



JEFFREY DOBKIN

America's Master Marketer

[Home](#) | [Vital Signs](#) | [Articles](#) | [Order Info](#) | [Bio](#) | [Book Info](#) | [Intelligent Testing System](#) | [Contact Me](#)

[Full Article List](#)

18 Marketing Assumptions that Aren't True

Customers are interested in what I'm doing

They don't care what you're doing, they're only interested in what you're doing for them. I've seen a lot of newsletters wrecked by self-serving articles that just talk about the company, not what the company is doing for the customer.

They're interested in what I have to say

They're only interested in what's in it for them. If you're not saying anything about them, I guarantee they're less interested in what you're saying, and more interested in what's on TV.

My recipients always read my direct mail packages

If you're lucky, 5 people in 100 read your direct mail package, and 0 to 2 people order. 2%? Hey, if you hit this number consistently, consider it a major success.

"We can educate the market"

Sure you can - if you're Bill Gates. But if you don't have the funding that he has - you can't. Don't even try. Don't even think about trying. Educating even just a small niche market segment is tough enough for the dominant players in that particular field. Educating consumers, even for the biggest companies in the world, still requires time, money, effort, money and time and did I mention money? If your product launch starts out with the phrase "We can educate the market," forget it.

It's a good deal for them

Even if it is, they won't know it. Even when you tell them, which has a cost unto itself, they may not believe it. With all the other firms saying what a great deal their company is offering, YOUR customers may not realize just how good a deal your offer really is. Then, if it's too good, you'll lose your element of trust and people will be scared to buy from you.

Sure they'll sell - ours are the best in the world

They may be, but you'll have to get in line - in back of all the other people who are saying "Ours are the best in the

By now, they've forgotten. Life goes on. Don't try to apologize in every ad, every newsletter, in every phone call, in every Just start focusing on the new and better products, services and benefits you're offering. Heck, it's not like you're the President and you got caught with an intern with your er Other people will have forgotten your faux pas by the time you've finished this article. I recommend you do the same.

I'll declare bankruptcy and that will be the end of my troubles

If your business is doing lousy and you think that's a headache, declaring bankruptcy is the beginning of a migraine - a bad migraine. I recommend you 1. Call all your vendors and tell them of your payoff schedule, even if it's just \$5/week. 2. Stick to the schedule. If you need to go bankrupt, they'll file for you. Either way, no one said you had to be doing what you're doing for the rest of your life - start thinking about what you'd really like to do

We'll create an "Image" with this ad

Unless you run a full-page ad every issue, your image ad probably won't work. No offense, but unless you have really deep pockets - forget image: try making money with your ads. Like advertising in the direct response industry, your ads should have a direct equivalent of "this ad cost us this much money, and we made this much money in return." Then, look to see if the last number is bigger than the first number. If it is, repeat the ad. If it isn't, I can pretty much guarantee it isn't helping your "image".

It takes 3 insertions for consumers to respond to your ad

If your first ad sinks like a stone the first time, I got news for you: the second time you place the ad in the same magazine or newspaper - and yes, the third time you place your ad - it will sink like a stone also. Never contract for more than one ad placement in any magazine or paper until you test it.

We'll just get this one out on the market, we'll make money on the next one

world." You'll have to convince everyone - one person at a time. Take cookies, for example; everyone says theirs are the best. If your cookies are really the best, your pitch will sound exactly like everyone else's. It's going to be tough to convince your market, and sending everybody a sample is too expensive.

The market is 57 million. If we get 2% of that

This way of determining your marketing success - by seeing how large the total market is - has no bearing on what percent of the market you will actually acquire. The size of the market is completely autonomous of any percentage of your own market share or any of your own sales figures. If it was relevant, firms would only market products to the larger market classifications. If the percentage formula worked, everyone would be wildly successful. It's kind of like a dog thinking, "I'll just have to stop that one wheel, and the rest of the car will stop, too." It just doesn't work.

Build a better mousetrap, and the world will beat a path to your door

If you believe this, obviously you've been reading too many comic books. Only invention submission firms will beat a path to your door. Look up mousetraps on the web, or at the IBM patent site, and see how many are incredible designs, then see how many names you recognize.

Of course we'll succeed, we're the best in the business

Unfortunately your success is not determined by the quality of your work - it's determined by the quality of your marketing.

In truth, you will succeed if your MARKETING is the best in the business. In direct mail, you can succeed if your copy is the best in the business - people buy your product directly from your copy - without seeing the product at all.

You can be the best architect in the world, and still go out of business because you don't know how to market your services: to make the phone ring and bring in customers. While your good work may have a hand at your eventual success as you generate referrals, your initial success is directly determined by your marketing. Word of mouth may be the best form of advertising, but it's slow. Can you afford to wait?

This was a catastrophe - we're ruined!

OK, so something bad happened. A few industry people heard about it for a brief instant. I assure you it wasn't as big a news story to them as it was to you.

If you don't make any money on this one, there won't be a next one. It is the objective of business not to manufacture products, but to make a profit. If you just need experience, work for someone else and at least get paid for it.

A patent will protect me

A patent doesn't protect you - a patent only gives you the right to protect yourself. Big difference. A patent is only as strong as its claims. Defense of a patent is expensive. For the most part design patents are worthless. Remember - there are people and firms out there that are specialists in "Patent Circumvention" Before laying out \$5,000 for a patent better think it through.

It will be easy to market, everyone needs one

I've often thought the hardest product to market is a telephone. If everyone needs one, you must now reach everyone to alert them of your product availability. There is a cost associated with reaching each person, known in the magazine industry as CPM or cost to reach 1,000 people. There is a huge cost to reach everyone - and alert them of the availability of your products. There are still further costs in showing them your products and describing your benefits. On a small budget, it can be tough. I'd rather market a product to a specific industry.

They couldn't print it if it wasn't true

Don't believe everything you read. There are only 17 assumptions in this article. Always check for yourself.

Jeffrey Dobkin, author of the incredible 400-page marketing manual, *How To Market A Product for Under \$500* (\$29.95), and *Uncommon Marketing Techniques* (\$17.95) - 33 of his latest columns on small business marketing exactly like the one you just read, now has a third book: *Inside Secrets of Direct Marketing*. Books are available directly from the publisher - 800-234-IDEA. These books are completely filled with tips and techniques to make your marketing faster, cheaper, more effective - and fun. You never learned this stuff in college! Dobkin cuts right through the theoretical crap and demonstrates a wealth of practical how-to direct marketing techniques. He is also a speaker, a direct mail copywriter who will change your letters and direct mail packages that sizzle with response, and a marketing consultant. To place an order call toll free: 800-234-IDEA, or to speak with Mr. Dobkin personally call 610/642-1000. Fax 610/642-6832. Phone orders welcome - Visa, M/C, AMEX. From The Danielle Adams Publishing Company Box 100, Merion Station, PA 19066. Or visit him at www.dobkin.com. Satisfactor Always Guaranteed.