

DIRECT FORUM

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Direct Forum is a free e-mail newsletter containing useful direct marketing tips, news updates and how-to information. It's convenient, informative and I am not trying to sell you anything!

This month's topics include:

- 1. WHAT WE CAN ALL LEARN ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA FROM THE REVOLUTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST**
- 2. OOPS! FOUR RULES I LEARNED ABOUT SELLING AFTER MAKING ONE BIG MISTAKE**
- 3. HOW AND WHEN DIRECT MARKETING CAN BECOME "TARGETED MARKETING"**
- 4. WHAT SHOULD BE AT THE HEART OF A DIRECT MARKETING PLAN?**



WHAT WE CAN ALL LEARN ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA FROM THE REVOLUTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Here's a list of what worked in the Middle East and what we can all learn from it:

The power of one: One man started it all. Al Bouazizi, a poor 26-year old Tunisian who could not find a job after finishing college, became a street vendor selling vegetables to support his family.

A female police officer seized his weighing machine claiming he was working without a legal permit. The exact reasons behind Al Bouazizi's subsequent outrage is not clear. Some allege that the police officer slapped him; others say Al Bouazizi tried to complain to the authorities, but that no one listened and he felt helpless and hopeless in a corrupt and unjust society.

His frustrations reached their peak when on December 17 last year, Al Bouazizi poured gasoline on himself and set himself on fire in front of a government building.

This sparked an outrage. He became a symbol for all the young college graduates who were unemployed



Here Al Bouazizi is seen being visited in hospital by President Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali.

and a catalyst for the violent demonstrations which followed. After 24 years the revolution resulted in the fall of President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali and his corrupt regime.

Unfortunately Al Bouazizi died of his injuries on January 4, so he was not aware that he had started a process that resulted in Zine El Abidine Ben Ali fleeing Tunisia with his family and seeking asylum in Saudi Arabia.

A common rallying cry: What impressed me most was the genuine universal message that they all felt that drew them together for a common goal they were willing to sacrifice their lives for.

When interpreting the Middle East upheaval, many people have tended to project their own passions as to why it happened.

The socialites see a social media revolution; the poor see food price hikes at its core; others see a hunger for democratization; human rights groups see a backlash against corruption, state torture and abuse.

One thing for sure, there is a massive 'youth bulge' with many in the region now under 30. Each year thousands of new graduates chase very few new jobs.

So it is hardly surprising that Wael Ghonim, a marketing manager for Google, played a key role in organizing the January 25 protest by reaching out to many Egyptian youths on Facebook and Twitter.

This has so far led to the overthrow of two presidents and counting.

Ethics: A lot of social media best practices must focus on the importance of 'reach' and 'relevance'. Get those two 'R's' right, and a third 'R' — 'response' will follow. Which leads me to a fourth 'R' 'respectfulness' which we should also be striving for.

Commitment As they all have demonstrated, they were attracted to a cause and committed to it. They actually spoke more in terms of " a calling" to end years of repression and anger, which they could not tolerate any more.



Wael Ghonim addressing a crowd after being released from prison.

OTHER MATERIAL ON SOCIAL MARKETING

Blogs

Mashable - <http://mashable.com/>
Google Blog Search - <http://bit.ly/fRzmj7>
Techsoup - <http://bit.ly/cJyYeW>
John Haydon - <http://www.johnhaydon.com>
Seth Godin - <http://sethgodin.typepad.com/>
FrogLoop - <http://www.frogloop.com/>
Build a Wiki - the wiki farm <http://www.wikispaces.com>
Gov Employee Network - <http://www.govloop.com>
Irish Group - <http://bit.ly/fnTbE8>
Shirley Ayres shirleyayresconsulting.co.uk/
Social Media 101 - <http://www.socmedia101.com/>
YouTube NPO & See3 - <http://blog.see3.net/>
Blue Avocado - <http://www.blueavocado.org/>
Chris Rose's - <http://www.campaignstrategy.org>
All Facebook - <http://www.allfacebook.com>
Stanford Social Innovation - <http://www.ssireview.org/>
Richard Millington - <http://Feverbee.com>
David Meerman Scott - <http://WebInkNow.com>
Dave Kerpen - <http://www.likeable.com/blog/>
Laura Quinn - <http://idealware.org/blog>
Gavin Clabaugh - <http://digitaldiner.org/>
Marion Conway - <http://bit.ly/77zgFm>
Webinars & newsletters - <http://www.prsa.org/>
Kivi Leroux Miller - <http://bit.ly/B5HX>

Tools for posting (free, Pro& Enterprise)

HootSuite - <http://hootsuite.com/>

Good Reads Alerts & Notifications

Google Alerts - keyword social media - <http://bit.ly/a6oJl6>
Digsby - <http://www.digsby.com/>
Instapaper - <http://www.instapaper.com/>
Twitter + Paper.li - <http://paper.li/>
Yammer - <https://www.yammer.com/>

Books

Berth Kanter & Allison Fine: "*The Networked*" Nonprofit - <http://www.bethkanter.org/the-networked-nonprofit/>
Chris Brogan "*Trust Agents*" - <http://bit.ly/you0jS>

Values: It's pretty obvious that the values the entire Middle East is fighting for are the end of years of rule by one dictator and the right to self-government.

I must admit that the recent revolution in the Middle East has truly opened my eyes to the power of social media.

I have been reading an excellent book on social media, *The Dragonfly Effect* by Jennifer Aaker and Andy Smith with Carlye Adler. Once I finish, I intend to put what I learn into practice for a charitable cause and will gladly let you know what I have learned and put into practice.

OOPS! **FOUR RULES I LEARNED ABOUT SELLING AFTER MAKING ONE BIG MISTAKE**

A few years ago, while visiting a new client I made a fatal mistake.

The marketing manager had invited me to learn about her company so I could make a direct marketing and advertising pitch. We had a very productive meeting with her and some of her staff.

We discussed the target market, the objectives, possible offers, the budget and a lot of little details. I even came up with a number of ideas that they were extremely excited about.

It was all going so well.

After about an hour, I decided to leave – and that's when I made a big mistake.

Just as I was getting up from the table, one of the product people said, "Do you have time to see what we do?" I glanced at my watch, shook my head, and promised that I'd be happy to do it at our next meeting.

There was no next meeting.

I later learned from a friend who worked there, that they felt very strongly that in order for them to feel comfortable working with me, I needed to first demonstrate enough interest in their product and company.

It was a crucial next step — and I missed it. Where did I fail? What did I learn?

I had failed to connect.

And that day I was reminded of some simple selling rules:

Rule #1: Selling is a process

Creating a good first impression is the first part of that process.

- Most of what we learn about selling should come from our buying experience
- We know what we like or dislike about other salespeople

Just think back to the last time you went to a store and made a purchase

Write down what you thought of the salesperson:

What motivated you to buy from this person?

What did you like about this person?

What did you dislike?

Rule #2: Building rapport

Every basic sales process starts out with what most of the experts extol as very necessary: building a Bond or a Rapport.

However, most people think that the two are the same.

They are not.

Bonding with someone takes place when both parties can identify with each other and there is a point of commonality.

Because I was born in Bombay, when I meet someone from there I may have found a point of commonality, but this does not guarantee that I have built a rapport with that person.

A rapport is when the other person senses that they can trust you, that you understand them and their problems and they feel comfortable opening up to you.

**Building
Rapport**

Rule #3: Inspiring Confidence

Business only goes where it is invited and stays when it is treated well.

Remember, even before you speak the first sentence, you speak with your body. Body language has a lot to do with it. How you feel is often reflected in your face, mannerism and gestures.



Rule #4: Effective communication starts with the ability to “listen well”

A good sales person will tell you, “Don’t be afraid to ask a question - it does not signify that you are not knowledgeable; it means that you care and wish to know more.”

Ask questions that solicit elaboration and deliberation; never ask close-ended questions that require a simple “yes” or “no”. They can only lead to a dead end in communication.

Hearing and listening are not the same. Experts will tell you that there are five different forms of listening: ***(and as a teacher I know them all too well!)***

- The apathetic listener (One who displays indifference or apparent boredom)
- The difficult listener (The know it all kind — the expert — the one who has to top what is being relayed)
- The non-attentive listener (The one who says ‘yes’ when he should say ‘no’)
- The selective listener (The one who hears only that what interests him/her)
- The empathetic listener (One who pays rapt attention to the speaker)

So take a hint, all it takes is a bit of politeness to create a good impression, build rapport, inspire some confidence.

Listen to your customers and demonstrate that you genuinely care.

And remember that failure is only bad when you don't learn from it.

HOW AND WHEN DIRECT MARKETING CAN BECOME “TARGETED MARKETING”

There is a point when direct marketing can become ‘Targeted Marketing’.

That point is when the writer creating the piece knows exactly what makes the house donors respond.

That has been the case for my last two mailings.

First for **Integra**, for whom I have now been working for over nine years. I have come to understand their house donors so well that I know who to target, when to target them and what will make them respond.



Case in point, the last mailing generated the highest level of response ever. The list was segmented into 2 categories and each received a specific mailing:

- Just a handful of high-end donors generated a 15% response with contributions of well over \$20,000
- Regulars donors generated a 7% response

The results for another client of mine, **Special Olympics Ontario**, were even better.

Over 19.65% of the house list responded, 15% made an average donation of \$70.30 while another 15% gave an average of \$57.91.

This marks the highest response during the seven years I have been working for them.

WHAT SHOULD BE AT THE HEART OF A DIRECT MARKETING PLAN?

Measuring and testing every direct mail initiative.

Measuring means checking every thing from:

- Different kinds of message and to whom they are directed;
- Different offers to different list selections;
- Different marketing segments to different appeals;
- Results from postcards as opposed to lumpy mail;
- Different approaches to different mediums.



Measuring should be aimed at different ways to increase response. The change must be just in one small area so it is clearly evident as to whether that made the prospects or customers respond.

However when it comes to testing, there is really only one kind of test that is important: Tactical testing.

Tactical tests should be very thorough. They should include testing of lists, timing, demographics, geographical and "buyer" data.

As well you should plot response patterns by local and/or regional areas.

Tactical tests must zero in on improving the efficiency and response economically and effectively.

Testing allows you to verify your hypothesis starting small and then rolling out to a full list to maximize your chance of success.

By doing both testing and measuring, you can change most messages right away to take advantage of the information you have gleaned.

You have complete control over the media, the audience and your offer. Now which other medium besides direct mail allows you to do this so effectively!



OPT IN, OPT OUT, OPTIONS:

- To unsubscribe, send me an e-mail simply saying, "Please, remove".
- To participate, send me an e-mail with your suggestions.
- To post a comment, please include your name, e-mail address and your thoughts.

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