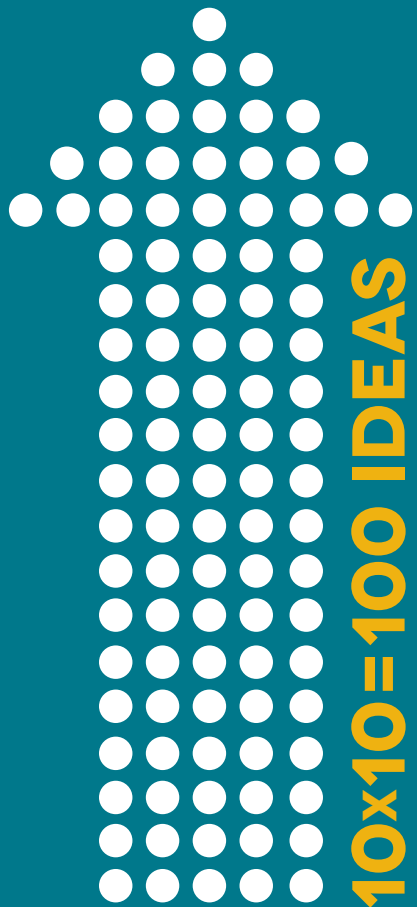


Marketing & Sales for the Market Research Firm:

THE TOP 10 TIPS FOR THE TOP 10 MARKETING TACTICS

100 KILLER MARKETING & SALES IDEAS FROM SEVEN DIFFERENT EXPERTS!



A PUBLICATION BROUGHT TO YOU BY



HARPETH
MARKETING

THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.

INTRODUCTION:



HARPETH
MARKETING
THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.

This eBook is a little different from the others!

Thank you for downloading this eBook, our fourth in a series on Marketing & Sales for firms in the Market Research industry. We hope you find some ideas, how-to's and maybe even a little inspiration in these pages.

Over the years, I have been lucky to have met a number of really smart, creative people who work in various aspects of marketing and sales... and I am incredibly fortunate that several of them volunteered to write a chapter for this eBook. They include:

- › Jill Addison, Online Video Producer
- › Paul Kirch, Actus Sales Intelligence
- › Dan Quirk, Quirk's Media
- › Clint Smith, Emma Email Marketing
- › Josh Wilkerson, Josh Wilkerson Design
- › Jerry Work, Work Media LLC

Their instructions for writing were pretty simple... "If you had to tell someone the ten most important ideas related to [insert tactic], what would they be?" That's it... and from that, they wrote six of the chapters inside. I am incredibly grateful for their help.

As you can tell from the title, the focus of this eBook is on the top tactics in sales and marketing today... on *executing* to achieve results! And whether you're an independent moderator or work for a Honomichl 50 shop, you'll be able to take advantage of many of the ideas laid out in this book.

Good luck and good marketing,

Steve Henke, President
Harpeth Marketing
Steve@HarpethMarketing.com



Marketing & Sales for the Market Research Firm:



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EMAIL MARKETING

Clint Smith, Emma Email Marketing


BY CLINT SMITH
Emma Email Marketing

Clint Smith is Co-Founder of Emma Email Marketing. Emma powers the stylish email marketing efforts of nearly 50,000 brands, businesses and non-profits. From intuitive features to unrivaled designs and award-winning customer service, Emma is much more than an email marketing tool - it's an email marketing experience. To learn more, go to www.myemma.com.



Email Marketing

Email marketing has been around for a long time now... and for good reason – it works! When it comes to effective email marketing, little things can make a big difference. Here are the Top 10 tips for getting the most from your next campaign.



1. Create a compelling subject line.

Make sure your subject line expresses the overarching theme and purpose of your message. Decide what you want the recipient to do as a result of reading your email, and begin drawing them toward that action from the start.

2. Use images to grab your readers' attention.

Of the people opening your email, about 80% are only scanning, not reading. (Gasp!) That means you need to show the big idea of your email without scrolling. Create a clear visual path to that big idea in the “above the fold” real estate.

3. Make sure you're using a valid “reply-to” address.

The point of a reply-to address is to allow your recipients, to you know, reply. A “noreply@” address not only feels impersonal, but it could cause you to miss out on valuable feedback coming from your audience. Don't forget, valid “from” lines are actually required by US CAN-SPAM laws.

4. Use first-name personalization.

Addressing subscribers by name in your emails is a simple, effective way to create a more personal feel to your message and boost your campaign's click-thru rates. Most email services make this an easy, automated process, so just make sure your email database has names to go with every address.

5. Don't over-format. Being consistent with your fonts, text sizes and line height will help keep a distracted eye from wandering. Use bolds, italics and font colors with purpose, but also use restraint. Over-formatting can not only make your email seem less professional, it can potentially trip the spam-filter wires of many email servers.

6. Provide a simple, honest “opt-out” to keep your reputation intact.

Send emails only to people who want to receive them, and offer the simplest opt-out process possible. (And please don't require subscribers to manually enter their email address as part of the process.) This will keep you CAN-SPAM compliant and ensure that you're showing your readers proper email respect.

Email Marketing Continued...

7. Don't forget your mobile audience.

43% of all email gets opened on mobile devices these days - that's more than desktop or webmail opens. And email is the top reported activity on smart phones, beating out even the act of making phone calls. Make sure your email template/HTML is mobile-optimized, and be sure to preview the mobile version of the campaign before hitting 'send.'

8. Provide a clear Call to Action. The purpose of a CTA is to give the audience something tangible to do – or to have – at a glance. Before you send, decide what you most want your audience to do next and then create a call-to-action button or link that makes it easy for them to do just that.

9. Increase your email's interactivity

with video. From 'how-to' screen casts to sharing best practices, video viewership is on the rise. Including video in your email, using a prominent image and a one-click "play" option, is a great way to create highly engaging, shareable content - and potentially boost your email click-through rates as much as 300%! That's right, 300%.

10. Split test your emails to ensure you're sending the best version. Short or long subject lines? Full thoughts or suspenseful teasers? Take the guesswork out of wondering which approach will win over more of your subscribers, and run a simple A/B split test that turns that wonder into clear, simple math. By testing alternate versions with a small group first, you'll be confident your entire audience is seeing - and responding to - your very best work.



SEND

Email marketing has been around for a long time... because it works!

CONTENT MARKETING

Steve Henke, Harpeth Marketing

Content Marketing

BY STEVE HENKE

Harpeth Marketing

For the most part, in our industry, we don't sell products. We sell and deliver our intellect (through the services we provide). And one of the most effective ways to market that intellect is to showcase it through "content marketing." That is, *sharing* your knowledge in a variety of ways to build awareness, to position you and your firm and to 'prove' that you have the necessary knowledge to deliver on what you say you can.

When you're ready to get into content marketing, here are our Top 10 tips...

1. The Golden Rule of Content Marketing: **Inform & educate... never sell.**
2. The delivery vehicles for content marketing can take numerous shapes, including... blogging, articles, case studies, white papers, eBooks, videos, podcasts, webinars, infographics, participation in online conversations and more. Consider them all as you build your content program.
3. When it comes to content marketing, the single most common question is, "What should I write about?" Certainly, much of your content will be subtly focused on the methodologies you espouse and the application of those methodologies (i.e. your services). Another popular category is the CEO-centric, forward-looking kind – the future of XYZ, coming changes in a certain industry, his/her vision and observations. In addition to those common types, there are numerous other ways to generate the content... interview a client or a notable industry expert, do a little research and report the results, write about your experience at the latest conference, report on industry news and ask employees or clients to guest-write for you.
4. To help with organizing your specific topics, create an **editorial calendar**. Start with broad categories and then break that down into multiple topics and sub-topics. Once you do that, then starting plugging them into a calendar and deciding on format. The goal is to be consistent in the delivery of your content.
5. If you do nothing else, **start with blogging...** then add other initiatives over time. Blogging is the easiest way to start, doesn't require anything extra to do (it's built in to your website) and it helps with website SEO.



Content Marketing Continued...

6. **Remember who you're creating the content for... and do it for them.** As you're developing the content, keep in mind these questions about potential readers... What kind of firm do they work for? What are their titles? What are their responsibilities? What kind of work are they doing with you? What keeps them up at night?... and write based on the answers.
7. It does you no good if people don't read or see what you've done... **so your content must be promoted;** once your content is ready and available – implement an appropriate promotional campaign. For a simple blog post, you might tweet about it and post it on LinkedIn. For a webinar, you might consider press releases, email and advertising. Also, make sure your online content is easy to share with simple social media/email icons.
8. **Test and measure** to see what works and what people want to read and what they're sharing with others... then do more of it!
9. **Some quick tips:**
 - › Don't cram one big topic into one very long article or blog post... it's OK to break it up into a 2 or 3-part series.
 - › Don't be afraid to re-purpose existing content... e.g. the content for several articles can be wrapped into an ebook; the content from your ebook can be reconfigured into a webinar, etc.
 - › People respond to 'lists' so use it in the titles. For example, "The Top 10 Reasons Why..." or "7 Innovative Way to..."
10. **Make most content freely available,** but make some of it available *only* after the viewer gives his or her name, company and email. For example, everyone should have unfettered access to your blog posts and online articles. But to attend your webinar or download your 20-page ebook, asking for their contact information is a fair trade. In this way, you also can use content marketing to build your sales database over time.

Because of the way that Content Marketing can build awareness for your firm and help to position you as a "subject matter expert," Content Marketing should be a cornerstone of your marketing efforts. But one, final piece of advice... once you start content marketing, don't stop. You need to make developing content a priority and stick to your schedule. You'll be glad you did.





BY JERRY WORK Work Media, LLC

Jerry Work is Co-Founder of Work Media LLC. Established in 2006, Work Media is an Internet marketing company that specializes in helping businesses to implement multi-pronged Internet marketing campaigns that include elements of website development, search engine optimization, paid search marketing, social media and email marketing.

To learn more, go to www.workmedia.net.

work media
Internet Marketing
www.WorkMedia.net

Search Engine Marketing



& SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Search engine marketing has come to encompass a lot of areas: organic search engine optimization, paid search (or “pay per click”), social media, and more. The rules of the game have definitely changed. Rather than some specific tactics that will likely be outdated tomorrow, following is a high level view of the Top 10 most important strategic factors you need to consider when promoting your website.

1. Write. A Lot.

In the early days of SEO, the focus was on “on-page” optimization – targeting page titles, copy, headers, etc. for their keywords. Then Google introduced tracking links that pointed to a website as another way of measuring a site’s ranking value. So, developers went to work on that. Well, we’ve come full circle. Once again, the *content* of a website is more important than links to a website (though links from well-respected sources still carry a lot of weight). To be successful at SEO/SEM, you need to frequently write and publish blog posts, articles, etc.

2. Be Specific in Your Keyword Targeting

Many website owners will want to have their websites rank high on Google for *any* search phrase that relates to their business. That is foolish thinking for two reasons:

- A.** How you *think* people search for your business may not be the way they *actually* search.
- B.** You can only optimize a single web page for a very small set of keywords.

An SEO campaign must be done relative to a specific set of keywords. Use Google’s keyword tool (<https://adwords.google.com/o/KeywordTool>) to give you an idea of what keywords you should target.

3. Google+

In a clever move to create momentum for its own social media platform, Google+, Google began letting search results be influenced by activity in the Google+ platform. In other words, the more people who plus (+) your site, the more people that will see it in search results. To sign up, visit <http://plus.google.com>.

4. Think ROI

Paid search is an excellent short term Internet marketing strategy because it can be used to immediately begin driving traffic to a website. SEO is a better long term strategy because over time it yields a higher return on investment – you do not have to pay for every click to your website. Using both you can drive traffic quickly as well as build momentum toward driving free organic traffic.



5. Don't be Junky

It is very difficult to fool Google. As soon as someone figures out a trick to fool the search engine into giving you a high ranking, Google engineers come up with their response and that strategy doesn't work anymore. You're better off if you play it clean.

6. Think Traffic. Not Rankings.

In reality, search engine rankings have become largely irrelevant. What one person sees on a particular search engine results page (SERP) is not the same as what another might see. Google or Bing will display search results that are most relevant to that individual based on where they live, what they have already looked at, etc. So, focus on getting as much traffic to your website as you can, regardless of what the ranking report shows.

7. Track Your Conversions!

Conversion tracking is the process by which you can associate conversions (the completion of a certain action) with specific visitors that arrive at your website. As a service provider, you can't track products sold on your website... you can, however, track that a form submission took place.

For example, with Google Analytics, you can measure the total number of website visitors and compare that to the number that downloaded your eBook by giving you their contact information. And each of those is a conversion.

8. Re-Cycle Your Content

A logical way to approach writing for Internet marketing purposes is to write in small chunks and then leverage those chunks into larger and larger works. For example...

- › Start by writing blog posts.
- › Blog posts can then be combined into articles.
- › Articles get combined into books, reports, or other more lengthy pieces of content.



If you follow the content repurposing process all the way to the end and actually write a book, you can use print-on-demand (POD) publishing to sell it online. Look at www.CreateSpace.com for additional information.

9. Learn How Google Works

Google's algorithms constantly change. The business of organic search engine optimization has been turned on its head recently as Google rolled out one update after another that completely changed search results, and what marketers needed to do to get those results. To stay up-to-date, visit sites like www.searchenginewatch.com.

10. Update Your Website Design

There's more to an attractive, modern website design than just a pretty exterior. A modern website design will be as cleanly coded as possible, using layers and cascading style sheets to move as much formatting code as possible out of the HTML. The reason for doing this is to maximize the amount of text content on the page and minimize the amount of code. The cleaner the code, the quicker and easier it is for Google to find the content and figure out what your website is about.

BUILDING YOUR SALES TEAM

Paul Kirch, Actus Sales Intelligence

Building Your Sales Team

No longer can research firms rely on a “build it and they will come” mentality to grow their businesses. Savvy business owners recognize the need to start, grow and manage a sales team to be successful. Here are my Top 10 tips for doing it the right way.

1. STRATEGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Whether you are adding to your sales staff or are developing a new one, it’s important to make sure you have a clear vision and strategy for sales. There are several factors which should be taken into consideration before initiating a search for that next salesperson.

✓ Performance targets and expectations
✓ Measuring and reporting, including use of a CRM tool
✓ Metrics to track... email activity, call activity, bids, pipeline, etc.
✓ Territories for each sales person
✓ Sales support... marketing, training, etc.
✓ Budgeting, particularly with traveling sales reps

2. RECRUITING AND HIRING

Once you’ve laid the groundwork, it’s time to start looking for your next hire. Before starting though, answer these questions:

What level of experience are you looking for?
Must they have relevant industry experience?
Are you expecting them to have established industry relationships?
Do they have a non-compete agreement that could be an issue?
What level of compensation is expected?
Role... Hunter or farmer?
Search... internal or through a search firm?

3. ON-BOARDING PROCESS

Often, a new rep with a stellar track record doesn’t perform as well as expected. A solid on-boarding process can help. Even the most experienced pros need to learn how to represent your company. Who will bring them up to speed? Is there a designated “trainer” or person to mentor them? Knowing these answers is a great way to start. Also...

- › Learn what worked for them at their previous organization and see if you can implement that into their role with your firm.
- › Set clear expectations, provide support and give them the opportunity to succeed.
- › New hires are generally energized and ready to make a good impression. Capitalize on that by helping them hit the ground running.

**BY PAUL KIRCH***Actus Sales Intelligence*

Paul Kirch is the Founder of Actus Sales Intelligence (formerly ActusMR). Through sales training, consulting, lead generation and executive sales recruiting, Actus Sales Intelligence provides the tools and assistance to help its client achieve growth and drive sustainability. Actus Sales Intelligence is a firm dedicated to helping its clients sell smarter.

For more information, go to:
www.actussales.com



BUILDING YOUR SALES TEAM

Paul Kirch, Actus Sales Intelligence

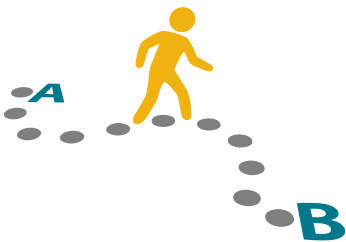
Sales Team Continued...

4. COMPENSATION

There are various forms of compensation in sales. Many believe that sales people are motivated only by money. Not really... but compensation does matter. Whatever your plan, it's critical to create an environment where your sales reps can earn more by selling more.

Base Salary	Base Salary – This varies greatly based on experience, previous salary history, total expected compensation and more. The range for inside reps is usually \$30-65k. For outside reps, it's generally \$50-110k.
Commission	Commission – There are two forms of commission commonly exercised within our industry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A percentage of Gross Profit – generally 7-20%. • A percentage of Revenue – 2-10% is common.

Commission percentages can also vary depending on other factors, like type of client (new vs. existing) or type of project – it's entirely up to you. Commission plans should help motivate, but it's important that they fit within the company's revenue and profit targets.

**5. TRAINING**

Training should happen with all new sales hires, whether they have 20 years of experience or 20 days. However, many firms don't have someone on board who can conduct such training. Here's a list of ways to achieve training success with existing resources:

Inside Resources	Leverage operational staff to train on products and services.
Team Meetings	Meet on a regular basis with your sales team to help develop an environment of sharing. Share successes and difficulties overcome with each other to explore what's working and what isn't.
Outside Training	Bring in an outside trainer on appropriate topics.
Shadowing	Have sales reps shadow a PM for a few days to help them understand the challenges in operations and how to address client concerns.
Call and Meeting Mentoring	Arrange time to sit in on calls or meetings to see how your sales reps are talking to clients and prospects.
Support	Ensure that your team always has a "go-to" person to bounce ideas or to get feedback (often a senior executive).
Books and Videos	Assign a book to read and then discuss it with them afterward.
Role Playing	In my experience, nothing works better to gain an understanding of strengths and weaknesses than role playing. Prepare good selling scenarios and record them for review and discussion.

BUILDING YOUR SALES TEAM

Paul Kirch, Actus Sales Intelligence

Sales Team Continued...**6. MANAGING**

In smaller organizations, there are often not enough resources to have a dedicated “sales manager,” so often, an operations manager steps in... not ideal. But no matter who is assigned to manage sales, it’s important that they understand the challenges faced by the sales team. Here’s a list to help develop your manager into a “sales leader:”



Attend sales training courses
Read sales management books
Attend client meetings
Attend conferences to network
Ask them to make sales calls
Find a sales leader mentor
Provide CRM training
Review processes frequently
Get sales team feedback

7. DEVELOPING

It’s often said that sales is the loneliest role within an organization. There are many reasons for this, but often, company culture drives much of it. Operations-focused companies, like those in marketing research, didn’t always have a need for a sales presence. It’s important to recognize this and make a conscious effort to help your sales team feel part of the company. Developing individuals starts with understanding what motivates them. Find out what truly drives them and find ways to enhance that and you’ll find that they grow professionally, but you can also keep them very loyal.

8. MENTORING

Mentoring your staff or developing a mentoring mindset is a powerful way to help develop your sales team and other staff. Can a mentor for a salesperson come from a background other than sales? Absolutely! In fact, some of the greatest mentors I’ve been exposed to came from backgrounds different than my own.

BUILDING YOUR SALES TEAM

Paul Kirch, Actus Sales Intelligence

Sales Team Continued...

9. MEASURING

Without sales goals and a means of tracking their performance against those goals, it's nearly impossible to accurately measure success. Monitoring weekly, monthly or even quarterly can provide you great insights into performance and areas you may need to improve. What should be measured?



Activity – calls and emails
Presentations – meetings, webinars, demos, etc.
Marketing touches – executed by sales team or marketing
Number of proposals/How long the proposals have been open
Revenue vs. Goals – Individual and overall company performance
Margins (if salespeople are allowed to adjust pricing)
Anything else which might impact your ability to reach the sales goals

10. SCALING

Let's take a look at a simple math example. Let's say a new rep has an annual sales target of \$500,000. Her base salary is \$75,000, with a commission of 4% of sales. The profit margin on services is 30%. If she hits her target (\$500k in sales), she is paid a total of \$95,000 (base + \$20k comm.). At a 30% margin, her firm grosses \$150,000 on \$500k in sales. Take out the comp for her and the firm clears \$55,000 from this new hire after year one.

So, if one sales rep is a good thing... then more is better... right? Maybe. But be sure to consider these things expanding your sales organization:

1.	How much of an investment in staffing are you willing to make?
2.	How long before you expect to see a return on your investment?
3.	Are you willing and able to reinvest some of those gains toward future hires?
4.	Does your client base and lead generation efforts support the idea of additional staff?
5.	What level of sales professional do you need? Hiring a team of inside sales reps can be less of an investment, but will the ROI be the same as outside reps?
6.	Setting annual goals for the company and for the sales staff allows you to determine where investment needs to be made.

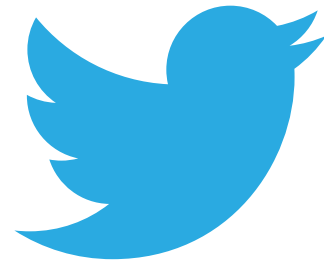
Social Media Marketing: Twitter

BY STEVE HENKE

Harpeth Marketing

Twitter has been described as a micro-blog... and with no more than 140 characters allowed per post, that makes perfect sense. So while the general rules of good blogging apply here, there are also some unique ideas around Twitter:

1. **Make sure you've got a complete profile...** fill out everything available. Make sure to use a good [professional] photo/image. Have a good descriptor below your image. Be sure to include your website URL. Make sure the 'brand' of your twitter site matches your company brand – use the built-in tools to enhance the background.
2. **What you tweet about is key...** pointing them to the content on your website is a good start. Also link them to usable content from other authors (as long as they're not competitors). Retweet posts you think are genuinely valuable. And please... no tweeting about where you are for lunch or what you did on vacation.
3. **Consider a tool like HootSuite to tweet,** to schedule tweets at future times, to post your Tweets on LinkedIn and FaceBook and as an easy place to view all the tweets and feeds that interest you. A limited edition version of [Hootsuite](#) is available for free.
4. Studies show the **best time for business tweets is 1-3pm,** Monday-Thursday.
5. **Hashtags (#s) are a way to categorize your tweets based on their content** (e.g. a tweet about research might be tagged with #marketresearch; a tweet about sales techniques could be tagged with #sales). These hashtags are then used by readers to find tweets on topics of interest to them. Make sure to tweet about and use the tags that would be of interest to your clients and prospects. Studies say use no more than 2-3 in any one tweet.
6. Because there are no real rules for hashtag creation and usage, to find the best hashtags for you to use, **become a Twitter follower of your best clients** and the top industry experts... and see what hashtags they're using.
7. Twitter is not just about adding followers and tweeting – at its best, it's about engaging. **Respond to tweets, re-tweet good tweets,** participate in online discussions (generally within a hashtag) and build an online reputation.
8. The old adage still works... **if you follow someone, there's a good chance they'll follow you back.** But, focus on quality, not quantity. And if someone completely inappropriate is following you... BLOCK them.
9. **Twitter has a new video component called Vine™.** If you've got something you can show in six (yes, 6) seconds – the max video length – then consider using this new tool.
10. **Like all marketing, measure your Twitter efforts.** The first level is 'connections' – how many followers do you have? Next is 'conversion' – how many are linking from the tweets to your website or blog? Finally, there's 'engagement' – how many are 'liking' and re-tweeting your tweets?





BY STEVE HENKE
Harpeth Marketing

Social Media Marketing: LinkedIn

From the beginning, LinkedIn was designed to be THE social media platform for business people. Today, with well over 150 million users worldwide (including over 75 million in the U.S.), they have achieved that goal. Here are the Top 10 tips for getting the most from it.

- 1. Make sure you've got a complete profile...** fill out everything available. Make sure you use a good photo/image/logo. That goes for your company profile, as well as your personal one. There are some additional categories – like ‘awards’ or ‘publications’ – make sure you fill them out, where appropriate.
- 2. Connect with all possible clients and prospects.** Aside from following up with people I've met at conferences, etc., the two most effective ways I've found for connecting are:
 - › Through LinkedIn Groups – connect with people who are in several of the same groups as you.
 - › Scrolling through ‘People You May Know’ and looking for those with whom you share a lot of the same contacts.
- 3. Don't use the generic invitation that comes with LinkedIn to connect.** Take a minute and craft a specific note that's appropriate to the situation. (e.g. “Nice meeting you at the MRA conference last week...” or “It looks like we're in several of the same industry groups together...”)
- 4. Post regularly** – to your profile and in appropriate groups. Post your tweets, links to new blog posts, links to other content on your website, etc.
- 5. You can join up to 50 groups...** but follow their rules; sign up to receive daily/weekly emails about group activities. Join LinkedIn groups focused on those where your clients and prospective clients might be. For example, if you do a lot of CPG-related research, you should join the [CPG SuperGroup!](#) (yes, it's a real group!).
- 6. Engage in conversations.** Scroll through the groups you belong to and look for those threaded conversations to which you can contribute. I didn't say ‘sell,’ but ‘contribute’... share your knowledge, show off your expertise. Your informative comments can not only help those who participate in the thread, but can also position you as a subject-matter-expert and will encourage others to connect with you. Better yet... start a really thought-provoking conversation!
- 7. Use a tool like Hootsuite to post updates,** to schedule updates and to include updates on Twitter and other social sites.
- 8. Don't forget about your company page...** make sure it's complete and that you post updates to it on a regular basis.
- 9. Take advantage of the built-in email tool called InMail.** You can send a note to up to 50 connections at a time (so if you've got 1000 connections, it's a little tedious). These notes arrive as regular emails in their standard email Inbox.
- 10. Like all marketing, measure your LinkedIn efforts.** The first level is ‘connections’ – how many followers do you have – both you and your company? Next is ‘conversion’ – how many are linking from your posts/updates to your website or blog? Finally, there's ‘engagement’ – how many are liking your posts/updates?

WEBSITES

Josh Wilkerson, Josh Wilkerson Design


BY JOSH WILKERSON
Josh Wilkerson Design

Josh Wilkerson is a graphic designer & web developer... and Founder of Josh Wilkerson Design. With his background in print design and web development, he successfully provides a wide range of services to his clients including identity and logo development, printed marketing materials and website design and implementation.

For more information go to:
www.joshwilkerson.com.

josh wilkerson
design



Websites

In today's "always online" world, your website is often your best salesman and almost always the first impression of your business to your clients and potential clients. Here are the Top 10 tips to get more traffic to your site and keep your users coming back.

- 1. Update Your Content Regularly**
 One way to ensure that search engines keep your site higher in their rankings is to keep your content updated. If your content is stagnant, don't be surprised if your site keeps dropping further and further down in the Google search results. A simple way to do this is incorporate a blog into your site. Blog posts can add value to your site because they provide a simple way to add content both for SEO purposes but also to engage with your users. A regularly updated blog will also keep your users coming back to your site and can give your brand credibility by positioning you as expert in your field.
- 2. Properly Name Your Images and Page Titles**
 Depending on how much control you have of your website, adding your company name into the title of your images can be an effective way to increase your search rankings. Also image searches (like Google Images) can be another effective way for users to find your site. If you have some ability to modify your page html code,
- 3. Google Analytics is Your Friend**
 A properly set-up Google Analytics account can provide valuable data about your web users. Among the many options you can view, one of the most valuable analyses is seeing which pages on your site attract the most views and how long your information is being viewed. That information can be used to determine which pages work best and which may need some revisions.
- 4. Put Your Best Foot Forward**
 Your homepage should have a concise statement about who you are and the services you provide. Imagine your website as a "brick and mortar" business establishment... your homepage should be the marquee outside that entices your users to come inside to "browse your merchandise."

the <title> tag is often one of the overlooked SEO tools. Your page title is the one of the first thing a search engine will see so having relevant keywords in your title can improve your chances of being found through organic searches.

WEBSITES

Josh Wilkerson, Josh Wilkerson Design

Websites Continued...

**5. Put Yourself in Your Clients' Shoes**

Another effective tactic to improving your website's usability is to try to imagine you are visiting the site for the first time. It can be difficult... often when we are too familiar with our site, because we know where all our content is and where to click. For better results, recruit some first-time visitors to browse your site and get their feedback.

6. Where's the Navigation?

Easy-to-use navigation is one of the most important features of a well-designed website. Make sure that your users can easily find the content they are looking for without having to "hunt." It is also important to make sure your navigation text can be quickly found. If your links have a background color that is too similar to the links themselves, there may not be enough contrast for the links to be easily read.

7. Be Accessible and Approachable

How many times do your users have to click before they find your 'contact' info? If you pay attention to your site analytics, like many sites, you may notice that your homepage gets the highest amount of traffic and your bounce rate (percentage of users that only view one page of your site and then "bounce" away to another site) is fairly high. Unless you are selling a product directly from your site – doubtful in MR – chances are that your users will need to contact you via email or phone in order to "seal the deal". So even if someone only looks at your site momentarily, make sure they don't have to hunt to find your contact info.

8. (Almost) Never Use Images As Text:

You are not doing yourself any favors by having headlines made up graphics (e.g. using a .jpg image as the headline). Doing this not only increases the page

size and load time for your users, but also takes away valuable, SEO content that will help search engines find and index your site. The exception might be when you're displaying a complex graphic or chart that contains text in the image. In that case, make sure to include as much of the embedded text into the image's "alt" tag so at least the code will contain the text and potentially allow the search engines to see it

9. Use the Right Color Palette

Studies have shown that specific colors used in a design will generate a defined perception or attitude by your audience. For example, blue tones create a calming effect, reds convey power and intensity, and yellow creates a cheerful, energetic tone. When developing your site, choosing the right color combinations are important, not only for maintaining consistency with your brand, but also in determining how you want to be perceived, even if subconsciously.

10. Whitespace Isn't Always "White"

Whitespace is the amount of space your site's design allows for "nothing". That is, the amount of margin between your headlines and your body copy or the space between your text and your images. Whitespace is an important concept when it comes to the design of your website and adding it is a great way to make your site more professional. But don't let the name fool you - it's doesn't have to be "white". If your site's background is gray, consider your "grayscale". Think of it as giving your text and images room to breathe and allowing the users' eyes a chance to focus on the important information presented on the page. Whitespace is key in presenting your information in a straight-forward way that gives your content the best chance of converting your search engine finders into long-term customers.

ADVERTISING

Dan Quirk, Quirk's Marketing Research Media

Advertising

Do you believe that display advertising works? Do you wonder how effective your advertising really is? Advertising, done right, works extremely well and there is plenty of research to back this up. That's why it is a multi-billion dollar industry. But it is just as true that advertising isn't a cure-all or a guarantee of success. Too often, advertisers in marketing research miss the mark because they don't really understand how advertising works and therefore create advertising that misses the mark.

Next time you contemplate a print or digital display advertising campaign follow these Top 10 tips for success.

1. Have a realistic objective.

In the marketing research industry, most advertising should focus on promoting a brand or specific product or service. Because the purchase decision-making process can be so long, ads that attempt to elicit calls to action don't usually work well. The objective should be for you to reach as many of your prospects on a repetitive basis with a message that clearly articulates what you are (or what your product or service is) and what makes you unique.

2. Make sure your ads match your objective

Many times I've seen ads that do a fantastic job of branding a company but the advertisers are disappointed because the ad didn't generate any phone calls. Not

only is getting an immediate call to action difficult in the marketing research space, but in almost every case the problem is compounded by the fact that the ad didn't even contain a call to action. In other words, the advertiser's objective and the ad copy did not match.

3. Include a headline.

According to research, 80% of readers will read your ad headline but only 20% will read your text. An ad with no headline is like throwing away 80% of your money.

4. Add text and images that make a great ad.

A.	Make sure the ad is memorable especially in the context of being surrounded by other ads. You want viewers of your ad to remember it even if they aren't currently in the market for your product or service.
B.	Don't get text-heavy. The ad should provide quick, clear information.
C.	Don't be clever just for the sake of being clever. If a reader can't easily see the connection between your ad and the message, you've only confused them.
D.	Write the ad for the prospect. The copy should not be what you want to say, but instead it should be what will inspire customers to do business with you.
E.	Make sure the ad leverages the medium in which it appears. E.g., a reader will likely spend a minute on a print ad but less than 5 seconds looking at an online ad.



BY DAN QUIRK
Quirk's Marketing Research Media

Dan Quirk is the V.P., Marketing and Innovation for Quirk's Marketing Research Media which promotes the understanding, use and value of marketing research through a suite of free products including a monthly print and digital magazine, e-newsletters, mobile apps, supplier directories and the industry's most comprehensive website.
For more information, go to:
www.quirks.com



ADVERTISING

Dan Quirk, Quirk's Marketing Research Media

Advertising Continued...

5. Make sure your ad campaign is integrated.

The most effective advertising campaigns are those that catch your audience at different times and in different ways – in print, online, e-mail, etc. It is a simple way to reinforce your message and make it more memorable.

6. Make sure you have reach.

Purchasing media with a large reach allows you to reap the benefits of advertising more quickly. In addition, the cost per reach is often significantly cheaper.

7. Make sure your reach is targeted.

Although it is important to have the largest possible audience, that reach must also be targeted. Ensure that you are advertising in the right place by looking at your existing customers and matching their profile to the media you've chosen.

8. Include frequency.

Frequency is the number of times a prospect sees your message in a given time frame. Research shows that frequency is important if you want your message to resonate and be memorable. Idea: You are better off running small ads more frequently than larger ads with less frequency.

9. Give advertising time to work.

Marketing research products and services are not an impulse buy. Numerous people can be involved in the buying process – which can take several months to a year or more. Advertising works slower than most people realize but when you understand this and act accordingly you will reap long-term benefits. Generally speaking, you should be willing to commit to 12 to 18 months, assuming your media matches your prospect profile.

10. Measure and refine.

Because advertising's influence is often subtle, it can be difficult to accurately measure its effectiveness. Many people often don't recall when or where they first heard of a product or service, so simply asking callers where they got your company name is not enough. Consider measuring your brand awareness every couple of years to see if it is growing. You may also get existing clients to provide feedback on your ad materials.



PRESENTATIONS

Steve Henke, Harpeth Marketing

After months of emails and phone calls, you've finally been invited to deliver a capabilities presentation to a key sales prospect. Are you ready? Do you have a dazzling presentation and compelling talking points?

Or are you like too many in our industry with way too many PowerPoint slides, way too many bullet points per slide and a plan for reading each and every one of them to the audience? UGH!

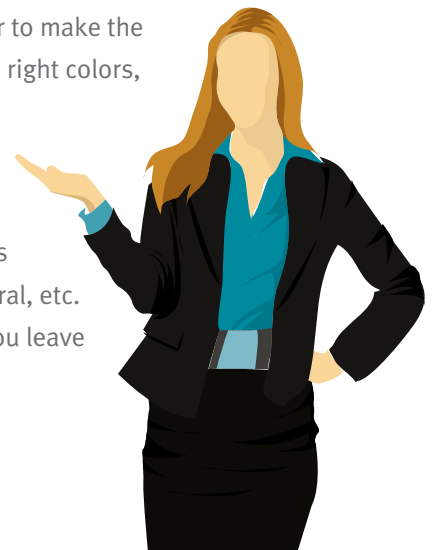
Don't be that guy (or girl)... stand out from the others... put on a presentation that's so good that the only possible outcome is for the prospect to hire your firm! Here are the Top 10 tips to help...

1. Less is more – less slides, less words per slide, less time presenting... and more time conversing.
2. Some layout fundamentals for PowerPoint slides:
 - › Lots of graphics, lots of white space, less text – *show it*, don't write it
 - › When using text, follow the '4 x 4 rule.' No more than 4 bullet points per slide... no more than 4 words per bullet point. Yes, it forces you to edit!
 - › Only one main point/topic/idea per slide
 - › Dark letters on a light background are easiest to read
 - › Be subtle with 'animation'
 - › Make sure your Copyright is on it
3. When creating your presentation, start with a simple text outline... only when that is done, should you start creating the slides.
4. **Don't read from the slides... ever!** The presentation is there to support what you are talking about so that you remain the "star of the show" (and people look at you and not the screen). And don't just present... engage; ask questions, get audience feedback. Ideally, you're not just presenting facts, you're telling a story.

Presentations

BY STEVE HENKE
Harpeth Marketing

5. Don't give out copies of the presentation beforehand... if you do, the audience will read it and skip ahead while you're speaking and not pay attention.
6. Got an 'About Us' slide to kick-off the presentation? Get rid of it or move it to the end. Your audience already knows about you – they've done their homework, been to your website and seen your LinkedIn profile. To really engage the audience, start your presentation with a general 'problem' that all prospective clients have. Why? It gets the audience nodding their head with approval and gives them a quick validation that you understand what they have to deal with. And because a little later in the presentation, you can show them how you solve it!
7. *How do you get to Carnegie Hall?* Practice, practice, practice!
8. These guidelines also apply to virtual presentations... webinars and remote sales presentations. But in addition, you need to really know the technology and have a back-up plan if the internet goes out (I promise you ... it will!).
9. Make sure the PowerPoint slides are branded for your firm... get a designer to make the template look right. Use the right colors, fonts and logo.
10. Regarding leave-behinds... you must have business cards – but everything else is optional. Most sales collateral, etc. will get tossed the minute you leave their offices.



MARKETING WITH VIDEO

Jill Addison, Online Video Producer



BY JILL ADDISON

Online Video Producer

Jill Addison is an Online Video Producer who helps service providers make a personal connection with prospective clients through short online videos. She specializes in coaching her clients for a natural performance, even if they're afraid to be on camera.

To learn more, go to www.jilladdison.com.



You've probably been unable to avoid reading articles about using online video to grow your business. Video marketing is a hot topic right now... and there are some very good reasons why. Here are my Top 10 reasons how video will help grow your business:

1. SEO. When you add new video content on your website consistently, you will begin to rank higher and higher with search engines. That's because you're combining two things Google loves: fresh new content and video.
2. Online video *engages* prospective clients with your message, which helps you convert them to clients. This added engagement also keeps people on your website longer, increasing the likelihood that they'll visit more of your site.
3. YouTube, where you can set-up your own "video channel," is the 2nd biggest search engine in the world. You need to be there.
4. People don't read like they used to... they would much rather watch a video. In our entertainment-centric world, people want to enjoy consuming business information the way they enjoy consuming other information in their free time: online and through video.
5. When you engage more of people's senses, they remember more. With the written word, you're only engaging the visual senses. With podcasts, you're only engaging the hearing. But with video you engage both senses, visual and auditory, and that makes your message more powerful and more memorable.

Marketing with video continued...

6. People don't buy based on *logic*, they buy based on *emotion*... and well-done videos can tap into those emotions. They can combine music, human presence and the power of storytelling to engage people on a deep personal and emotional level to help them make buying decisions.
7. Whiteboard animated videos are a new, unique type of video where the viewer literally follows a hand as it draws on the board. They are engaging because the viewer watches words and shapes take form and meaning before their eyes, essentially involving them in the creative process.
8. At the heart of it, business is about relationships... and video helps you to make a personal connection with your prospective clients. After watching your video, they'll feel like they've met you personally.
9. Lighting is one of the things that separates the amateurs from the pros when it comes to video production. If you get this right, your videos will look more professional. Here's a simple lighting trick that you can add to your toolkit, and it's free:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWH1HDEqUw>

10. Another key to great videos is audio. Ironically, if you have good clean audio, it makes your video look better. Weird, huh? Learn a handful of essential audio tricks that will improve the audio in your videos:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilonCbyQbHo&list=PLE9F520AD39B3B75E&index=22



ABOUT HARPETH MARKETING



HARPETH MARKETING

THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.

ABOUT HARPETH MARKETING

At Harpeth Marketing, our goal is simple... to help our clients put in place marketing & sales programs and systems that help to grow revenue. We do this through a variety of outsourced marketing services and consulting programs.

Outsourced Marketing Services provide an effective and stress-free way to help build awareness across the industries you serve, effectively position your firm in the marketplace and develop relationships with prospective buyers to help generate revenue... all for less than the cost of a full-time employee. We work with you to plan the efforts, then we execute & manage them and report back to you on a monthly basis.

When outside expertise and experience is necessary, we provide a full range of **Consulting Services** that are tailored to meet your specific needs... from full-blown marketing & sales plan development to audits, competitive analyses and ongoing coaching.

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