



Advertising and Networking

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Explain the objectives of advertising
- ✓ Describe various factors that determine the choice of media for advertising

Advertising and Networking

Advertising Myths

There are plenty of myths surrounding advertising, and we'll test some of the more common ones here.

You have to advertise to get business.

Can you think of any companies that don't advertise yet do a booming business? Most people can think of a great little coffee shop or café that has never spent a cent on paid advertising but is always busy.

Advertising is too expensive for small business.

Can you think of a small business that spends a great deal of money in advertising, advertising that works? Again, participants may be able to name pizza companies who distribute flyers, who advertise regularly in the local newspaper, or who are on local television ads to create the traffic they need. Often, local media outlets provide advertising at pretty reasonable rates to small business in order to provide some level of local content.

There is one best advertising method.

You want participants to realize that the advertising that works is not the same for every company.

Advertising is a one-shot deal.

Again, not so. Repetition of the brand and consistency in presentation are what make an advertisement memorable. When advertising misses, people can remember a great ad, but not the product being advertised. Some of the larger companies that get it right have a memorable logo, sound, or approach to their brand. Think of Ronald McDonald or the M&M candy characters as successes.

If you put your money into advertising, the advertisement does the work for you.

If you don't do your part, the ad still doesn't work. The company must do the work to support the advertising, promote it, and create a memorable, service-oriented customer experience in order to support the advertising.

Creating Desire

Now let's take your marketing efforts a giant step ahead, and create desire to buy your product. Advertisers usually do this by trying to satisfy needs. In times of inflation, many advertisers emphasize the cost-saving aspect of a product or service. This satisfies our need to save money.

What's important is to get to know your customer's needs and try to satisfy them. Abraham Maslow, a famous psychologist, suggested that all humans have five levels of needs that exist in a hierarchy.

Level One: Physiological Needs

These are needs like food, clothing, sex, and shelter. These basic needs must be satisfied before people become concerned with satisfying higher-level needs. Ads for perfumes often appeal to sexual needs by suggesting (often in indirect ways) that by buying the perfume the person will be able to satisfy that need.

Level Two: Safety Needs

This level is about protection against danger and insecurity. All of us seek protection. Ads for insurance companies often appeal to the need for security with slogans like, “Save now for a secure future for your family.”

Level Three: Social Needs

This is where the need to belong, give, and receive affection comes into play. Many advertisers successfully satisfy this need. TV commercials for food products often show family and friends enjoying a meal together, where an atmosphere of togetherness is created and a social need is satisfied.

Level Four: Esteem Needs

This is the need for status, recognition, and self-respect). In today’s society, these needs are increasingly important. Promotions for credit cards often appeal to status needs. The message is clear: owning this card will give you status.

Level Five: Self-Actualization Needs

The final level is the need for self-development, creativity, and psychological health.

Networking Tips

For some of us, entering a room full of strangers can be pretty daunting, although this is not the case for many people who work in sales and marketing. Even people who are introverts often learn to behave like extroverts in order to make connections and develop relationships. For business and social reasons, we are obliged to get out and meet people.

Many people approach networking with a kind of blanket approach, which is not the best use of their time. Networking with the right intent means:

- Meeting the right people who can lead them to new, paying customers
- Meeting people who have the information that will lead to new, paying customers

The challenge is that at many networking events, members or groups agree to do business with other members before looking outside the attendees. However, many of these groups are attended by relatively small or medium-sized businesses. They are not going to give you access to buyers in larger businesses, and as Jill Konrath writes in her book *Selling to BIG Companies*, there is a different skill set required to sell to larger businesses. You may not want to sell to the largest companies, but selling to bigger companies than you already do makes sense from the perspective of growing sales and increasing your market share.

Decision makers from large companies don't often attend those morning or noon-time networking events. When they do, they can be swamped by salespeople, and you may not get near them anyway. You already know that trying to cold call them or send e-mails is not effective either. Instead, your best strategy is probably one of these:

- Break the company into smaller pieces, and approach the company through smaller divisions or by department
- Meet buyers at places they do go, like trade shows and conferences
- Leverage your existing contacts by asking them to introduce you to the people you'd like to meet

You might be surprised at how willing people are to help you, but your helpfulness in return will also help them, and the relationships build in turn. There is also a strategy of reverse networking, which is a fascinating result of the principle of reciprocity. Reverse networking is based on making introductions rather than blatantly making sales propositions. If you sell insurance, and one of your clients is looking to buy a house, you might recommend your own realtor. You do not benefit from the introduction at the time it is made, but your client and realtor are building a relationship, growing their networks, and in a spirit of reciprocity, will refer people to you when they find people who need what you have.

Networking Tips to Consider

Here are some things that can help you make your networking efforts a success.

- Say "Hello" first.
- Take risks and anticipate success.
- Show others you are a good listener. Practice your listening skills at every opportunity.
- Be able to tell others what you do in a few short sentences.
- Use eye contact and a smile when you meet people.
- Greet people you see regularly, even if you don't know them.
- Find some common ground with the people you meet.
- Ask others for their opinions.
- Show some interest in the things the other person is interested in.
- Find some good in every person you meet.
- Remember things people told you in previous conversations and ask them about these things.
- Know when to stop talking.
- Compliment others about what they are doing or saying, and say so sincerely.
- Be aware of open and closed body language and monitor your own body language.
- Do an anonymous act of kindness every day.

Test Your Knowledge

What kind of networking are you focused on right now?

Are you getting the benefits that you expected?

What will you change as a result of what you have learned today?

Internet Marketing Basics

What It Looks Like

What is Internet Marketing?

Internet marketing is just what it sounds like: using the Internet to leverage your marketing strategy so that your company flourishes. Marketing strictly by the Internet is not the goal, so you will see that we refer to an Internet marketing strategy as an element of your overall marketing strategy.

If you are going to have an Internet marketing strategy, you need to be ready to establish (or if you already have one, expand) your digital presence and reach. Often, the hub or central gathering place for business is your **website**. Since you may have several sites that are related to one company or one individual, we sometimes also refer to a **hub site**. Your hub site is your main web site, to which any others are linked. For small businesses without a website, if you want a presence in the digital space (and this is practically required nowadays) you can sometimes get a “free” or nearly free site through your Internet provider or services including Google, Facebook, etc.

Popular Strategies

There are some preferred and effective strategies that companies use when it comes to Internet marketing. You may find that only some of them fit with your overall marketing strategy, but we

recommend that you consider each of them. Your goal is to use the strategies which best connect you to your customers and prospects, and also fit into your overall marketing strategy.

Web Design and Development

Your business is going to be reflected in your website, so it needs to look good. Your website needs to be a comprehensive and engaging demonstration of what you do with and for your customers. It is no longer enough to have a brochure-style website (which just lists your products and services with a few pictures).

In 2007, I met a business owner who said that she budgeted \$10,000 a year for her website, which supported her two-million dollar a year company. This gave me a lot to think about, because on scale \$10,000 for a couple of million dollars in revenue doesn't seem to be too much. How much should a business budget for a website? The answer depends on what you want to do.

There are plenty of templates available to get you started if you want to create your own website. Some small businesses manage to start with a tiny presence and a free page on a site like Facebook or Etsy. However, if you plan for your company to grow and be taken as a serious member of the business marketplace, consider what your web presence will be, how much you will spend on it, and what you want to accomplish. Bigger isn't always better, but content is most important. Unless you are putting good content on your site, don't bother with a website at all.

Affiliate Programs

With affiliate programs, you can use your web presence to recruit others to sell your products, or you can sell products for other companies from your website. This approach can be helpful if you do not have a lot of products to offer of your own, or if there are complementary products out there that can help you get started.

As an example, if you write a blog and include posts about great books that you have read, you could set up affiliate links to a bookseller, where you get a portion of sales (a commission) that come from people who click on the ad on your blog.

If you have plenty of products available and you want people to sell them for you, then you can set yourself up where you act like the book wholesaler in the example above, and people who sell for you receive a portion of every sale that originates from their web links, while you get to keep the profits from the overall sale.

E-mail Marketing

You can create a list of subscribers and create an e-mail that goes out periodically and engages readers. There are lots of services you can use (both paid and free) to help you get your messages out in an appealing format that can be read on computers, tablets, smartphones, and so on. Make sure you check the rules (often called **terms of service**) about e-mail marketing, since the law in many places now states

that you cannot just send these messages to whomever you want. (Typically, you need people's permission to add them to your mailout lists.) We'll get into more detail about e-mail marketing later in this session.

Using Social Media

Social media is an effective and growing resource that allows you to connect with your consumers. Whether you use one site or many, if the people you want to connect with are on social media, you probably need to be there too. Social media sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter are almost essential for companies with lots of consumers using those sites, but the return you get depends on your business. Niche businesses may be better off using niche social networking sites.

Social media marketing takes a lot of very skilled work and patience in order for you to see a return on your investment, but it is an effective way to connect to lots of people.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

There is now a whole industry called SEO (which stands for Search Engine Optimization) that helps you get strong rankings in major search engines. This helps people to find you easily and for you to engage with them. We use SEO to understand what our consumers want, how they look for it online (through analyzing what search terms and patterns of usage they use), and then we design our digital spaces so that they can find us easily. We'll discuss SEO in more detail later on in this session.

Sharing Messages

Marketing has changed over the years, becoming committed to and focusing on **influence** much more so than about messages that reflect an approach to direct advertising. A part of this subtle difference is a change from messages that say "This is why you should buy from me," to messages that say, "This is how we help people who have needs just like you do. Look at how your neighbor/best friend/favorite uncle uses what we have."

Consider what your products and services are. Position your messages to **tell a story** about who uses your product and how it helps. Stop yourself from just explaining features and benefits.

Marketing over the Internet, and through social media in particular, allows us to connect and share stories much more easily than print media used to. If you think of this in terms of influence rather than selling, you can start to consider how you can share what your company does, what it stands for within the context of a community, and how to present yourself.

The **community** is a big part of marketing and social networking today. You can create connections to your community and influence their decisions without having to sell directly. Sponsoring a team, helping out a charity, or offering people information instead of commercial advertising all help to create an atmosphere of influence. These approaches reflect the successes of **relationship building and consultative selling** rather than direct sales.

With the lowering costs of producing **videos**, we can quickly put together a video that has real people who have used our real products talking about how they benefitted. Even better than testimonials, you can show (rather than tell) people using and benefitting from your products or services. If you think back to the marketing cycle and the research you have done about what your consumers need, you can also create instructional videos, informational pieces, and more that have some benefit to the viewer.

The video does not have to be directly about your products or services because you are creating them based on the ideas of influence and creating community. You could create parody pieces, interviews with interesting people, or share a piece about a project you learned from. The options are numerous, and really only limited by your own imagination and budget.

As Seth Godin has said in several of his books, what we really need is to **be remarkable**. So go ahead and get away from your ordinary way of doing business, step out of the proverbial cubicles and boxes, and entertain something different. Get your message out by daring to do it differently than everyone else, including yourself.

E-mail Marketing

If your customers have a computer at work or home, chances are they have e-mail. If you look at your own e-mail inbox, how many messages do you receive each day? How many do you send? Do you read everything you receive or do you just glance at them?

In one sense, every e-mail that you send and receive is a piece of marketing. Your company domain is in the address and is also hopefully included in the signature block in the e-mail. You might even have a tag line in those e-mail signatures or a link to your website or your Facebook page. If you have a customer service representative who replies to online inquiries by e-mail, those replies are a marketing opportunity too. They might offer to send a coupon, send free information, or simply extend a sincere message.

A Cautionary Note

If you send out e-mails to a list of people, you should not be doing so from your personal e-mail address! When you send a message to a large list of people, your own e-mail service will tag it as spam, and then your subsequent messages also get flagged as spam or even get blocked entirely. Once your e-mail address is blacklisted, it is extremely difficult to work your way back into people's e-mail inboxes. Save your personal e-mail for messages to one person or a small group of people. Use a distribution service for reaching out to people in your database for marketing and commercial purposes.

A **distribution service** can help you to generate some of the more sophisticated looking newsletters, articles, and white papers that are part of the marketing mix. Many of these distribution services come free of charge, which will allow you to experiment and see what works best for you. It will also keep you from being blacklisted.

In some countries, you are unable to market commercially unless the people you are e-mail have opted into your e-mail list. This is called **permission-based marketing**, and means that everyone on your list has asked to be included in your contact list, or has at least given you permission to add them to the list. They can do this automatically with links on your website or on your e-mail list, and your distribution service will help you do this.

Distribution Services

You've probably already received marketing e-mails that come from distribution services. You will know which services are being used by looking for their logo at the bottom of your e-mail (although some companies will not appear there at all).

When you are choosing an e-mail distribution service, you need to make sure that they can offer you some important support to your marketing efforts. You want to make sure that they can:

- Maintain a list of your contacts (including their name and e-mail address) in a secure database
- Merge your existing contacts into their database by importing a list from wherever you currently have them stored
- Manage people who want to opt in and opt out
- Provide easy-to-use and attractive templates
- Include an easy-to-use unsubscribe button on the bottom of each e-mail
- Offer distribution that takes place on time
- Generate reports that tell you the number of e-mails that get opened (the open rate), bounced e-mails and the related e-mail address, links within the e-mail that are clicked, etc.

Whether you are using a paid or free service, you'll have some peace of mind when you know that your subscribers' information is kept private and that you are in complying with the range of spam laws in effect in different countries.

Some companies that you can review include:

- Constant Contact (www.constantcontact.com)
- Mail Chimp (www.mailchimp.com)
- Vertical Response (www.verticalresponse.com)
- iContact (www.icontact.com)

NOTE: These links were accurate at the time of printing. We are not affiliated with the sites and companies listed, nor does we accept any responsibility for the information provided on any third-party site.

Keep it Rich

We cannot emphasize enough that, just as your website needs to have rich content, your e-mails do too. Give your visitors something to think about, talk over, and gravitate toward! You should always be

offering the receiver something, whether it is a resource, a tidbit of information, a strong visual, or links to these things.

One mistake that businesses continue to make is that their e-mail marketing always repeats a similar “buy me” message instead of giving people reason to click a link within that e-mail that takes them to your hub site for more information, a map with directions, or even your product page and shopping cart. Give them a compelling reason to engage with you, and they will.

What is SEO?

No matter how popular your company is, or how unique your name is, people still have to be able to find you online. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) needs to be one of the tools you use in order to help you gain and maintain a digital reach that is both broad and deep. When you optimize your web pages, social media sites, blog, and wherever else you have an online presence, SEO helps you to get as close as you can to the top of search results – preferably to the top of the first page.

In order to get to the top of a search page, you need to select search terms and keywords that people look for, and then optimize your content to make it easy to find, or “search friendly.”

Your best SEO results come from having great content on your sites. This will also help you attract people who are interested in what you have to offer; the **qualified prospect**. Throughout our conversations about SEO, it’s important to remember that nothing is effective unless you offer good, strong content. Unless you appeal to visitors to your site, they don’t become qualified prospects and convert to customers.

When it comes to getting found on the Internet, there are plenty of different tools that get used. We’re fortunate that a shared language has developed around them.

Spiders, Crawlers, Bots (or Robots)

These are automated processes that search engines use to visit all your sites and index what they find there.

Natural and Organic Searches

These are the lists of unpaid advertising sites that are generated after you do a keyword search. They are the result of the search engine’s algorithm (a set of mathematical rules). They are different than a non-organic result (which may include paid advertising). In the example below, we searched for “how to paint furniture” and we got about 115,000,000 results. They are all natural or organic, because there are no paid ads on the page.

how to paint furniture



About 115,000,000 results (0.19 seconds)

[How To Paint Furniture - Young House Love](#)

www.younghouselove.com/2009/02/how-to-paint-furniture/

10 Feb 2009 – Do you have an old table, chair, or dresser that you're dying to **paint**? Well wait no more, here's the play by play.

[How to Paint Wooden Furniture](#)

www.thefrugalgirl.com/2009/03/how-to-paint-wooden-furniture/

5 Mar 2009 – If you sanded down to the wood, you've been careful to do thin coats of **paint**, and your piece of **furniture** is made of nice wood, you should still ...

[Karla's Cottage: How to paint furniture \(the short cut way\)](#)

karlascottage.typepad.com/.../how-to-custom-paint-furniture-the-shor...

8 May 2009 – For years, I had an antique **furniture** painting business and painted hundreds of pieces of **furniture**. I spent a lot of time figuring out an easier ...

[Paint Furniture - How To Paint Furniture Video](#)



video.about.com/furniture/How-to-Paint-Furniture.htm

16 Sep 2008

Is your favorite table in need of some sprucing up? A fresh coat of **paint** can revive an older piece of **furniture**.

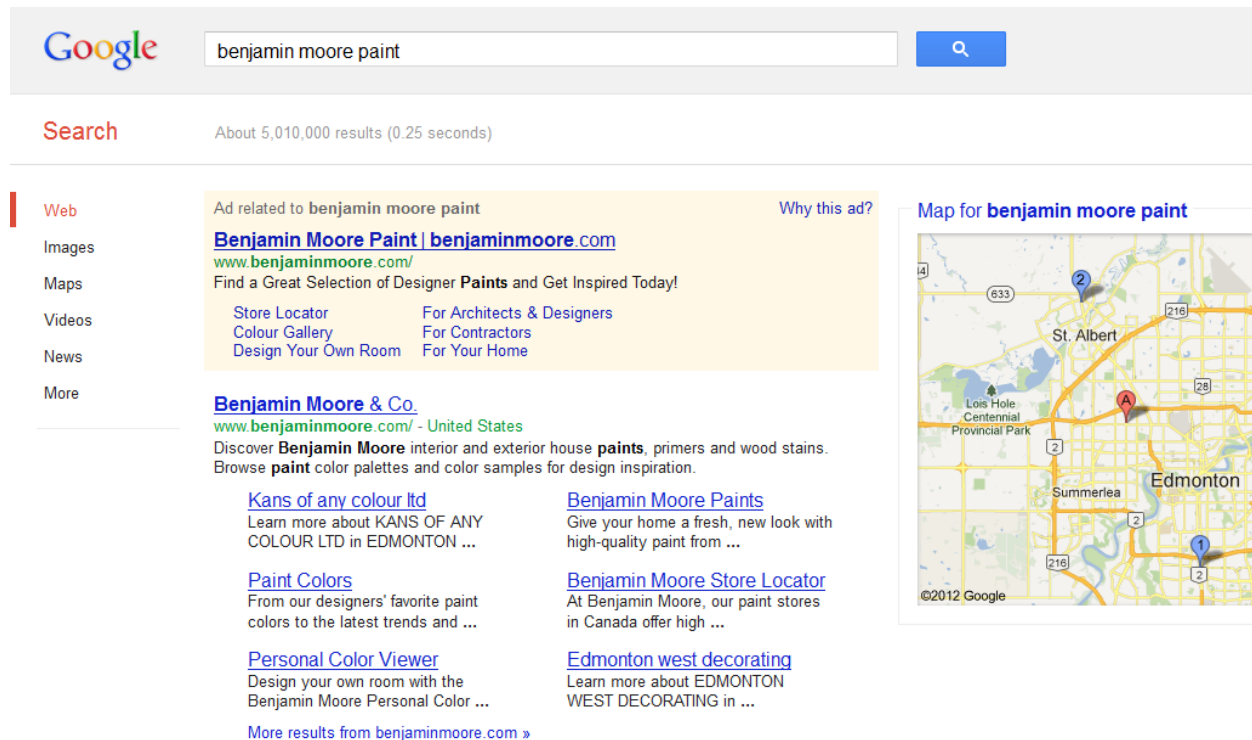
[More videos for how to paint furniture »](#)

[DIY On the Cheap: How To Paint Furniture: A Beginner's Guide](#)

diyonthecheap.blogspot.com/.../how-to-paint-furniture-beginners-guide

Paid Searches

If we search for something more specific, like “Benjamin Moore Paint,” the results show a paid ad first (with a very pale yellow background) and even a map with the nearest location, before the natural leads follow:



If you want to test how your site ranks by using different search terms, you can use a free trial at WebPosition.com or an inexpensive tool like ZoomRank.com. (Neither of these sites is endorsed nor recommended by us, but are simply provided here as a reference point.) If you are working with a professional marketing company, they can and should be testing your site rankings.

How It Works

Search engines use tools like spiders, crawlers, or bots to trawl the Internet for new information. They are working all the time! Remember, though, that they may work on a different schedule than you do, so you need to prompt them to come look at what is new on your site by sending them a message.

You can update a search engine like Google, Bing, or Yahoo by using their webmaster tools and submitting the URL of the new or updated page. You have to submit to each search engine separately, and they don't like it if you are sending them all the same link.

Instead, you can choose to update one site and wait for the spiders from the other sites to find your new content, or you can stagger things. For example, you could send one site the updates for your hub site, another your blog updates, and the third an update to your social networking page. As you can already tell, this could get to be a big job, so you might find this easier if you use something called **pinging**.

Pinging is a process where you can advise the search engines that a change has been made. You can start pinging with a third-party service, or you can set up your website, blog, and so on to do it automatically. For example, large blogging sites such as WordPress, Blogger, or TypePad have pinging built in to their service already. For other sites, you simply have to submit the URL of the page you updated, the name of the page or title of your article or information, and then click Submit. The service you are using will respond by broadcasting a message that your URL has been updated.

Leveraging Social Media

Social media, like all marketing, is about developing relationships with your customers. It is not a short road to profits. You also need to know (and may have already discovered this while exploring your personal social media networks) that it can take an enormous amount of time if you approach it casually.

We have seven guidelines for developing your social media plan and making the most of time and resources.

Stretch

As you develop your social media plan, you need to work with people who have a deep digital reach. Traditional marketers focus on what they know in order to help you establish a niche in the marketplace. They rely on tried and true methods for design and marketing campaigns. (Think about flyers, brochures, contest entries, or contact forms on a website.) If your usual marketing is not getting you the results that you need, make sure you increase your strength by bringing on expertise that gets you what you need. Don't hire someone to be your social media marketer if they have no knowledge about the areas that you want to reach.

Build a Community

What you really need is to get people talking about you in a way that they promote your brand independently of you. Seth Godin has written about this as **tribes**. The Grateful Dead, a wildly successful band for more than 40 years, focused on providing their fans with experiences at their concerts rather than selling albums. Fans (called Deadheads) went to the concerts because they knew that each one was different from the last. Think of the things that you can do for your customers that are different than what everyone else is doing.

Watch Out for Social Media Experts

Social media is constantly evolving, and it is one aspect of marketing, but it is not all there is to marketing. Marketing consultants who are also specialists in social media understand its fluidity. They can help you navigate and establish your brand in the social stream as one aspect of your marketing plan. However, make sure that they can do what they say they can do. Ask for references and look at what they've done in the past.

Be There

Whichever social channels that you use (and there are more coming out all the time), make sure that you participate **with** your community. Don't ask a question on Twitter, for example, and then not be around or available to reply to people's answers, or you will turn them off. Better still, give them something they have not even thought to ask for yet.

Find Your Customers

When you conduct your market analysis, be very clear about where your customers are. Make sure you reach them and their friends so that they are able to talk about you. This doesn't mean that you need to sign up on every social platform there is, because you won't have time. Focus on methods of reach that work for your customers.

Be a Person

There is a lot of artificiality in social media. While systematizing and pre-planning updates makes sense, you look like a robot if you come off like something that has been automated. Make sure that some of your personality and character shines through the things that you say.

Follow Others

It's not appropriate to be a one-way machine in social media. For example, if you are on Twitter and have 2,500 followers, and you only follow 20 people, you will not be able to reply to people who are speaking with and about you. We know you cannot read comments from 2,500 people a day, but we also know that you can organize people into categories and lists. That way, you can participate in the community you are trying hard to build, instead of being a sandwich board on the street corner that simply makes an announcement. If you are blogging, make sure that you reply to people's comments on your blog posts and that those posts provide people with information they can use, rather than just writing them as a billboard for your products.

Remember: your social media strategy is a portion of your overall Internet strategy, which is a portion of your overall marketing strategy.