



5 Ways To Ensure Failure

How to make sure you fail in today's online marketing environment

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How did your first quarter end up?

Well - how did your first quarter end up?

There's certainly been a lot of talk over the last three months about the economy, and its effect on marketing teams - and ultimately our sales efforts. If you're anything like me, your email box is full of notes from people telling you how to make the most out of this economy. I oughta know - I've offered a few myself.



But I've been doing some research for a project - and in combination with a few other things - it really struck me that there's a few things we can do now to really ensure that we fail. Yeah, there I said it. I think it's time we just gave up - and really kept our head down till this whole economy, recession thing blows over. I think we should just wait with our hand out until we get our bailout. Sounds like a plan?

I mean this whole internet thing is just a fad right? Like CB Radio, and Laser Discs before it. This is the time when we make sure that we close up our doors and wait till it gets better. If we just sit back and watch - we will really guarantee that the recession and the economy will just blow over. So, because it's the new quarter - and maybe we can take a quick collective breath - here's a few "modest proposals" for you to ponder:

#1 Stop Updating Your Web Site & Landing Pages

I mean really - our web site performed well when we launched it. The content is great. We finally got to number 162 on Google for our keywords - let's not mess that up. I mean The Aberdeen Group just [released a study](#) where they interviewed 300 businesses - and they split them into three groups. The first group were what they called "Best-In-Class". These companies were averaging 146% average return on their marketing investment. The other two were, as you might expect, lower. These "best-in-class" companies updated their web site once a day or more. Once a day or more? Man, that sounds like a lot of work. Further, Marketing Sherpa relates tweaking landing pages to a 40% increase in conversions. Even more work. And, I just read that Marketing Sherpa report - and whew was it long... I mean if you're looking for ALOT of information you can [purchase it here](#).

#2 Don't dive deep into social media - It's a fad

Some experts like the IAB are saying in their [Outlook 2009 Report](#) that Social media now exceeds television in its reach - and it's only growing. But let's face it - who's got time to really worry about whether our brand is being discussed across Twitter and Facebook. And, really, even though it's free (other than our sweat equity) do we really want to go to the effort of creating a Facebook presence, or encourage our teams to start

connecting with a community. I can't even get my college friends to stop tagging me with toga party pictures. I mean - really. I just re-read [Seth Godin's Tribes book](#) and just can't be bothered to even try.

3. Stop experimenting - Now's the time to play it really safe

In today's market it's best to make sure you're putting your head down and letting everybody fail around you. You'll be so much better off - really. Stop trying small marketing experiments that may teach you something about your audience. And, make sure you don't take the time and effort to implement good measuring techniques - because you really need to wait until the market turns around before you invest in a good way to measure your marketing success. After all, there's no ROI in investing in a measurement capability now.. Right?

4. Make sure that you don't call your customers right now.

No matter what you do - don't try to engage your customers for new products and services right now. I mean never-mind that the [CMO council found](#) that a third of its respondents said that "customer insight and retention" were among its top executive mandates. That's only a third... That's less than two thirds right? All these customers are feeling just as bad as you. So, it's best to make sure that you just let that sleeping dog lie and make sure you're not engaging. Even if you're development teams are launching new products or services - it's best to just wait until the economy turns before you start trying to encourage and upsell your existing customers.

5. Let your Web site just be a brochure - People will find you.

Whatever you do, don't put the effort into transforming your web site into an online marketing engine - and develop the capability for closed loop marketing. I mean, come on... Closed Loop? That sounds so - closed and Web 1.0'ey.... Never mind that Aberdeen in their Customer-Centric Marketing study found that companies that adopt a closed loop process are more than three times likely to generate a greater than 50% return on marketing investment. Now is the time to make sure your just maintaining the status quo. Don't spend on anything - especially on improving your web site.

In short - we should just recognize that anything we do now will just have to be re-done once the economy gets better. So, really, why should we put the effort in now - especially when budgets are so tight and the the executives are looking at marketing with such a critical eye. I mean didn't somebody say that "[flat is the new growth](#)"

Anyway... I was going to make this a top ten list - but I just quite frankly couldn't muster the effort.

Hope this is helpful for you!!