

## Outsourcing Your Marketing

**If you are not familiar with the Marketing Function, then you should outsource it.**

The ideal situation for any business is to have a marketing representative acting on your behalf to create opportunity for your business's products and/or services. The major problem is that you bear the full cost of this person's salary and benefits along with the time it takes to manage him or her. The benefits are that, typically, the right person will be a dedicated employee who is passionate about growing your company, bringing in sales and sharing in rewards and profits.

If only it were this easy. If you knew a salesperson could bring in \$20,000 worth of business for every \$10,000 of salary he or she was paid, hiring a salesperson would be a no-brainer. In reality, the biggest challenge is educating or finding someone that knows as much about your industry, product, service or business as you do. Typically, this requires a long startup curve that's often not worthy of the investment. Evaluating all these factors will help you determine if a salesperson is the right move to bring in more business for you.

If you are strictly trying to get the word out about your company, then using the outsourced services of a marketing agency is probably for you. An outsourced marketing professional will create advertising campaigns, make calls, arrange appearances, follow up with media, solicit press and so on. Their efforts will allow you to go face-to-face or phone-to-phone with prospective clients.

When they focus on the details, you're free to do what you do best. A marketing agency typically does all a publicist would do, but spends much more time developing your marketing strategy, defining target markets and ways to communicate to your targets via campaigns, developing websites and collaterals (brochures), media kits to get more PR placement, and making the contacts. Remember: Whether you go with a marketing agency, their job is to get the word out about you. At this point, closing the sale is still left up to your selling process. Hiring a marketing agency does not guarantee an increase in sales. Neither does hiring a salesperson, but the probability of increased sales does go up when you hire one. This decision, of course, has to be weighed against the cost and training time involved.

A marketing manager will coordinate all your marketing in addition to the PR, and spend time planning your business's communications. The result will be a big-picture business planning approach for growing your business. Again, getting someone up-to-speed or knowledgeable about your industry must be evaluated.

**As you can see, there are a variety of methods to gaining new business and growing your company. Evaluating your overall strategy—as well as resources such as time, training, salaries and benefits—will help you determine your best course of action.**