

This Is Marketing: You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn to See by Seth Godin

Chapter Six – Beyond Commodities

- Problem first: There's a gap in the market where your version of better can make a welcome change happen. Not a tactical change. Not a quarter-inch hole, or even a quarter-inch drill bit. No, we can change someone on an emotional level. Our calling is to make a difference. A chance to make things better for those we seek to serve.
- The commodity suckout: Selling ice cream on the beach in the summer is easy. Raising people's expectations, engaging in their hopes and dreams, helping them see further—that's the difficult work we signed up for.
- Imagine a shoeshine stand downtown. Any of these edges and stories and transformations are available to the craftsperson as soon as he decides to make a difference. Knowing that this is the story your customer tells himself is insufficient. You still have to act on it, open the door to the possibility, and organize the entire experience around that story. This is the work that helps people understand that you are special, and this is the work that makes things better.
- Find and build and earn your story, the arc of the change you seek to produce. This is a generative posture, one based on possibility, not scarcity. Now that you've chosen your audience, where do you want to take them?
- Good stories:
 1. Connect us to our purpose and vision for our career or business.
 2. Allow us to celebrate our strengths by remembering how we got from there to here.
 3. Deepen our understanding of our unique value and what differentiates us in the marketplace.
 4. Reinforce our core values.
 5. Help us to act in alignment and make value-based decisions.
 6. Encourage us to respond to customers instead of react to the marketplace.
 7. Attract customers who want to support businesses that reflect or represent their values.
 8. Build brand loyalty and give customers a story to tell.
 9. Attract the kind of like-minded employees we want.
 10. Help us to stay motivated and continue to do work we're proud of.
- Great marketing is the generous and audacious work of saying, "I see a better alternative; come with me."
- Experts Exchange created profit via frustration. Joel worked with his cofounder, programmer Jeff Atwood, to come up with a different approach: make the questions visible, make the answers visible, and pay for the whole thing with job advertising. After all, what better place to find great programmers than a website where great programmers come to ask questions and give answers?
- Joel discovered that creating a better product meant treating different people differently, telling stories to each constituency that matched its worldview and needs.
- No matter how cheap and big Amazon got, Trident managed to do pretty well. Because they do something Amazon can't. They serve coffee.
- You know this archetype: the woman who shows up with her full self, her inner truth, ready to withstand the slings and arrows of a world that doesn't get her, until it does, and then they celebrate. This is a myth.
- In general, what's true is that we need people willing to be of service. Service to the change they seek to make. Willing to tell a story that resonates with a group that they care enough to serve.

- A professional plays a role, doing the best possible work, regardless of the day or the patient or the client.
- Revealing isn't what better looks like. Revealing is reserved for your family and your closest friends, not the marketplace.
- Marketing acts (interesting choice of word, acts) are the generous actions of people who care.
- What people want is to be understood and to be served, not merely to witness whatever you feel like doing in a given moment.
- It takes a small amount of energy and guts to be authentic. You need to feel confident enough to let your true feelings be exposed, knowing that if you're rejected, it's personal. But there's a lot of hiding involved as well—hiding from the important work of making change happen. If all you do is follow your (make-believe) muse, you may discover that the muse is a chicken, and it's steering you away from the important work. And if the authentic you is a selfish jerk, please leave him at home.
- There's the opportunity to be a professional, to exert emotional labor in search of empathy—the empathy to imagine what someone else would want, what they might believe, what story would resonate with them.
- When a human being extends emotional labor to take responsibility—"Here, I made this"—then the door is open to connection and growth.

Chapter Seven – The Canvas of Dreams and Desires

- You may say you're offering a widget, but don't believe it. When you're marketing change, you're offering a new emotional state, a step closer to the dreams and desires of your customers, not a widget. We sell feelings, status, and connection, not tasks or stuff.
- It's our job to watch people, figure out what they dream of, and then create a transaction that can deliver that feeling.
- There are three common confusions that many of us get stuck on. The first is that people confuse wants and needs.
- The second is that people are intimately aware of their wants (which they think of as needs) but they are absolutely terrible at inventing new ways to address those wants.
- The third is mistakenly believing that everyone wants the same thing.
- Innovative marketers invent new solutions that work with old emotions
- We share a basket of dreams and desires, all in different proportions, but with a ton of overlap.
- Marketers, like artists, don't need many colors to paint an original masterpiece.
- When someone encounters us, will they see what we see? Will they want what we think they'll want? Will they take action?
- Begin with dreams and fears, with emotional states, and with the change your customers seek.
- Marketers make change. We change people from one emotional state to another. We take people on a journey; we help them become the person they've dreamed of becoming, a little bit at a time.
- More than 80 percent of the people who hire a broker do so by choosing the first person to return their call.
- Here's what I'd ask a broker seeking better: How will you choose to show up in the world? Will you reassure and soothe? Will you probe and explore? Will you claim that you're better, faster, more caring?
- Where's the angry bear? When someone doesn't act as you expected them to, look for their fear.

- Just as your customers want a shift in their emotional states, to move from fear to belonging, so do you.
- It's tempting to make a boring product or service for everyone. Boring because boring is beyond criticism.
- New and boring don't easily coexist, and so the people who are happy with boring aren't looking for you. They're actively avoiding you, in fact.
- It's on each of us to make an assertion. Outline a promise. Choose your extremes, find the people you seek to change, and show up with your offer.
- When designing a website, or an email campaign, or a new product, you can scrapbook it. Find the things you think that those you engage with will be attracted to and will trust. The typefaces, the pricing, the offers, the images, the interfaces . . . and cut them up, break them down into the original indivisible memes within. Then rebuild something new on top of these pieces.
- We don't pay ten times extra for more words, a bigger order of French fries, or a louder stereo. Instead, it's a different extreme, a different story, a different sort of scarcity.
- The ice cream cones are a symbol, a beacon, a chance to engage. If you run everything through a spreadsheet, you might end up with a rational plan, but the rational plan isn't what creates energy or magic or memories.
- Without a doubt, the heart and soul of a thriving enterprise is the irrational pursuit of becoming irresistible.