



How can You Recession Proof Your Marketing?

By Patrick Zuluaga, [PMZ Marketing](#)

You realise that marketing is vital for your business to survive this economic downturn. Now more than ever you need to use marketing to help you sustain and grow your business, however, you need to cut costs and marketing expenses does seem like an easy way to achieve this!

You are not alone. Ever business is grappling with this challenge at one level or another. What do you do? How can you get the right balance? How can you recession proof your marketing?

Well the answer is simply and obvious. Stop wasting money on marketing programs that do not bring results! So many businesses spend on marketing activities without a clear business objective and the ability to track results. Every marketing dollar spent must be scrutinised. You need to get smart about how you are marketing. Smart marketing is about maximising your business results in the most cost effective manner. You do not need mega-bucks to apply smart and effective marketing for your business. In fact, if you follow my guidelines you will achieve Better Marketing Results on your own marketing activities.

Here are four rock-solid points to ensure your marketing will become recession proof:

- 1. Focus on your Ideal Customer** – Develop a customer profile with detailed descriptions of their drivers and buying processes. You must completely understand your customer and their buying process to allow you to formulate marketing messages that are relevant and will resonate with them. Your message must paint an emotive picture of your customer enjoying the benefits of your product or service.
- 2. Apply Multi-Channel Marketing** – At any one time you must have a least four marketing channels delivering results for your business. Yes, you read that right **four** not **one**. You might be thinking to yourself that implementing one is already a struggle let alone four. The secret has long been discovered by successful business entrepreneurs. You need a business marketing system that will function efficiently as your business development engine. Consider the following four marketing channels to start with:
 - a. Referral Marketing** – We all know this, however, what we need to do is go full-throttle on [referral marketing](#) as a driver for new business. Look at implementing referral programs with incentives and rewards. Rewards can be informal such as flowers, chocolates or a dinner for two for referrals that generate business. At the very least a thank you card would be appropriate even if the referral did not turn to new business. Formal programs like affiliate referral strategies are 'Pay for Performance' paying commissions only on successful referral sales.



- b. *Networking or Personal Selling*** – Everyone in your business must be able to network effectively whether in a social and or business function. Make sure all staff is familiar and comfortable with your 'Unique Benefit Statement'. Formulate your 'Unique Benefit Statement' from your target customer's point to view "What's In It For Me?" The value of networking is in your opportunity to establish relationships that expand your market reach beyond your immediate networking circle.
 - c. *Email Marketing*** – I am not talking about blast or broadcast emails that have spawn the term SPAM. Don't be one of these. Properly implement [email marketing](#) is focused on your recipient. It must deliver relevant and interesting content for your target audience. Understand your customer and use their profiles in defining what they want and need. Inform and educate your customers in the benefits that will help them with their 'pain points' to demonstrate the value you can deliver for them.
 - d. *Web Presence*** – Get this underperforming marketing channel into shape and revamp your website into a properly functioning [online web business presence](#). Make it an automated marketing engine for your business development. Revisit your key business objective for your web presence and demand more for those electronic web pages in cyberspace. If you have a clear business objective you will develop an understanding of how it can be achieved on the Internet. Every single web page must work hard for your business. A good way to help you focus on this change is to view your online web presence as belonging to your target customers – it is theirs not yours! Content must be oriented toward their relevant needs and interests not what you want to say. Ensure that every web page meets this content test and is designed according to 'persuasion-conversion' scenarios. If your web designer/developer is unfamiliar with these design concepts find one that does – immediately!
- 3. Engage in Relationship Building with your Customers** – Make you customer feel important and appreciated. At the simplest send them a thank you note or card. Deliver real value and keep engaged and in touch with your customer. Remember engagement or interaction with your customer is keeping the conversation open with them. More than anything a customer moves on if they feel neglected and undervalued.
- 4. Test, Test and Test Again** – Everything you do in marketing must be tested. Measuring and tracking the results against the business objective for the effort will allow you to manage and achieve Better Marketing Results by ramping up what is working and dumping programs that are ineffective.

Apply these guidelines and you will get Better Marketing Results to make your marketing recession proof.

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I appreciate your feedback and would like to hear from you on how you are handling these marketing challenges, send your comments to patrick@pmzmarketing.com.au.

About the Author



Patrick Zuluaga has more than 20 years experience in marketing and business development roles with Australian and international companies. He is Director of PMZ Marketing, a consultancy focused on Small and Medium Enterprises to **help you succeed in business with better marketing results.**

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