



Monthly

MAY 2015

Marketing Morsels

Marketing is... Conversation

I'm on an "operation downsize" mission at home this year. I spend time each Saturday in my basement, filling one or two trash bags consistent with a "pecking away" inventory reduction plan. That's where I re-discovered one of my favorite books, which I read originally in 1999. It's called **The Cluetrain Manifesto**, written by a team of four authors.

I was struck by how relevant that book is **today**. It's based on the basic idea that **Marketing is conversation**. Think way back to biblical times. Marketers sold their wares directly to customers at the Ancient Bazaar. Many years later, the "new" communication called advertising filled the airways and space with one-way messages. "Modern" marketing flourished with product-oriented directives.

Then the internet entered our lives (thanks Al Gore), followed by social media. A challenge from **The Cluetrain Manifesto** put all marketers on the spot with a mandate to add conversation-based messaging to the mix – "You have two choices. You can continue to lock yourself behind facile corporate words and happytalk brochures. **Or you can join the conversation.**"



Now 21st century marketing success stories begin with companies who listen and fire back with engaging content that wins trust and teaches you something. Effective strategy is aimed at human beings. It recognizes that markets are more informed, better organized, and have the technology available to make their voices heard, similar to the purchasing

power they wielded at the ancient bazaar.

How well does your marketing respond to this challenge from the market - "If you want to talk to us, tell us something. Make it something interesting for a change."

Make sure your communication is market-oriented, not product-oriented. Is engaging conversation at the core of your marketing communication? And does it fit an integrated plan approach?

Have a good May. Until next month's Morsel, I'll be scouring my basement for more hidden treasures.



Call Jack Cantwell at SkyLimit Marketing
717-269-0288
for a free consultation.
You can also email
jack@skylimitmarketing.com
or visit www.skylimitmarketing.com



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