



FROM START-UP TO STAND OUT

THE ENTREPRENEUR'S MARKETING PLAYBOOK

4 WAYS TO “WOW” YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

by Brent Thompson, Founder & Chief Spearheader of Spearheader Creative

There is a running theme among the people I speak to about their start-ups and existing businesses: “how to create that special ‘**WOW**’ factor to woo target audiences”. We live in a time of hyper-competition – and the need to stand out in your own industry is evergreen. The old-school way of thinking had businesses focused on the notorious 4 P’s: product, price, placement, and promotion. While those will always have foundational relevance in marketing, there is still a need to get attention beyond the norm; how to truly stand out. Here are a few thought-starters for you to consider with the management of your brands:



1 Personal Touch – It will never go out of style and it really can't be replaced by AI... *I think*. Your ability to make a personal connection with a customer, and even your own vendors, REALLY matters. *But, how do you do that?* Think about what you would do if you hosted a really fancy dinner at your house: you'd plan an exquisitely mind-blowing meal, spruce up the inside and outside of your home, create a perfect playlist, arrange fresh flowers, light candles, have a signature cocktail... you get the idea. All of those things running through your brain go in to making your guests' experience extraordinary, right? You don't want them leaving your party saying, "Meh. I've been to better." The same applies here: *taking pride* in what you do will always be noticed by your customer – and it gives you something to talk about. But, *personal touch* is taking the next step in going above, and beyond, expectations... it's being real; it's being *you*. Extend the care to your customer by having authentic, thoughtful conversation focused in human connection – and less focused in exclusively metrics, presentations, and deadlines. This "humanizes" your brand and, quite frankly, gives the impression of you, and your work, a lasting effect.

2 Be Unexpected – We're all used to the same old stuff; the way it's always been done. What happens when you rearrange the living room? All of a sudden, you're looking at things from a different perspective. Your customers, ultimately, love this. *But, how do you put it in to practice?* Try exercising the art of "surprise & delight". People like the unexpected – when it happens in a positive way: offer a unique incentive on a special day for a select group of fans out of nowhere or reward a great customer with a discount on their purchase just for being awesome. These recognitions go a long way in building up that intangible bond between brand and customer – because it's humans who are really doing the connecting.

3 Radical Thought – Bringing the "WOW" comes from wild ideation. One of my favorite conversations starters begins with, "What if...". While the rest of your business is busy being busy, it's important to manufacture those jaw-drops and head-turns to jolt the social system into taking a new look at your company. Public relations firms are paid to create the "WOW" for you, but if you can't afford that expense, think about what you can do on a shoestring that ensures people will pay attention to you; be willing to soundboard with people who won't squash your "what if" spirit, but who will help you shape your vision. That radical idea could very well be the thing that helps you level up.

4 **Howdy, Partner!** – One of the best ways to ‘**WOW**’ is to grow your audience into a new frontier – and one of the best ways to do this is to find a partnering person, business, or organization that aligns with your brand’s goals. We know there is power in numbers and, oftentimes, partnering can multiply *both* entities messaging and campaigns. Let’s face it; we need each other! Strike up a new conversation with an industry influencer, charity, or for-profit business that you believe you can benefit from combining energy with... and vice-versa. These relationships build a bigger tent for your brand and create new discussions around your products or services. Because we know what happens when potential audiences gets organically excited about what we have to offer, we are all trying to get noticed, to stay “top-of-mind”, and to create authentic engagement no matter what business we might be in. Invite a partner in to your boat and see how much farther you can get.

Can we add to this list? Of course! As I say all the time, “Everything is an *experiment* until it becomes *science*.” So often, we become guilty of working “in” versus working “on” our businesses. Let these topics kickstart the next great idea in your marketing journey. But, if you need some help or just want to soundboard things out, let’s talk! Who knows what kind of ‘**WOW**’ will happen!

Ready to talk about your next big project?



Let's talk about it!