

Market Ignition

...Understanding Market Sophistication

Let's talk sophistication. How many similar products has your market been told about before? A market evolves like an animal species does over millions of years. Over time markets adapt and become more intelligent like a living breathing, organism.

In our time and age, information flows much faster than it ever did in the past. As time goes on, this flow of information will continue to speed up. This means markets will mature much faster. What do I mean when I say "market maturation?" Example:

What if I told you that you could get into a piece of machinery that will move across country at over 60 miles per hour!? In fact, you could get from Los Angeles to New York in only several days!

Pretty incredible right? Of course not, the car was invented over 100 years ago. That appeal would have been incredible in the 1850s. But an ad with those type of hooks/angles and themes today would be laughed at. Why? The product is exactly the same but the market is in a different level of sophistication.

This level of sophistication increases as time passes and markets tend to evolve into the future. The faster information spreads, the more marketing we are exposed to. This tends to lead to markets reaching higher levels of sophistication faster than ever before.

In the future, marketers who truly understand will be able to capitalize on these evolutions. Those who can't will be slaughtered. Gene Schwartz described markets in five stages. After the fifth stage, markets tend to splinter, segment, and repeat the process all over again. The five are as follows:

- 1st stage - What the product does
- 2nd stage - The product does it better than it's competitors
- 3rd stage - Introduce a Mechanism
- 4th stage - Elaborate on the Mechanism
- 5th stage - Shift from mechanism focus to identification

Post Stages 5 - market splinters and new segment repeats all stages from the beginning

Stage 1

If you're entering stage 1 of a market I tip my hat to you. This means you are the first

person there. Nobody has ever had what you now have to offer.

All you simply need to do is state what you have. Your product is literally revolutionary so a big 'sales job' is not in order. Just tell 'em what you've got. Example:

"Now Lose Ugly Fat"

Stage 2

As the competition starts to catch up to your stage 1 "basic claim" you need to reinvent yourself. In the second stage you'll want to build on your initial claim. You'll "enlarge on it" - do it faster, easier, better, etc. than your first. Example:

"Lose 30 Pounds of Fat in 30 days"

Stage 3

At this point in time your prospects have heard every enlarged claim under the sun. The issue you have to overcome now is distinguishing your product from every other on the market.

How do you go about being portrayed as something unique? You focus on your MECHANISM. This "freshens up" your approach. The emphasis will need to transition from the actual product to HOW it works. Example"

"First Wonder Drug For Weight Loss"

Stage 4

This stage is similar to the second. All you're going to do is build off the mechanism you used in stage three. You'll enlarge it just like you did from stage one to stage two.

"First No-Diet Drug For Weight Loss"

Stage 5

At this stage the market has quite literally "seen everything." It's jaded. People aren't going to believe a word coming out of your mouth.

What do you do? Shift gears. Instead of pitching what a product does, you prey on the fact customers have desires to fill certain "roles." Your marketing should help your prospect identify with the role your product places him in.

Prospects actually have two different kinds of desires:

- To be thinner, wealthier, happier, etc.

- To identify with a certain role in society

This is where the fifth stage comes into play. You'll see a ton of big brand advertisers using this stage to mass market. Think about luxury cars. Companies aren't pitching that they have a hunk of machinery that will drive them from place to place. They're not in a features and benefit slinging ad war. You're buying an experience, a role, and the marketing is catered to this desire to belong and identify.

Post 5th Stage

After the last stage, new markets open up. These markets tend to segment even further. Once these markets are segmented, the cycle of stages is ran through all over again. The process repeats itself. Think about light beer or filtered cigarettes.

Wrapping It Up

Very important... What you always must remember is that the markets core problem/desire will ALWAYS exist! The level of sophistication simply changes. People are always going to want to be thinner, make more money, have better relationships, and solve all of their problems. The only thing that ever changes is the way we "talk" to that market.

Market Ignition allows us to be "first" in markets. By really segmenting and "niching" down, we can essentially create completely new markets. When you get their first like this, you HAVE NO COMPETITION.

The key here is "creating" a market that has enough people in it. Segment to much and "get there first" and they'll be nobody to serve. Market to a broad segment and you'll have HUGE competition to deal with.

Ultimately you'll need to decide on the right balance. Choosing a great niche isn't enough.

You need to take it to the next level. When you understand the sophistication of your market you're operating at a level most marketers will never achieve.