to pay his way through college somehow. So he and his brother decided to open up a pizza place. Brother No. 1 would run the place during the day and go to school at night, while Brother No. 2 would go to school during the day and run the place at night.

After a few months they were losing more money than they were making, and Brother No. 2 wanted to get out in exchange for an old beat up Volkswagen Rabbit.

Now Brother No. 1 owned the entire business. Not long after Brother No. 1 developed an USP and turned his company into a

multi-billion dollar company within a very short time. This was his USP:

Fresh hot pizza developed in 30 minutes or less, guaranteed.

Of course, that is Dominoes and that is how Tom's fortune was made. Now they don't even guarantee the 30 minutes, but that is irrelevant. They are so huge now and everyone knows them, that it is not hurting them. But the USP made them big, it made the difference.

The important point is that a USP is not complicated, it is simple. It does not promise all things to all people. It never mentions the homemade sauce from the old country or even good taste like mama makes. What it did was expand on an opportunity gap in the pizza delivery business. No one was quick. It used to take at least an hour or longer. And it addressed another concern — people hate cold pizza.

If you see an opportunity gap in your area, go for it. One of the biggest opportunity gaps is giving a small time window. Most people hate to wait around all day or even four hours. They are annoyed, but no one has offered them a different alternative. You can dominate your market if you hit an opportunity gap.

I have a landscape mentor of mine in Ohio, Marty Grunder of the Winners Circle and Grunders Landscape. He began to set up his appointments at 9:57, 10:57, and 11:57, and so on. This made him stand out in his market. He would be standing at the door at 9:56 or 10:56 waiting for the homeowner to come out once he rang the doorbell at that precise time. You may say well, that sounds a little silly, but what it did was set him apart in his marketplace. It got him talked about and an article in the paper about him for doing that one simple thing. So he drove in a lot of business.

Most tree care companies, and we all know this, just say, "I will be out there some time today" or they may say, "We'll be there some time this week." That is a very bad thing to do.