

Seven Secrets of Sleaze-Free Marketing

Grow Your Business
With Trust and Authority

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Never worry again

about your marketing being perceived as sleazy, slimy, icky or sales-y



If you cringe at the very thought of being considered sleazy or sales-y when marketing your business, you are in good company.

Haven't we all, at some point, found ourselves in an uncomfortable situation, backed into a corner by an annoying sales person relentlessly pressing us to buy something we don't want or need?

For most of us, it's off-putting. Sleazy. Slimy. Icky. We run the other way. As fast as we can.

And the fear of being sleazy holds many entrepreneurs back, preventing us from doing important work.

We want to buy from people we know, like and trust. How do you present yourself as that likeable, trusted entrepreneur?

Today, marketing is not about taking advantage of others, manipulating minds or preying on people's insecurities. It's not about interrupting people with cold calls or unwelcome outreach. Whew! That's good to know!

Today's marketing is about service, solutions and inspiration. You build trust when you focus on serving your customers and offering them the solutions they absolutely need. When you embrace the qualities of being inviting, honest, generous and compassionate, you inspire sales with integrity and transparency.

Let's take a look at the seven secrets so your marketing can be sleaze-free as you grow your business with trust and authority.

Seven Secrets of Sleaze-Free Marketing

1 BE OF SERVICE

2 KNOW YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMER

3 BE GENEROUS

4 SHOW THE TRANSFORMATION

5 BE AUTHENTIC

6 BE CONSISTENT

7 BE INVITING

1 Be of Service



I've seen many budding entrepreneurs, all with incredible expertise in their respective fields, simply wither at the thought of marketing their product or service.

All product launch guru Jeff Walker had to mention to a group of would-be entrepreneurs on a webinar was one word: 'marketing.' The chat came alive with comments about how attendees knew their subject backwards and forwards but were scared to death to even think about marketing it. Why?

In my experience, there are a few likely reasons:

- There's a lot to learn about marketing, and it's a continuous learning process
- When marketing is done right, it's not obvious
- Inevitably, imposter syndrome creeps in
- There's fear of rejection
- There's fear of failure.

Shake off your worries and look at marketing from a different perspective. **Marketing is not about you and your fears.** You are the expert with a solution to a problem others are experiencing. You are fulfilling a need. It's about helping your prospect, your customer – all the people out there who rely on you and absolutely require what you have to offer.

Be of service. Get out of your head, open your heart and give generously to ensure your customers receive what they want and what they need.

2 Know Your Ideal Customer

As Marie Forleo says, “If you’re talking to everybody, you’re talking to nobody.”

This is so important. Effective marketing is personal. When you create a persona or avatar for your ICA (Ideal Customer Avatar), you can visualize and zero in on the one person you’re talking to in your posts, articles, podcasts and marketing materials.

Is your ICA a nonprofit staffer tasked with producing a virtual event and has no idea where to start? Or maybe she’s a go-getting educator who wants to start a concierge teaching business, or a professional in leadership looking to improve the quality of her sleep?

Imagine your ideal customer and create an avatar for that person. Identify their age group, likes, dislikes, needs, wants – everything you can think of. The persona you build might be based on a current customer, a composite of customers, or even on yourself – maybe you’re helping others navigate the same path you’ve traveled in life.

Every persona has its own set of struggles and solutions they’re looking for – identify those and you will be well on your way to creating an ICA.

When you know your ideal customer and talk directly to them, they wonder how you got inside their head, how you can possibly know what they’re thinking, what they need and what they care about. It creates a connection, a bond and initiates a relationship where people cannot wait to buy from you.

Sleaze-free!



3 Be Generous

Give, give, give and then give some more. Offer massive value to your ICA on your website, in emails to your list and on social media. This is how you establish credibility, showcase your expertise and build relationships.

You may ask: “What do I charge for if I’m giving everything away?” Even though it can seem like you are giving everything away, the nuggets you share and the support you offer is only scratching the surface of your skills and knowledge. Any service you’d likely sell would be going into much greater depth.

With every piece of free content you develop – be it a blog post, social media post, podcast or video – run it through a value test. Ask “what is the take-away or valuable nugget I’m providing?” and “will this be helpful to my ICA?”

When you are honest, authentic and transparent, you build your know-like-and-trust factor. You become a magnet, attracting your ideal customer who’s becoming primed to buy from you and who can’t wait to see what you’ll do next.

4 Show the Transformation

Every offer needs to move your ICA from Point A to Point B, from where they are today to that dream state of where they want to be.

When you illustrate the transformation someone will experience as they work with you, your ideal customer can visualize how their life will improve, thanks to your product or service.

A sleazy approach might be, “Here, get this, buy from me,” or “you need this now.”

But when you take the time to paint a picture of your ICA’s future self – transformed step by step with your guidance, skills, expertise, product – people *want* to buy. They want to be on that journey with you.



5 Be Authentic

When you open up to reveal your strengths, reactions, vulnerabilities and beliefs, you attract a loyal audience.

Make sure your authenticity is real and unique to you. Strive to go beyond the stereotype messy bun and stylish yoga pants. Be yourself. Tell me your unpopular opinions.

Your imperfections help you be seen as a real person in the eyes of your ideal customer. As you tell a story, they identify with you and are being entertained. They may be thinking, “I do the same thing,” “I binge watch the same Netflix series” or “she’s totally nuts and I love her even more.”

Maybe you struggle with your weight, so you open up about that topic and how it affects you. Or maybe you’ve made mistakes along the way or experienced failures your audience can identify with.

In my case, I struggle with being quiet and shy, which I need to set aside in order to put myself out there in the marketplace. (No easy feat!) I’m the girl with the sweaty palms who would never raise her hand in class, just in case her answer might be wrong. Even though deep down I have confidence in my skills and expertise, imposter syndrome tries to hobble me. This is a common theme, but it doesn’t make it any less real.

Let your personality show through. Be authentic.

6 Be Consistent

The easiest way to build trust is to show up consistently with your steady, valuable message.

If you only email your list when you have something to sell, well that's downright sleazy.

At a minimum, create one piece of content each week such as a blog post, podcast or video. Build your list and email them your newsletter or an announcement directing people to your new content.

Support your regular presence by posting daily, or a few times a week, on social media.

Your audience is now primed to hear from you, so when you have something to sell, it appears helpful and sleaze-free.



7 Be Inviting

As a rule, invite people to join you on your journey, in your class, on your webinar.

It's not "buy this" but rather "join me."

Design your marketing offer to be so irresistible that it sells itself. The combination of your offer, your inclusive message and your authentic self will create a powerful draw that will fill your online course, your workshop, your webinar and everything else.

When you invite people to join you instead of buy from you, it gives a whole new feeling to the ask. Instead of taking their money, you're giving value and so much more. They can't wait to open their wallets.

And there you have it!

Never again worry about being sleazy, slimy, icky or sales-y.

Thank you so much for downloading this guide. If you want to go further, I'd love to discuss. In my Strategy Sessions, we can dive deep into your marketing to help you find the clarity you'll need to build an actionable plan.

XOXO,



About Mary Ann Sircely



Hey there. My specialties are brand strategy, graphic design and conversion copywriting.

For 30+ years, I've served as principal and creative director of Sircely Marketing & Design, a full service marketing communications firm. Over time, I've served hundreds of businesses and nonprofits across the nation, producing award-winning materials for clients.

My newest love is my work for Inkwiry, where I'm chief marketing officer and co-founder. Inkwiry helps students, their parents and young professionals shape their futures, providing applications, online courses and tools that make financial life planning fast, easy and affordable.

A graduate of Connecticut College, where I studied Government and Fine Arts, I delved into Journalism and Studio Art during my senior year at Lehigh University.

I live on beautiful Orcas Island in Washington State with my sweet chocolate lab, Rollo.

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