

## The Difference Between a Strategy and Tactic?



A few weeks ago, I wrote about the importance of creating or updating your strategic marketing plan in today's tough economy. It was a lengthy post, fleshing out the **components of a marketing plan**. I mentioned I'd follow-up that post with a close look at strategies and tactics. So, here we go!

What exactly is a strategy? you might ask. And how does it relate to your marketing effort? Well, my definition of a strategy is that it's a big, broad idea for moving your business forward (in a series of "little" ways). Conversely, tactics are the specific activities you use to bring your big, strategic ideas to life.

The trick is to pick strategies and tactics that should deliver the best result for your time, energy, money, and other resources. A few examples using what's in my marketing plan for Pet Leopard Communications (or could be):

**Strategy:** Increase awareness of my products, services and talent within the Chicago advertising and public relations community.

Tactics supporting that strategy would include various publicity, advertising and/or promotional activities such as:

- Join two Chicago public relations and advertising industry organizations and serve on committees on which I can volunteer/showcase my skills and expertise.

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- Start a blog featuring Chicago public relations and advertising agency news. Build relationships with executives by contacting them to be interviewed on my blog. Feature plenty of each targeted agency's news on the blog.
- Run a Google AdWords advertising campaign geotargeted to Chicagoland blogs, the PR and ad agency communities.
- Issue a series of online press releases announcing my new Chicago clients; tips that agencies can use; a promotional contest on my blog; local industry trends, etc.
- Create and circulate a white paper or viral report showcasing great case studies, solutions, and/or creative by various local ad and PR agencies. Contact executives in charge of these successful campaigns for permission, quotes, photos, etc. and relationship building.

One could go on and on with tactical ideas. But after brainstorming your tactics, be realistic about your budget and whether you have time to implement each component. Prioritize and let some fall to the wayside for now; get busy executing those which are more likely to deliver the results you need.

Also be realistic about this: Not everyone's going to contract or buy from you the moment you reach out. Consider every point-of-contact a seed to keep watering for growth. Better still, consider every activity a chess move in your reputation management game. Like in chess, we must think ahead with a vision, anticipating the target market's needs and possible next moves.

In summary, you can probably replace my business and industry in the above examples with your own. The strategy and tactics likely extrapolate and may work for your business model, too.

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## Copywriting Spa - Here's How to Indulge!



Writing sales copy that actually sells isn't easy. Try as you may to edit yours, it still may not convert enough traffic. Grammar, spelling and usage aside, how you position the value of your goods and services must be compelling. The benefits of choosing your service or product over the competition must be conveyed in Zen.

If you've tried -- tweaked and tweaked again -- your website copy and still don't see the results you need, try a new approach. It may be time to loosen up. Indulge in a...  
Copywriting Spa!

Here's how to hire a copywriter, one with the skills necessary to heal the sales tension on your website or landing page. But when evaluating copywriters, don't initially consider costs. Focus more on finding the writing style you believe can distinctively articulate your offer. Immerse in each writer's portfolio. Follow as many links to their writing samples as you can. While reviewing, make your decision based on these strategic copywriting essentials:

**Organic SEO Scrub** – Good website and sales landing copy goes beyond being SEO friendly. It uses your highest value keywords in the headline and/or sub heading to increase website traffic. And then uses them some more. Marketing copy should be SEO-intentional. So, actually count the number of times the writer built the keywords into the copy, and where. Can this word-massage help get you near the top of Google search pages? Being there will improve your exposure, which impacts sales.

**Natural Wrap Treatment** – Conversely, too much of the above -- keyword stuffing -- isn't good. Not only can your website get D-listed by search engines for too densely repeating keywords, keyword stuffing turns off readers. Marketing copy must be SEO-friendly, but still a

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breeze to read. If you have to re-read lots of sentences in a freelance writer's work, your visitors may have the same bumpy ride. Look for writers who've achieved a smooth SEO read.

**Face Polish** – Think of your website as your 24/7 salesperson. Consider the “personality” greeting your visitors. What is this “person” saying? Is the copy saying all that a potential customer is dying to hear? Copy should open up and persuade! Copywriting gurus call this the WIIFM factor: What's In It For Me? Meaning that persuasive copywriting first addresses peoples challenges. It first strikes a nerve, and then gets into a description of how to resolve it. It gets personal and ignites a sense of understanding and trust.

Writers are everywhere online. If you plan to hire a copywriter, don't let price fool you. Never just select the least expensive writer you find. And don't assume that spending more will make your sales copy an automatic success. Go with the writer whose portfolio and samples speak to you. When you see, hear, touch and smell hypnotic copy, its fragrance will persuade you!

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