

7 EASY STEPS

TO AN EFFECTIVE MARKETING STORY



TRACY LEE THOMAS
AUTHOR



RevMarketing.com

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Author Website: TracyLeeThomas.com

TRACY L THOMAS Life

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Intro to 7 Easy Steps... To An Effective Marketing Story

So, what is a marketing story? And how is it meaningful to me and my business, how can it help my business grow, and how can it help me overcome marketing challenges in today's fast-paced and seemingly ever-changing world?

These are all legitimate and hard-hitting questions that deserve an equally hard-hitting answer. And that's what we're going to provide in this book.

Simply put, a marketing story is a means of building a story brand for your business. It allows you to build a level of trust and rapport with your customer base that you cannot achieve anywhere else. That's because it will enable you to simply and efficiently identify elements of a brand through the techniques of story that help you zero in on issues, challenges, and problems that affect your success. Then it allows you to see clearly defined solutions to those challenges and shows you how to overcome them.

And ultimately, it aids you in building a better brand and better business model altogether.

And lets you achieve that success you deserve.

So, let's dive in and see just exactly what these seven easy steps are to an effective marketing story.

1 | CHARACTER/HERO

*Identifying the target audience and
defining the hero of your story.*

There's always a character, the main character, or the hero wherever there's a story. When we're considering our business in the sense of a marketing story, it's natural for us to think of ourselves as that main character or the hero. After all, we're the ones with the vision, we're the ones putting our backs into the success of our business, and we're the ones facing down all these marketing challenges. But does that mean or make us the hero?

No, it doesn't. And here's why.

We're looking at this from the wrong perspective for success. We want our business to sell, and we want our product to sell and become popular. And that means we need people coming through the door or online to buy and invest in our business. So that means *they* are the ones that are central to our marketing story. And *they* are the hero of this narrative. That's where our focus always needs to be, on them, on the customer. And not on ourselves. Good business means taking care of the customer first and foremost and on ourselves last. If we take care of our customers, they'll take care of us, and our business will grow. If we focus on ourselves first, we're stunting ourselves and our growth potential. It's an easy mistake to make when you're starting. But every successful business owner will tell you the same thing.

Customer-first.

Do that, and the rest will follow. So that makes our customer the main character and hero. But *who* exactly are they? Imagine who that ideal customer for your business is. What's their age bracket?

What's their economic bracket? Answer that question, and that'll tell you what they value and how they'll see your product, and that will determine whether they're that main character we're looking for. Consider, for instance, if your product is high-end vehicles. Your demographic is naturally going to be with upper-class customers because they are looking for exactly what your product offers, class, style, taste, luxury, and expense. The same goes for if you were producing economy vehicles. Your customer base will be on the lower end of that spectrum, people looking for the best value, economy, and thrift.

Determine how the market will see your product, which will help determine who your customer base is. And there you go; you've got your main character.

But we'd like to stress again that this deserves a thoughtful process of determining who your main character really is. Oftentimes we can *think* we know, and we can even become fixated in the sense of desiring a specific customer base but maybe being a little off in our assessment. And then we find ourselves perplexed. Consider, for instance, how many times we've heard the stories of fellow businesspeople trying something out, and on the surface, it sounds like a great idea. But then they open the doors expecting a flood tide of customers and business. But then there's nothing! Just crickets and they can't figure out where they went wrong.

Chances are it's because they misfired on their audience, they misunderstood who the main character in their story was, and they ended up marketing to the wrong people.

It happens all the time, and it can happen to us; however, it's not an end-all-be-all problem. It's easily fixable, and it just takes some readjustment in our perspective.

And that's why this step is the first one, and why it's one of the most important ones.

We need to see our product from the market's perspective and what it has to offer.

Let's consider one example of the problem above: thinking we're marketing to one group when we're actually marketing to another. What if we opened a coffee shop and that's our product, and we're expecting a particular group? We're expecting the main character we thought we'd determined. Everything seems to be right, but it's not working for some reason. Then maybe we discover that on days we thought would be peak days, there's actually maybe some other event going on that's drawing those customers away. There's an outside factor that's causing us a hiccup, and we hadn't factored that in because we couldn't until we experienced it; it wasn't a thing we could determine beforehand.

So, we readjust our thinking, we see our coffee shop from *that outside perspective*, and it can be a lifesaver; it can change the way we see ourselves ultimately.

This is once again just one more aid in helping us to zoom in on who our main character is, not who we want them to be, who we expect them to be, but who is really going to be interested in our product, and who is going to keep coming back as our customer base, our audience, or main character.

So, now that we've determined our first step let's go over three questions that might help us remember what we've learned and keep it at the forefront of our minds.

1. Which perspective is the most valuable in determining who our character is?

Our own? Or the Markets?

2. What would the market or the people really say about your product? Would that align with what *you* think they'd say?
3. Can you find at least one perspective about your product that is different than what you thought it would be? For instance, is there a type of customer that might be interested in your product that you hadn't imagined at first?

2 | THEIR CHALLENGES

Recognizing the customers' problems.

So, what challenges await the hero in our story brand narrative? Because most assuredly, they do and they will, and that's what brings us to our next step. We identify the challenges they face by reaching us, interacting with us, and seeing our business as the solution to their problems.

This step is essential because it builds upon what we learned in the first step, who our customers really are. After all, now we can divine what they want and what problems they might be encountering in trying to get it. Think of the carmaker who's determined his middle-class customers are looking for an experience as much as an economy vehicle. So, he considers the problem from their perspective. He imagines himself driving to work every day and considers what that drive might be like. Then he can immerse himself in the customer experience in the vehicle he's providing, and he can determine how he can make that trip easier, nicer, better, and more enjoyable. That's because he knows, as we said, the customer *experience* is selling them on his vehicle, and not just the vehicle itself. So, he considers their driving conditions; are they warmer? Cooler? What if it's cold all the time? Boom, there's a ton of material to work with right there. How would you go about making the vehicle warmer or better adapted to those conditions, thereby reducing stress and concerns that come with that?

See what we mean?

You are looking at the entire thing from your customers' perspective, and that is aiding in you identifying challenges they face. It's revealing solutions to you that your product provides.

So, the carmaker finds a way to make his car warmer or make it warm up faster. Then he finds a way to increase safety or adaptability to those cold conditions.

Right there, he just identified a couple of significant problems that his customers had, and his vehicle was the solution to those problems.

Some of those problems might be big or small, but they'll all affect the way your customer sees your business and whether they see your business as the solution to their problem.

Maybe your business is doing great, but customers have a problem with not *seeing* your business. Perhaps you need an increased web presence? Maybe you need a better or smarter marketing strategy that incorporates a strengthened web presence. In one sense, that's a small problem, easily fixed, but it has the potential to pay big dividends down the line as more and more customers enjoy your increased visibility. Sometimes the problem can be easily remedied or spotted. Maybe your customers ask specific questions, and it's always the same question? There you go, an easily spotted question with an easy fix; you post the answer to that question on your website or in your store and done deal. Other times the challenge might be more challenging. What if your customers have a challenge even they aren't quite aware of?

That's where perspective comes in. You keep looking at your business from their perspective as if you're the customer. For instance, what if you have a lot of traffic to your website and people are spending a lot of time on your website. But nobody seems to be buying? You've got a few different options, but the critical element is discovering *why* people are spending lengthy amounts of time but aren't buying. Maybe it's something as simple as the arrangement of information on your website or webpage, and people are just confused, so a simple rearrangement of things and you see a marked change. Maybe it's something more profound?

The point we are making here is that your customers will have problems and challenges.

But you and your product will always be the solution.

So, here are three questions to consider conditioning yourself to always be the solution.

1. If our customers experience challenges, where do they find the solution?
2. Identify a possible challenge your customers could have and how could you solve it?
3. Are your customers already communicating a challenge they have, and if so, what is it?

3 | MEETS THE GUIDE

Crafting the best guide.

So, steps one and two tell us what step three is: who we are and what role we play in this story brand narrative.

We are the guide. We assist the character, the hero, which is the customer, in obtaining what they want. We help them overcome their challenges and present to them the solution, which is our product. Like many lessons, it's easy enough to grasp, but it's also easy enough to forget and allow ourselves, and ultimately our own efforts, to get sidelined. That's because we allow ourselves to become so focused on ourselves, on our efforts, and we forget that role. We focus on trying to achieve our successful business goals, and by that, we tend to become inwardly focused when we should always be focused outwardly. If we do that, if we train and cause ourselves to be focused constantly outward, then the inward will naturally follow.

It's a matter of working smart, not hard.

Working smart, not hard, doesn't mean you take shortcuts. It doesn't mean you go halfway with things. It means finding more efficient solutions to how you are already doing things. It means conditioning yourself to look for opportunities and ways to improve your performance. If your performance is bad, you make it good, and if it's good, you make it better.

But it all starts with looking at where you are at, where you are likely to be, and where you want to be. And that means looking at your current role.

Understand our role. That's the importance of this chapter and understanding why it's necessary to the success of our business to

focus outwardly and not inwardly. We train ourselves to consistently see our business as the customer does. Eventually, we can begin to assess and anticipate challenges our customers will face even before they do. We can determine how best to see those challenges met. In this sense, we're always remaining one step ahead of our customer, our hero, just as the guide does in the story. And we are always there, and we are a permanent fixture in the world of our main character. We create a bond of reliability with our customer base, and we create an atmosphere in which the customer knows that they will always be listened to.

Consider the importance of what we just said.

The customer will always know they are being listened to.

That is profound. And it's even more profound in the effect it will have on our business. The reason is we are creating or placing value as much on our product and even more on our relationship with the customer. That is what will generate a return buyer. That is what will create repeat business and loyal customers who continue to look to us as the solution to their challenges and needs. It is our product and our interaction with our client that the client sees as valuable. And that is irreplaceable.

So, when it is seen in that light, what ways can we enhance and create that kind of relationship with our client?

We are already looking to provide solutions to their challenges, so what else?

We can listen to their opinions on our product, not necessarily their problems but just their opinions, and perhaps ways we can make it better.

We can listen to their desires for new things we might offer them.

And we can address their grievances when they have them. We show them they matter.

So, let's pose three questions and see how it helps us enhance our guide perspective.

1. Think of a time when you acted as a guide to your client. Were they satisfied, and did they feel listened to?
2. Think of a time when you answered a client's grievance and how you handled it. Could you have handled it better?
3. Think of a time when you saw a client's needs and left them happy. Were they a repeat customer?

4 | WHO CREATES THE SOLUTION

Comprehensive planning, finding the big picture.

Comprehensive planning is about creating the solution that solves or meets the needs of the customer audience. It's about creating protocols that allow you to be prepared for any eventuality. Throughout your business life, you'll encounter common problems and sometimes not-so-common problems. But the point of planning is creating solutions that can be applied to these problems when they crop up, and they will. What happens if a customer placed an online order and didn't receive the product? What happens if they are unsatisfied in some fashion with what they received? Things like this will happen, and it's important to be prepared for them and show the customers that you are prepared. That's key in creating solutions and implementing them. It also helps preserve that bond of trust and value to your relationship because it shows them that you are listening and giving value to them and what they have to say. You are fully prepared to see them completely satisfied and the problem rectified. So, you create specific steps for when a customer says they didn't receive their order, tell the customer each step you are taking or will take, and show them that you've done it. This again lets them know you're doing everything possible to see to their need.

Afterward, you have those steps available the next time something similar happens. And in doing so, you are not caught off guard and left standing before the customer with no plan to address their grievance and leave them unattended.

The immediate goal here is to eventually build a library or catalog of contingency plans so that you can address virtually anything that happens from a customer placing their order for your product to their receiving it and essentially signing off on complete satisfaction. Often you'll discover that after you've done this, even if something happens, you can sometimes find opportunity in the problem or challenge.

Consider, for instance, a customer ordered something from your online web page, and somewhere along the way, it wasn't received, so they called you and voiced a complaint. You received it and went about your troubleshooting.

You have a plan for this sort of thing, so you inform them of the steps you are taking, listen and address their grievance, and ultimately get them their product. But it doesn't stop there. You have taken all the steps necessary, listening, extending an apology for the inconvenience, etc. Then you see an opportunity to go the extra mile and offer them something complimentary for their trouble. Because you went this extra mile, they are so abundantly pleased that they say so, leave a positive review, and tell others about what you did to help them, which encourages others to look you up and consider becoming a customer themselves. What you just did was textbook execution of troubleshooting with a plan and implementing that plan, communicating with the customer, and seeing and seizing opportunity where there was trouble. It could very easily have been a disaster, and for businesses that don't implement this step in the story brand narrative, that's exactly what happens, disaster.

They don't have a plan, so they don't communicate anything but negativity to their customer. They reveal to them they don't have a plan, they aren't listening, and insinuate that the problem really isn't even theirs, it's the customers, and there's not going to be any positive resolution. You can easily see how this could practically torpedo a business. But all of this is avoided in your case, and what is more, you turned a mistake into an opportunity of gold.

You created even more value to your relationship with your customer, you enhanced your prestige and your trust with them,

and you left them even more satisfied than they would have been had the problem or challenge not even cropped up in the first place!

That is outstanding and a business model of comprehensive planning to follow!

So, three questions to consider.

1. Has a problem cropped up in your business that you turned into gold?
2. Do you have protocols in place to deal with challenges?
3. When did you have a problem that ended up less than satisfactory, and what could you have done to change that?

5 | CALLING THE CUSTOMERS TO ACTION

*Getting your prospective customer to
TAKE the next action.*

A call to action is exactly that, as it applies to our story brand narrative. It encourages and calls the customer audience to act on something, in this case, your product. A call to action can either be direct or transitional.

A direct call to action is posting things like BUY NOW or SIGN UP TODAY. It's a means of calling the audience to move immediately on your product and put in an order, come into your shop, go to your webpage, or something similar.

A transitional call to action is like offering a trial offer in the sense that they maybe aren't paying a full subscription price or the like, they're catching a break, but it's causing or encouraging them to stay with you and go all in.

A call to action is also a means of communication in that you are letting the customer know they are there and you want to engage them. Anything you use to engage them, like an email list, phone calls, or the like, is a call to action because you are directly reaching out to the customer or audience to encourage them to do business. Calls to action are used all the time. In a wide variety of ways, from email lists which allow you to let your customers and even potential customers know about upcoming deals you might be offering, to just cold calling customers or potential customers and plainly asking if they'd be interested in your services or products.

The digital world of social media calls to action has become even more vibrant, wide-ranging, and wide-reaching. There are message boards and social media platforms where you can engage customers and potential customers all across the globe. And it presents you with an abundance of wealth in opportunities to seek out new and interesting ways of calling your potential customers to action. The skies are the limit to what you can do. And in many ways, it's also an effective means of discovering for yourself what works and what doesn't so that you can constantly remain on the forward-moving of momentum, using it for you instead of against you. So, look for ways to use social media to enhance your ability to call to action. Are there ways that look effective that you aren't taking advantage of? It bears thinking about and watching the market to see what is already working, what isn't, and how you can apply that to your business.

It's effective, it works, it's forward-moving, and it leads to success.

So, let's consider three questions that can help us build toward success.

1. When was the last time you had a call to action? What did it look like?
2. What future methods of calls to action could you incorporate that you aren't already?

3 Think of a time when you could have used a call to action and didn't. How could you have improved it? Or what call to action would have been helpful to driving business?

6 | THE SUCCESS STORY, OUTCOME A

Sharing for others to see.

There is an old saying that success breeds confidence. And that is no less true in your world of business. And that confidence is what encourages a customer to want to do business with you and see you as the solution to their problem to find their success.

SO, TALK ABOUT IT.

Share that news in the form of testimonials or reviews, or statements to your public. Let them know about your successes so that that breeds confidence in them that translates to continued business. It ultimately builds longevity into your business, and it's what you are all about.

Success stories also perform an important role in showing and telling your customer audience how you take care of them. It shows them and tells them how you are going to deal with them if they opt to become a customer. It reassures them, encourages them, it engages them. It allows them to make an informed decision and indeed answers many questions they might already have about doing business with you.

Many times, potential customers will have questions about doing business with someone. They seek out and look for reviews; they want to know where their strengths are, and if any, where their weaknesses are. They want to know what the product is like; did someone enjoy it? Did it leave someone wanting? How does that company deal with its mistakes? How do they engage their customers? Do they go the extra mile for their customers?

In short, they are asking, will you value your relationship with them.

And that is precisely and exactly what success stories do. They inform the potential customer that you WILL value their relationship and continued business, and you will treat them with all the respect of a valued customer.

It shows them that you are forward-moving, that you are constantly looking for ways to improve your business. And it shows them that success for you depends on your success for them.

Post examples or stories about when you met a customer's challenge and left them superbly satisfied with your business. Ultimately this leaves customers curious and wanting to do business with you.

1. When was the most recent success you had you could post?
2. Are you posting about success stories now? If not, why?
3. What methods of calling to action are you not using now?

7 | FAILURE, OUTCOME B

It's never the end.

Failures happen; it's a part of doing business. But it isn't the end of the business. You pick yourself up, you learn where you failed, and you implement a solution to avoid that in the future. But you must never let it discourage you from looking for ways to improve because that is how you succeed.

The problem with failure at its core is that it's insidious; it infects your business model and, more deeply, the way you look at your business; as we said, success breeds confidence. So, it follows that failure breeds a lack of confidence, and that lack of confidence can continue to erode your faith in your own abilities. And if you are the leader, what do you think that will do to the rest of your company? It will spread like a virus if you don't take steps to avoid it.

And we can tell you right here, right now, how to avoid that.

STOP DWELLING ON IT.

It's as simple and as powerfully effective as that. You accept that you messed up and failed in some capacity. You evaluate where you went wrong, how you could have avoided it, and what you can do to fix it.

Then you get back to work.

Sure, it can be difficult to get over a failure, but you do that by looking for even small ways to succeed so you can build on that or even rebuild if you have to. But you stick to that plan. And that in itself will help aid you in recovering lost confidence or trust.

You'll discover that that in itself is a process by which you can and will succeed if you follow that business model.

Look for small ways to improve and enhance your performance. Then use that confidence to look for bigger ways to succeed and so on until you have returned to the place from whence you came, which was at the top of your game.

1. When was the last time you failed a customer?
2. What could you have done to prevent that?
3. How can you implement a solution to avoid the same problem in the future?

8 | WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

Simplicity over complexity.

This workbook is to supply you with the knowledge that we Rev Marketing have compiled in our time as a leading digital marketing agency. We want to impart you with all the tools you need to continue to succeed and grow your business to whatever lengths you imagine for it. And just as customers look to you for success, so you can continue to look to us for success and solutions to the challenges you face.

We understand what it's like to experience all of what we've told you about, from successes to failures and everything in between. And we are continuing to pioneer the field of discovering new ways to do exactly that, succeed, because we know that your success is our success.

So, we hope and encourage you to continue to look to us like a beacon in a dark and uncertain world. We hope and encourage you to continue looking to us to help you build your company and grow it even past perhaps your own imaginings.

Just taking part in our methods is an illustrative example of working smart, not hard. Why go through all the trouble of learning something the hard way when you don't have to? Why would you continue to search for an answer to a problem when a perfectly good one is already right in front of you? That's how you succeed, is plain, by working smart, not hard.

CONCLUSION

So, if you haven't already incorporated this strategy of story brand marketing to increase your business and enhance your model for success, why haven't you? These seven steps are proven effective means of reaching an audience and helping you understand the processes you go through from beginning to end, just like in a story, and reach the success you are looking for.

If you haven't, you need to evaluate your current strategy and why it isn't what you need it to be. And consider this strategy that we've presented as a solution to that need. We guarantee that you will enhance your methods and increase your chances of success.

And in the end, that's what we're all about.

About 7 Easy Steps To An Effective Marketing Story

This book is the first of five in the Workbook Series, where Tracy offers business owners the opportunity to review and analyze their business. This workbook helps the user identify the seven steps needed to build a compelling marketing story. What is a marketing story? That is a way of creating a brand story for your business; it allows you to build a level of trust and rapport with your customer base. This workbook helps guide you step by step by step to create an effective model of success for your business model.



About the Author

As a serial entrepreneur, Tracy has been building businesses since the young age of 17 years old. From developing leaders to stacking success for all levels for entrepreneurs, Tracy has helped others drive their business growth to new levels. As the Founder of Rev Marketing, he has helped thousands of entrepreneurs and businesses tell their stories online while guiding them to the next level in business.

Tracy cracked the code in driving growth factors that yielded game-changing results as a business consultant. This book is of his Rev Workshop Series Books, training business owners to own their success online and within their business.