

Basic Marketing Strategies for Young Pros

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There are basically **3 Principles of Relatability** and **4 Principles of Marketing** that all marketing specialists are expected to juggle in order to create a successful pitch for clients and consumers. (As all my students know, I prefer the more direct **3 Pillars of Persuasive Rhetoric** – Aristotle's *Ethos, Logos, Pathos* – which is the basis for all modern-day marketing principles including this outline).

3 Principles of Relatability: Leading Public Relations (PR) and Branding experts across the globe agree that all marketing strategies boil down to a psychological association the target audience identifies as a key component to their advancement and relationships (either professional or personal). A PR Rep's job is to assess and connect with the target audience through their sales pitch while maintaining their company's overall image and standards. This requires a combination of *psychological, social* and *technical* skills.

4 Principles of Marketing: A good PR agent knows how to outline the raw values of their *Product* (an item or service their company is preparing to launch, rebrand, etc.), the desired *Price point* (which is typically featured as being more affordable than competing products or companies), sustainable *Accessibility* to the product by the members of the target audience, and the process of *Promoting* the product (which does loop back to Aristotle's *Ethos, Logos, Pathos*, which is applied to make the product seem attractive and indispensable to the target audience).

Every aspect of the written and audio-visual promotion of a product (either in stores or on screen) is regulated by these principles.

Identify and hone in on your target audience.

- To begin with, identify and get to know the desired target audience. No **Object X** is meant for all people everywhere.
- Narrow the margins of your marketing to suit a core audience and tailor all marketing to that core audience.
- It's possible to add a 2nd- or 3rd- tier audience with different marketing that will attract them (e.g., *Object X* sales that are geared to parents so they feel like heroes for purchasing *Object X* for their child), however it's essential to think first of who your top seller is (e.g., college-bound high school students, college students, new graduates, established young professionals, particular corporate networks or companies in a given industry, etc.).

Create a good "Hook Phrase" (a.k.a., Tag Lines) for Outcome X.

- For example, the toothpaste that promises you'll have teeth 10% whiter in 3 weeks but doesn't tell you whiter than what... vs the toothpaste that tells you that you'll have whiter teeth in 3 weeks. There's a difference.
- Another example are the supplements sold ONLY at one particular vendor (at double the price anywhere else you look) that promise **Outcome X** (e.g., to reduce wrinkles and strengthen nails). The stores near you claim to carry it but are ALWAYS sold out of it. Why? The tag line will tell you it's hard to find, rare ingredients, etc. etc.
- A final example are the countless Saturday morning infomercials for the latest mixer/juicer/power drink...
- Each of these is the same. Every statement is geared towards forcing the viewer/potential client to think fast and make an impulse decision or purchase for something they suddenly feel they cannot do without.

Subliminal Marketing – make "YOU" statements that are positive and indirect.

- "X will help get YOU to the next level." NOT "I'm here to motivate you." The first statement implies that members of the target audience are already at some level of progression while the other implies that members of the target audience are demotivated or lack direction, etc.
- Psychologically, a person's **pack mentality** kicks in and he/she typically prefers to stay competitive (or status quo) with peers.

Avoid sounding cliché or cheesy. Use appealing catch phrases without falling into clichés.

- Everyone will claim that their Object X is the BEST. Make yours "the most accurate" or "the most convenient" and so on.
- Avoid sweeping generalizations (e.g., "Everyone will want X" or "No one will want to be without X") that are cliché and conceptually inaccurate.

Know the most common and effective resources for online/onscreen marketing and how to use them.

- **Pop-Up Ads:** At present, one of the most commonly-used visual aids in online marketing is the popup (which I personally find excessively annoying and avoid using in my own sites). There are mixed responses to pop-ups, particularly how intrusive they can be as one tries to skim an article, conduct research, watch a video, etc. This gimmick is used by many companies regardless of their size or budget since it guarantees visibility across a broader network. The decision to be made here is whether as the PR Rep you and your company prefer to focus on Quality or Quantity.
- **Celebrity Sponsors and Product Endorsements (a.k.a. Appeal to Authority):** The value of an "I Think" statement made by someone who is not a celebrity or certified professional ranks low on a potential client's mental register. Take advantage of

a solid psychological appeal to authority. For example, Jennifer Aniston promoting SmartWater, Aveeno and other products draws the attention of women who want to look and be as fit as she is. By contrast, having the scientists who created the products speak about their benefits WITHOUT Aniston's popularity will likely have a smaller impact on the general public in terms of sales and marketing. What people are buying into is not just the effectiveness of the vitamin/cream/beverage but the confidence of feeling like they're following the regimen of someone who looks great and is very successful. People **connect** with the image of Jennifer Aniston, with her life struggles and so on, which is why they'll invest in the products she promotes.

Other Forms of Psychological & Logical Appeal:

- **Understand the Psychology of Color:** As a good PR agent, you want people to take action, click a button, make a purchase. **Add some splash of color to the page/flier so it's more visually appealing, but do so with purpose.** In many lectures I discuss the significance of reading a color chart and understanding the psychological value and effect each color has on the human mind. For instance, beige or grey are not energetic colors that incite a call to action; they feel like a calming, classy and neutral colors that help the viewer feel at ease. So if I'm considering colors to include in the background for a yoga studio, some very light earth or stone colors would be desirable, with pops of gem-toned secondary colors to draw the viewer's eye to something that will boost their spirits while maintaining that sense of calm. A glimpse at a reliable color chart explains why I favor blue and white for www.Philo4Thought.org and for my course videos (with pops of red, orange or brassy gold for small sections of the fliers/videos). I have chosen a combination of calming and "Call to Action" colors to balance out the visual message and feel of my sites, their products, and so on.
- **Cut Back on Words:** Whatever you write, plan to cut it in half. People don't read. Use **Bold Font**, **Italics** and **Bullet Points** to highlight main concepts so people can easily browse the page.
- **The Elephant in the Room:** Seasonal promotion for products and services that will get you "bikini fit" in time for the summer... or the promise of pumpkin spice products the moment schools reopen in the Fall... are common seasonal marketing tactics that traditionally grab the general public. Make use of opportunities for seasonal marketing, however remember to avoid cliches.

Suggested Exercise & Closing Notes: Understanding the Principles of Productive, Positive Psychological Appeal

Be your own PR Agent! Whether you're heading towards a degree in marketing or just trying to convey to your team that you're a capable and confident member of the company, understanding the simple principles of productive, positive psychological appeal will go a long way towards conveying this message. This exercise involves a combination of logic and sociology and psychology, which may be challenging at first but gets easier with practice.

- Write down **ETHOS... LOGOS... PATHOS...**
- Make a list of the thoughts, actions and words that fall under each category.
- For those completing this exercise for personal branding: Revisit the list at least once a month, adding guideposts for yourself. Keep track of successful interactions – a successful meeting/presentation, a new connection or friend, increased sales, etc. – over time. Also keep track of unsuccessful interactions – a failed connection, etc. – to avoid similar encounters in future.
- For those completing this exercise as part of an effort to increase professional marketing skills: Focus on what makes Object X (the product) so unique... imagine yourself as a member of the target audience and ask yourself what would make you want or need this item or service?
- A good PR Rep following the Aristotelian means of appealing to others typically completes a combination of Personal Branding and Professional Marketing Strategy.

We'll cover this topic in more depth in the coming months. Please stay tuned and sign up to the free newsletter for updates: www.philo4thought.org.