

6 Laws of Advertising Success

1. Use One Message: A high response rate ad usually conveys a single message. NordicTrack's message of the "World's Best Aerobic Exerciser" was simple and compelling. Your advertising needs to quickly communicate its core message in 3 seconds or less. If you are fearful and overwhelmed by technology what computer book do you buy? "DOS for Dummies" began a best-selling phenomena because its message was easily understood and to the point.

2. Add Credibility: It has become human nature to distrust advertising. Claims need to be real and credible. Roy H. Williams; best-selling author of the "Wizard of Ads" says, "Any claim made in your advertising which your customer does not perceive as the truth is a horrible waste of ad dollars."

NordicTrack added enormous credibility from a University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse research study, ranking the cross-country ski exerciser first in the areas of weight loss, body fat reduction, and cardiovascular fitness. Ivory soap's advertising success was attributed to its credible statement that ivory soap is the 99-44/100% pure.

3. Test Everything: Large businesses have a greater margin to waste capital and resources without testing advertising. Small businesses do not have the luxury. Use coupons, codes and specials to measure the headline, timing and placement of your ad. Test only one item at a time and one medium. Testing can be as simple as asking every customer for several weeks how they heard of your business.

4. Be Easy to Contact: Every single brochure, box, email and all company literature should have full contact information including: website and email address, phone and fax numbers, and company address. It seems simple but is forgotten by most companies. At NordicTrack, every box a ski machine went into had full contact information and the "World's Best Aerobic Exerciser" tagline. Be everywhere.

5. Match Ads to Target: Successful advertising speaks to one target market only. At NordicTrack, our ads were tailored to each market. An ad in a medical publication, preached the cardio-vascular benefits of cross-country skiing to heart patients. Ads in women's magazines discussed the weight-loss and calorie burn from cross-country skiing. Focus the message to the target group.

6. Make Them Curious: Successful advertising does not sell a product or service. NordicTrack's ads sold the free video. Once a potential customer watched the video, they contacted the company for more information. And we closed millions of sales. Create ads that generate interest and make the customer want more information.

Having a poor response is not the medium's fault. Often the problem is the message. Advertising is not a quick fix solution to marketing a business. It takes planning, testing and constant exposure to have an impact on your small business. Done correctly, advertising can be a winning strategy to small business success.

