

## AdvanceMe's Small Business Tip: March 18, 2009

### The Simple Objectives of Marketing

Marketing your small business does not have to be complicated. In fact, the objectives of marketing your small business boil down to three simple tasks:



1. **Generate Awareness.** Your business needs specific branding to separate from the pack. Your customers need to know where to find you and why they should seek out your business in the first place. You want to promote your core values and make connections with like-minded individuals. You need to inform the public of your products and services, and how they benefit consumers. You need to share your location, buying procedures and competitive edge.
2. **Move the Sales Process.** There are many steps in a buying process, and your marketing needs to speak clearly to buyers involved with each step. From pre-qualification into qualification, general interest into an evaluation situation, from a purchase decision into distribution or delivery, each step of the sales process can be guided, prodded or jump-started with carefully constructed marketing.
3. **Communicate.** Today's consumers are often seeking a range of information before making a purchasing decision. As a business owner, you want to offer access to the information that helps your customers make a favorable buying decision. Communicate how you understand and address their concerns and do all you can to minimize risk. Allow them a means to talk to you and let them know that you care. Become an active part of the community you service.

Each marketing effort should support one or more of these three basic objectives. Sometimes it makes sense to focus on one objective to improve your return on investment. For example, if you want to spread the word about your business, a simple brochure or one-sheet could do the trick. Keeping the focus simple, you may be able to reduce your initial investment and improve your return rates.

You can also combine objectives, such as increasing brand awareness while also moving customers closer to a sale. For example, an email campaign could target consumers in your sweet spot, be properly branded and contain product information and details of a specific sale. By understanding who you are marketing to and why, your messaging becomes clear (e.g., "We have what you need for less").

Though marketing any business can become very complex, by remaining focused on the three basic purposes of marketing a business owner can feel more secure that each step taken is a solid step forward.