



## Developing marketing Strategies



### Marketing tips

Here are some helpful techniques, tips, and tricks-of-the-trade so you can better market your course or special event.

- Tip 1: Create an intriguing title
- Tip 2: Marketing is simply another form of education
- Tip 3: Consider a marketing campaign
- Tip 4: Be welcoming
- Tip 5: Items in a series aren't random
- Tip 6: Be learner-centred, not lecturer-centred
- Tip 7: Marketing by committee doesn't work
- Tip 8: Diversity in marketing does work
- Tip 9: Whimsy and fun are important
- Tip 10: Lead with your greatest asset
- Tip 11: Have a "call to action"
- Tip 12: Consider learning levels
- Tip 13: "One size fits all" or "one size fits one"?
- Tip 14: Word of mouth; word of mouth; word of mouth
- Tip 15: There's a reason they call it "popular culture"

#### TIP 1

##### CREATE AN INTRIGUING TITLE

One simple way to create an interesting title is to change a statement into a question. Instead of "*How to Run for Public Office*," make the title, "*How Do I Run for Public Office?*" or "*Have You Thought about Running for Public Office?*" If you choose not to use a question, use an action verb: Create, design, explore, investigate, search, determine, delve, think, ponder, wonder, consider, imagine, pretend, dream. The English language contains more than 900,000 words, nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. Use them. Play with them. Try words you don't

normally use. Get in a subjunctive mood. Use an active voice. Rediscover gerunds.

Use a colon to separate two parts of a title. The colon affords an opportunity to have something "professional" on one side of the colon, some leavening humour on the other; something catchy paired with something wonky; something severe with something whimsical.

#### TIP 2

##### MARKETING IS SIMPLY ANOTHER FORM OF EDUCATION.

Marketing your course or event is an opportunity for potential students to learn more about the topic in advance. Even a little information in advance can help get people informed and tip them off to what level you're at and what level they're at.

Even if someone cannot participate in the actual program, they have learned something new from your marketing. They can search out more information on their own, attend another presentation in the future or determine this is not for them. Each news release, article, ad, or announcement is an educational opportunity in a sense, not just to build awareness, but to share more information. Over time, people can become a little more knowledgeable, even if they never attend the program.

#### TIP 3

##### CONSIDER A MARKETING CAMPAIGN

The purpose of a marketing campaign is to build awareness and an audience. It is also developmental and educational - more opportunities to inform and educate. You can create a campaign to reach potential students multiple times in multiple ways through multiple learning channels. Make it a



## Developing marketing Strategies

campaign, not a one-shot attempt to get the word out.

### **TIP 4 BE WELCOMING**

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All too often, we don't "invite" and "welcome" students to our course programmes or events. It's not that we don't use the words; it's that the warm, welcoming feel isn't there. A string of declarative sentences, while informative, by definition isn't an invitation. We need to invite and welcome people by the tone and tenor of our words and our creativity. To our students, "inviting" and "welcoming" translate to excellent customer-centred service.

### **TIP 5 ITEMS IN A SERIES AREN'T RANDOM**

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If you're listing bullet points, enumerating principles, outlining important points, or stringing together a lengthy narrative list of items in a series, there's a secret to it. Put the most important, most powerful, strongest items first. Lead with your strength. Put weaker material (but still worthy of inclusion) in the middle. End with a fairly strong item, but not the strongest.

### **TIP 6 BE LEARNER-CENTRED, NOT LECTURER-CENTRED**

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If you approach each event from your students' point of view, that is a "marketing" approach. Developing a "learning plan," rather than a "teaching plan," is a simple way to help frame your perspective. Modern educational marketing is learner-centred.

### **TIP 7 MARKETING BY COMMITTEE DOESN'T WORK**

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If you want everybody to get a participation ribbon and feel good about themselves, then create a large marketing committee. If your goal is to creatively market your course

programme, campus, or facility, that's a different thing entirely. In that case, one person, a dynamic duo, maybe a very small team of 3-5 people is what works. Large committees rarely create memorable and effective marketing.

### **TIP 8 DIVERSITY IN MARKETING DOES WORK**

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Diversity in marketing is essential. Having people with diverse backgrounds involved in marketing brings diverse perspectives, experiences, and ideas to the planning process. It also helps to ensure that diverse audiences are considered and addressed right from the start. Finally, divergent perspectives and experiences are how true creativity comes about. When two or more seemingly-different things are combined in new, exciting, different ways, that's when creative marketing flourishes.

### **TIP 9 WHIMSY AND FUN ARE IMPORTANT**

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Whimsy and fun are not only appropriate and acceptable in marketing and education, but highly effective strategies. Some of the most creative and effective marketing - or literature (Shakespeare, Chaucer), or politics (Lincoln), or - pick your field - of all time has used humour or whimsy to get their message across.

### **TIP 10 LEAD WITH YOUR GREATEST ASSET**

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The idea is to lead with your strength, your greatest asset, your best marketing point, most important principle, the primary learning focus. Determine what your "big gun" is. Then use it. Repeatedly.

### **TIP 11 HAVE A "CALL TO ACTION"**

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A call to action can be as simple as inviting and welcoming people to participate. A call to



## Developing marketing Strategies

action can be implied or overt. Learning is often implied for example, but have you ever considered actually inviting people to learn? A call to action is another way learners can get involved in, and be responsible for, their own learning.

### TIP 12

#### CONSIDER LEARNING LEVELS

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At what level is your audience of learners? At what level are you? How does one know? Why is this important? When you plan a marketing strategy to promote a new course or event, how do you know that the material you've prepared fits the level the learners are at? How do you know you're not "over their heads" or presenting material they already know? You should ask them first. You can ask them ahead of time, with a survey on-line, or you can just chat to people before a class. The idea is to be learner-centred, not lecturer-centred. Start with the level your learners are at and go from there.

### TIP 13

#### "ONE SIZE FITS ALL" OR "ONE SIZE FITS ONE"?

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One of the advantages of new learning and teaching technologies is that they can help us customise learning. The days of "one size fits all" are over. Today, learners want and expect customised learning with "one size fits one."

### TIP 14

#### WORD OF MOUTH; WORD OF MOUTH; WORD OF MOUTH

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Virtually every course, no matter what the field, has shown that the primary way people

attend to something is via word of mouth. We tend to believe something when we hear it from a family member, friend, neighbour, or colleague rather than read about it. However, this doesn't mean you shouldn't advertise your courses or services. Word of mouth and the "product" in combination create the "buzz" that makes students take notice and take some kind of action. Part of creative educational marketing is creating a "buzz." If people are telling others about the great presentation they've seen or heard, that in itself is educational. Some component of the lesson is being spread via word of mouth and more people want to learn about it.

### TIP 15

#### THERE'S A REASON THEY CALL IT "POPULAR CULTURE"

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It's important to keep up with "popular culture." Although many in education denigrate it, another word for "popular culture" is "life" - it's what people are doing, reading, buying, visiting, talking about, thinking about, and experiencing. If you don't pay attention to popular culture, you miss out on references your learners use and miss opportunities to reference things you can use as hooks to hang potential students on. If you come across as elitists who think popular culture is something below you, you risk being seen as irrelevant.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

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- [Learn Direct](#)
- [Marketing and advertising techniques](#)
- [Principles of Marketing](#)