

The 10 Commandments of Direct Response Marketing – and Why You Shouldn't Break Them

WeDo marketing. Whether marketing happens online or offline, there is one thing every smart marketer worth their salt is after: They want the customer to respond.

So let's review the 10 commandments of direct response marketing, as covered in one of the most authoritative books on the topic: *No BS Direct Marketing* by Dan S. Kennedy, a top marketing consultant and legendary copywriter. Here's a quick look at his guidelines, as shared on the GKIC website:

1) There Will Always be an Offer or Offer(s)

In order to get consumers to stand up and take notice, come up with an offer "...that tells the consumer how your product can enhance their life, solve their problems, make their day better, etc., and the steps they need to take in order to reap the benefits."

2) There Will Be a Reason to Respond Right Now

It's called direct response marketing for a reason: you need your customer or prospect to respond RIGHT NOW. What sort of offer will spur them to action?

3) Clear Instructions

Don't make your customers guess. Tell them exactly what to do next!

4) There Will Be Tracking and Measurement

Tracking means accurately collecting all the information you need to determine what advertising is working and what isn't, which offer is pulling and which isn't, what marketing has traction and what doesn't.

5) Branding as a By-Product

Smaller companies often can't afford the luxury of branding campaigns. Stick to call-to-action offers "that are designed to motivate qualified leads to step forward and take action."

6) There Will Be Follow-Up

We're not just talking about a one-time follow-up based on a lead. Treat that lead like gold and as the beginning of a valuable relationship. Why? Because, "there are fortunes in the follow-up."

7) There Will Be Strong Copy

When all is said and done (and written), "your copy must be compelling enough to get your prospects to take immediate action. Your vocabulary choices should aggravate your prospect's problems so much so that they can almost feel the pain, and then soothe them immediately with whatever it is you're offering, and how it can solve their issue."

8) In General, It Will Look Like Mail-Order Advertising

Kennedy suggests making a swipe file of mail-order newspapers and magazine advertisements that show clear calls-to-action. Next time you construct an offer, flip through the file for inspiration. The timeless principles of mail order still work.

9) Results Rule, Period

It doesn't matter what marketers think. All that counts is what the customers think. "If you make sales, then your strategy has worked. If it doesn't make sales, scrap it."

10) Keep Your Business On a Strict Direct Marketing Diet for at Least Six Months

Dan Kennedy says it best: "Anything that doesn't conform to the prior nine rules, do not let it in at all. Just say no. And bar the door."

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