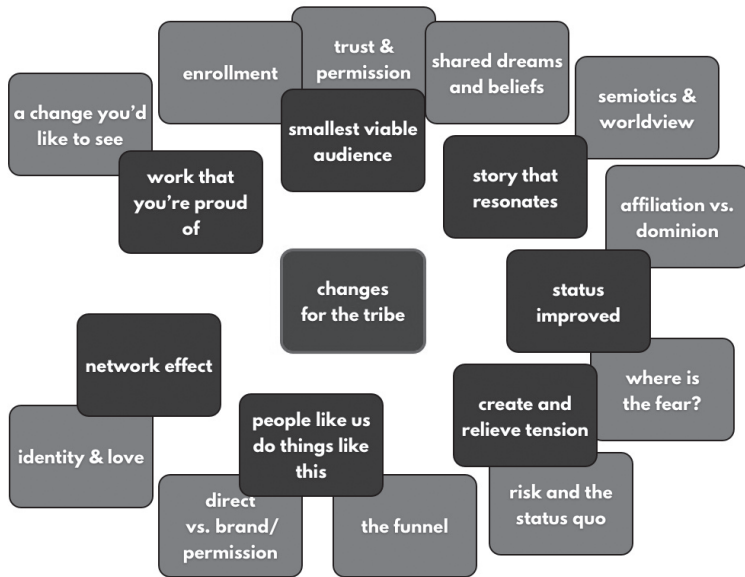


THIS IS MARKETING



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[a sketch to show you what's to come]

► CHAPTER ONE ◀

Not Mass, Not Spam, Not Shameful . . .

Marketing has changed, but our understanding of what we're supposed to do next hasn't kept up. When in doubt, we selfishly shout. When in a corner, we play small ball, stealing from our competition instead of broadening the market. When pressed, we assume that everyone is just like us, but uninformed.

Mostly, we remember growing up in a mass market world, where TV and the Top 40 hits define us. As marketers, we seek to repeat the old-fashioned tricks that don't work anymore.

The compass points toward trust

Every three hundred thousand years or so, the north pole and the south pole switch places. The magnetic fields of the Earth flip.

In our culture, it happens more often than that.

And in the world of culture change, it just happened. The true north, the method that works best, has flipped. Instead of selfish mass, effective marketing now relies on empathy and service.

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In this book, we're working together to solve a vexing problem. How to spread your ideas. How to make the impact you seek. How to improve the culture.

There isn't an obvious road map. No simple step-by-step series of tactics. But what I can promise you is a compass: a true north. A recursive method that will get better the more you use it.

This book is based on a hundred-day seminar, one that involves not just lessons but peer-to-peer coaching around shared work. In TheMarketingSeminar.com we assemble thousands of marketers and challenge them to go deeper, to share their journey, to challenge each other to see what truly works.

As you read through, don't hesitate to backtrack, to redo an assumption, to question an existing practice—you can adjust, test, measure, and repeat.

Marketing is one of our greatest callings. It's the work of positive change. I'm thrilled that you're on this journey, and I hope you'll find the tools you need here.

Marketing is not a battle, and it's not a war, or even a contest

Marketing is the generous act of helping someone solve a problem. Their problem.

It's a chance to change the culture for the better.

Marketing involves very little in the way of shouting, hustling, or coercion.

It's a chance to serve, instead.

The internet is the first mass medium that wasn't invented to make marketers happy. Television was invented to hold TV ads, and radio was invented to give radio ads a place to live.

But the internet isn't built around interruption and mass. It's the largest medium, but it's also the smallest one. There's no mass, and you can't steal attention for a penny the way your grandparents' companies did. To be really clear: the Internet feels like a vast, free media playground, a place where all your ideas deserve to be seen by just about everyone. IN fact, it's a billion tiny whispers, an endless series of selfish conversations that rarely include you or the work you do.

The magic of ads is a trap that keeps us from building a useful story

For a long time, the most efficient way for a commercial enterprise to make large-scale change was simple: Buy ads. Ads worked. Ads were a bargain. Ads paid for themselves. Besides, they were fun to make. You could buy a lot all at once. They made you (or your brand) a little famous. And they were reliable: money spent equaled sales made.

Is it any wonder that, pretty quickly, marketers decided that advertising was what they did? For most of my lifetime, marketing *was* advertising.

And then it wasn't true anymore.

Which means you'll need to become a marketer instead.

That means seeing what others see. Building tension. Aligning with tribes. Creating ideas that spread. It means doing the

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hard work of becoming driven by the market and working with (your part of) that market.

On getting the word out (precisely the wrong question)

“How do I get the word out?”

The SEO expert promises that you will be found when people search for you.

The Facebook consultant tells you how to interrupt just the right people.

The PR professional promises articles and mentions and profiles.

And Don Draper, David Ogilvy, and the rest will trade your money for ads. Beautiful, sexy, effective ads.

All to get the word out.

But that’s not marketing, not anymore. And it doesn’t work, not anymore.

We’re going to talk about how you’ll be discovered. *But it’s the last part, not the first.*

Marketing is important enough to do right, which means doing the other part first.

Shameless marketers brought shame to the rest of us

A short-term, profit-maximizing hustler can easily adopt a shameless mind-set. Spamming, tricking, coercing. Is there any other profession that proudly does this?

You won't find civil engineers who call senior citizens in the middle of the night to sell them worthless collectible coins. You won't hear of accountants who extract customers' data without permission, or orchestra conductors who proudly post fake reviews online.

This shameless pursuit of attention at the expense of the truth has driven many ethical and generous marketers to hide their best work, to feel shame about the prospect of being market-driven.

That's not okay.

The other kind of marketing, the effective kind, is about understanding our customers' worldview and desires so we can connect with them. It's focused on being missed when you're gone, on bringing more than people expect to those who trust us. It seeks volunteers, not victims.

There's a groundswell of people doing marketing because they know they can make things better. They're prepared to engage with the market because they know they can contribute to our culture.

People like you.

The lock and the key

It doesn't make any sense to make a key and then run around looking for a lock to open.

The only productive solution is to find a lock and then fashion a key.

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It's easier to make products and services for the customers you seek to serve than it is to find customers for your products and services.

Marketing doesn't have to be selfish

In fact, the best marketing never is.

Marketing is the generous act of helping others become who they seek to become. It involves creating honest stories—stories that resonate and spread. Marketers offer solutions, opportunities for humans to solve their problems and move forward.

And when our ideas spread, we change the culture. We build something that people would miss if it were gone, something that gives them meaning, connection, and possibility.

The other kind of marketing—the hype, scams, and pressure—thrives on selfishness. I know that it doesn't work in the long run, and that you can do better than that. We all can.

Case Study: Penguin Magic

Hocus has left the building.

Penguin Magic is the sort of company that they invented the internet for.

You may have grown up near a magic shop. There's still one in my little town. Dimly lit, with fake wood paneling, almost certainly with the owner manning the counter. While he may have loved the work, he certainly wasn't very successful.

Today, if you care about magic, you know about Penguin

Magic. It's not the Amazon of magic tricks (because being the Amazon of anything is difficult indeed). Instead, it has grown to significant size by being very different from Amazon and by understanding precisely what its audience wants, knows, and believes.

First, every trick for sale on the site is demonstrated with a video. That video, of course, doesn't reveal how the trick is done, so tension is created. If you want to know the secret, you'll need to buy the trick.

To date, their videos, on the site and on YouTube, have been seen more than a billion times. A billion views with no costs of distribution.

Second, the people who run the site realized that professional magicians rarely buy tricks, because they only need ten or twenty regular tricks in their bag. Since the audience changes every night, they don't worry about repeating themselves.

An amateur, on the other hand, always has the same audience (friends and family) and so he's hooked on constantly changing the routine.

Third, every trick is reviewed in detail. Not reviewed by the knuckleheads who hang out on Yelp or Amazon, but reviewed by other magicians. It's a tough crowd, but one that appreciates good work. There are more than eighty-two thousand product reviews on the site.

As a result, the quality of stock on Penguin cycles very rapidly. Creators see their competitors' work immediately, giving them an impetus to make something even better. Instead of a production cycle measured in years, it might take only a month

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for an idea to go from notion to product on Penguin. To date, they've carried more than sixteen thousand different items on their site.

Going forward, Penguin continues to invest in building connections not just with the community (they have an email list of tens of thousands of customers) but across it as well. They've hosted three hundred lectures, which have become the TED Talks of magic, as well as going into the field and running nearly a hundred live conventions.

The more magicians learn from each other, the more likely that Penguin will do well.

You're not a cigar- smoking fat cat

You don't work for a soap company. You're not an obsolete industrial marketer.

So why are you acting like one?

Your Kickstarter is nearing its deadline, so sure, you have a good excuse to spam every "influencer" you know, begging for a link. But they ignore you.

You work for a content marketing company, and you obsessively track how many clicks your articles get, even though the crap you write embarrasses you.

You make graphs of how many Instagram followers you have, even though you know everyone else simply buys followers.

You lower your price because people tell you your rates are too high, but it doesn't seem to help.

It's all the same old thing—the industrialized selfish same-old, made modern for a new generation.

Your emergency is not a license to steal my attention. Your insecurity is not a permit to hustle me or my friends.

There's a more effective way. You can do it. It's not easy, but the steps are well lit.

It's time

Time to get off the social media merry-go-round that goes faster and faster but never gets anywhere.

Time to stop hustling and interrupting.

Time to stop spamming and pretending you're welcome.

Time to stop making average stuff for average people while hoping you can charge more than a commodity price.

Time to stop begging people to become your clients, and time to stop feeling badly about charging for your work.

Time to stop looking for shortcuts, and time to start insisting on a long, viable path instead.

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