

WomenEntrepreneur®

Put Trends to Use for Your Biz

Know how to market whether current trends are positive or negative.

By: Sherry Prescott-Willis | 12/28/2009

URL: <http://www.womenentrepreneur.com/2009/12/put-trends-to-use-for-your-biz.html>

This is the first of a two-part excerpt from [Market This! An Effective 90-Day Marketing Tool](#) by Sherry Prescott-Willis (Morgan James Publishing).

How Current Trends Can Impact Your Business and Influence Your Marketing

What hot and current trends are affecting your product or service? Think about all the trends out there right now--there are positive trends, negative trends and then there are even economic trends. There are trends with technology like the iPod and the iPhone, teeth whitening trends, business outsourcing trends and trends with going "green." Be aware of the trends that could influence your business and the ways your customers may be viewing your product or service.



Positive trends that can impact your marketing efforts

Positive trends come and go, and sometimes they stay for a while. A positive trend encourages customers to purchase your product or service because of something that is happening in the market. These trends evolve and change over time, so being aware of these trends can really help you to anticipate what your customers will do when they decide to purchase your product or service. An example of a positive trend would be the availability of current Web 2.0 technologies such as blogs, podcasting, e-mail campaigns and teleseminars. Many businesses are finding that these new technologies provide a more effective way to reach an increased number of potential customers through marketing efforts.

I have been working with a printing company for years that is a family-owned business. With many companies choosing to cut back on their printing efforts and instead move their marketing efforts online, this particular printing company began to think about new ways to expand their business. Since businesses are beginning to rely on Web 2.0 technologies to continue their marketing efforts, the printing company saw this trend as an opportunity to not only increase revenue, but also to incorporate these new technology trends into their business model. To help their customers, they now offer Web 2.0 technology marketing campaign programs as a part of their business service offerings. Their customers love it, and they have been able to attract new customers as well with their new offerings. New and potential customers see their company as a leading-edge technology and printing service, offering such programs as e-mail campaigns, teleseminars and direct-mail print campaigns that tie into Web 2.0 technologies. Their customers are also reporting back to the printing company that using new Web 2.0 technology programs have made their businesses appear much bigger and savvier. This is a good example of a company that really tapped into a current trend and changed the way it did business for the better.

Remember that positive trends can help you and your business thrive because they can make your product or service look more attractive. You can ride the positive trend waves and continue to show your customers you

are adding value. You can also expand a new product service offering or start a company from a trend. Energy conservation and "going green" are really at the forefront of news right now, and many businesses have been born from this trend. I just got a brochure in the mail for a solar backpack and diaper bag for new moms. I found that product really impressive and very interesting to young mothers who are looking for ways to help the environment. Now that you've established your target audience and your customer segments, ask yourself if there are certain trends going on in the specific industries you are targeting.

Where can you find these positive trends? Look at the media, for starters. Commercials, newspapers and the radio can help provide information in addition to online publications and resources. Many current research reports appear in online newsletter publications. Analysts are also good at writing white papers on trends in specific industries. You can also Google your industry or specific area of interest and look for trend reports on products or services that you think may be related to what you are marketing and selling.

Turning trends into messages that lead to your product or service

Think about what trends are out there today. What types of trends exist that could be affecting how your customers are purchasing or not purchasing your product or service? What types of materials already exist that contain trend information that you need to help sell and market your product or service better? For example, are there reports, white papers or any recent information that could persuade your customers or potential customers to be interested in what you are marketing to them? Think about how a current trend can provide some useful information to incorporate into your messaging. It's really this simple--by mentioning or including a positive trend in your marketing message, you may have an opportunity to lead a customer right to your product or service. For example, if you have a product that may be attractive to customers who are conscientious about the environment, and you have a product that is environmentally friendly in some way, you may consider including this fact in your messaging to the customer. Or if you provide a service to your customers and you see a trend report that shows using your type of service would enhance their lives in some way, incorporate these facts into your messages to your customers in all your communication efforts.

NEXT: How to handle negative trends