

# Image vs. Selling Marketing

By Nanette Miner

There are really only two types of marketing endeavors: image marketing or selling marketing. The type of marketing you choose to do depends on what you want the outcome of your marketing efforts to be.

## Image Marketing

Image marketing is a smart thing to do when you are newly in business. It is used to get your name “out there” and develop an image (hence the title “Image Marketing”) and name recognition.

Image marketing is also a smart thing to do throughout the life of your business on a consistent weekly or monthly basis. A mistake many business owners make is that they stop doing image marketing after their initial introduction to the market place. When people stop hearing about you they may assume you’ve gone out of business. Image marketing should be an on-going effort that is enhanced by Selling marketing.

Nike® is a good example of Image marketing. Nike® does excessive amounts of Image marketing and every once in awhile announces that a new line of athletic shoe has been introduced. They never announce sales of their footwear or offer coupons or promotions for their product line in any of their advertising. In fact, many times you’ll watch a television commercial and not even realize it’s a Nike® ad until the very end, when they briefly flash their logo. Nike® is 99% about image marketing. Nike® has even gone so far as to identified their company with a logo – the “swoosh.” Consumers can simply see the logo and *think* “Nike®.” Very few organization have been able to do this level of Image marketing as well as Nike® has done it.

It takes years of consistent image marketing before consumers will automatically identify your company name or logo with your business. It is well worth the effort, however, because Image marketing will brand you as “the place” to be. Image marketing allows you to charge higher fees for your services and never, ever have to discount or put anything on sale. When you make people *want* to come to your salon because of its image and reputation, they will never quibble about the price.

## Selling Marketing

Selling marketing is done when you want to make a sale. The whole intent of Selling marketing is to cause your customers to take action. In fact, many types of Selling marketing include what marketers call the “Call to Action.” The call to action is a phrase such as “Hurry! Supplies are limited.” Or “Arrive early for best selection.” The call to action jogs the consumer into thinking, “I better do this soon;” whereas Image marketing doesn’t asks the consumer to do anything.

Selling marketing is used effectively to boost sales during normally slow periods or to move products that have sat on your shelves too long. Selling marketing can also be used when you've added a new staff member and would like to develop clientele for that person. If you run a promotion such as, "All manicures half-off when you ask for Jill," you know you will make immediate sales from people who will take advantage of the promotion.

Selling marketing can involve **offers** – such as the one mentioned above, or **limited time promotions** such as, "Now through Saturday, buy two and get one free," and **coupons** which are a combination of offers and limited time promotions. Coupons identify a specific product or service and a specific special offer, such as dollars-off or a percentage-off of the normal price. The disadvantage to using any of the three types of Selling marketing mentioned here, is that if you do it too frequently, consumers will just wait for the next promotional offering. Pretty soon you won't be selling anything at full price. I bet you wait for the coupon before you have your oil changed at the local shop, or you may wait until your favorite soda is on-sale at the grocery store because you know these two types of Selling marketing happen on a very regular basis – and if you wait long enough, you can take advantage of the discount.

### **Track Your Results**

No matter which type of marketing you choose to do – and a smart business owner will do both, in some combination, that allows her to maximize the return on her investment dollars – you will want to track your results.

To track Image marketing results you *must* ask each new customer who enters your salon or who calls to make an appointment, "How did you hear about us?" Keep a simple log at the front desk with the main categories of image marketing you are using and simply put a hash mark next to each when it is identified by the customer. Your image marketing may include newspapers, radio, television, charity events, mailings, word-of-mouth referrals, press releases, and even your window that faces the street. At the end of each month take a quick scan of the hash marks and determine which types of marketing are working better than the others. You'll want to put more dollars and effort into the areas that are working and less towards those that aren't. Each month replace the list at the front desk and store the old list for review at the end of the year (be sure to label it with the month it tracks). After a year or two of image marketing you may realize that newspaper marketing works better in the winter than the summer and radio marketing works better in summer than winter. You may discover that charity event involvement is your single biggest source of new customers and decide to focus on that type of image marketing exclusively. The most important part of tracking is to determine what works well and what works poorly so that you don't continue to repeat mistakes and so that eventually marketing your salon is effortless because you'll only do what works.

Track your Selling marketing in the same manner, by making a small check when a customer asks for the offer or by using coupons and having the customer turn the coupon in, to take advantage of the offer – then at the end of the month simply count up the coupons you’ve received. You’ll want to track your Selling marketing not only to determine if it worked, but also to determine if it was cost-effective. If you discounted a standard service by \$10 and 100 people took advantage of it during the course of the month, then you’ve “given away” \$1000. If the average ticket of those 100 people was \$25 (after the discount) then you’ve also *brought in* \$2,500 that you wouldn’t normally have gotten during that period. If the cost of the promotion was \$500, then you’ve come out about \$1,000 ahead of the game. If the cost of the promotion was \$1,000 then you’ve just broken even, but you *may* also have brought in new customers who will stay with you for years. You’ve also probably kept your staff busy during a normally slow period, so there may be other advantages to the promotion than the immediate return of money.

As stated earlier, you’ll want to use a combination of both Image and Selling marketing to be sure that you attract everyone who might be interested in your salon, as well as to use your marketing dollars to their maximum benefit.

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