

**Workshop Title: Relationship Marketing & Branding**

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**Executive Summary**

Relationships are a key to your success in business. Direct marketing allows us the unique opportunity to be authentic and forge trust with our customers; it allows us time to be in front of them. Step back from just telling the features of your product and develop your story – Why do you do what you do and communicate this with your customers. Your customers will respond to your story and you will build loyalty. Features tell, benefits sell. Serving your loyal customers will build your business more than always looking for a new customer.

**Detailed Notes**

**Relationship Marketing**

Develop relationships with your customers to establish long-term business success. Serving existing customers is more effective at building a business than constantly seeking the next new customer.

**Branding**

How do you differentiate yourself? How do you become memorable and likeable to your customers? No gimmicks. It isn't external; it comes from inside; storytelling.

We have authenticity and trust in direct marketing – this is how we compete with commodity sales. There is more to it than product and price – this storytelling is where our brand comes from.

People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do, it is what is meaningful to them.

The product is the package for the results – the why.

There are product results, presentation results (packaging), and relationship results.

Your sales are a function of product and/or services, presentation and **relationship building**.

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People have to understand the difference of what we offer by direct marketing vs commodity selling, clearly differentiating your product from a commodity is essential.

### **Competition is an illusion**

No one has the exact same product, same storytelling and customer service. Not everybody will purchase from you. Customers will be drawn to different people. Shine to the best of your ability.

You are your biggest asset to your business. Take advantage of the time you have to be in front of people. If that is not you, then find someone who can be a great public face.

### **Early Adopters and Innovators**

Law of Diffusion of Innovation: Whenever there is a new product there are:

- Early adopters/innovators – those who rush out to get
- Middle/late adopters – those that need more info and feedback
- Laggards – those that will most likely never adopt

Research shows that roughly 16% is the turning point for a product to move into the mainstream. Farmers' markets and organic agriculture are getting close.

We have made the fatal mistake of throwing money and time into marketing to everyone. Need to focus on early adopters and innovators first; let the tipping point do the rest for us.

You find them by starting with your why, branding, standing behind your product and communicating that. Sharing your why stories. This will attract your early adopters and innovators.

They will pay a premium, go out of their way and suffer some level of discomfort to get what they want. They will be your ambassadors.

You can build an incredible loyalty around your product and have people that are proud to be associated with that brand. Think of your favourite store or market. You buy products from a certain business for a reason that speaks to you. It can be quality, customer service or the brand says something about them and you want to identify with it.

Your why, story and values will have much more resonance with people than product methods.

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Share your values and your story: it is an integral part in selling. We cannot compete on price and convenience, but we can compete on why we do what we do and create powerful brands.

Share what you are about successfully with your audience. Ooze your story, why are you doing what you are doing and trust that will matter to other people. Proudly share that story.

Your why will move people. People will want to be a part of your story. Never miss an opportunity to share your story.

Lack of business success is rarely a production issue. Put passion into your branding and story. IT will separate you from other businesses.

Features tell, benefits sell; It is the benefits association with the features that will sell the product.

Don't hide the benefits and values behind boring words. Don't make people guess the meaning. Don't assume that people know anything.

Use two words to talk and engage customers – which means – tell the benefits. Example, this is fresh – which means..... It is not enough to talk about the features, tell the benefits. Start using benefit language.

What are the benefits behind these words:

Local – dollars stay in the community, carbon

Fresh – safe, nutrition

Handmade – trust, life span, unique, customization

Summary

Branding tells your story. Our brand, organic agriculture and farmers' markets, are easy to storytell about and build relationships with. Keep in touch with your customers and share stories with them that matter.

Relationship marketing uses the power of what you love to build your business.