



# IMAGINATION

NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF PRINT AND MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS FROM IMAGESET

SUMMER 2012

## What is the "Rule of 7" and Why Should You Care?

Consistently acquiring new customers is an important goal for any company, but it's not an easy goal to achieve. Both consumers and business buyers now have easy access to a wealth of online information, and they can perform research and learn about products and services on their own. So, they're less likely to respond to marketing campaigns.

This challenge is not entirely new. Marketing has always been a numbers game to some extent, and acquiring new customers has always required a lot of effort. As the old saying goes, "To find a prince, you have to kiss a lot of frogs." Empowered and independent buyers make the job even more difficult than it was in the past.



There's no silver bullet that will completely eliminate the "frog kissing," but there are several steps you can take to improve your marketing efforts. These are basic, well-known marketing principles, but they're worth repeating.

- Define your target market - Understand what kinds of buyers make your best prospects and focus your marketing efforts on those buyers.
- Use accurate data - Make sure your prospect contact information is accurate.
- Make your offers as relevant as possible - Use information about your prospects to customize your marketing messages and materials.



Following these three principles will make your marketing efforts more effective, but there's a fourth component of effective marketing that's equally important - persistence.

In the 1930's, the film industry conducted research and concluded, on average, a person had to see seven advertisements for a movie before he or she would buy a ticket.

Over time, this concept became widely used throughout the marketing industry and came to be known as the Rule of 7. In its current incarnation, the Rule of 7 says that a potential buyer must be exposed to a marketing message seven times before he or she will respond.



Seven may not always be the right number, but it's undeniable it takes more than one offer to entice most potential buyers to respond. This is especially true in

customer acquisition marketing, where you are reaching out to potential buyers who may know very little about your company.

So, you need to treat marketing as an ongoing process - a series of planned contacts that are regular and relatively frequent - rather than as a one-time campaign or sporadic event.



When it comes to marketing in today's environment, the old saying needs to be expanded a bit: "To find a prince, you have to kiss a lot of frogs, and you usually have to kiss the frogs more than once."

**The Rule of 7 says a potential buyer must be exposed to a marketing message seven times before he or she will respond.**

## GOOD STUFF TO KNOW

### HARD ECONOMIC TIMES: FUNNY ADS MOST EFFECTIVE

According to a study conducted by consumer research firm Nielsen, funny ads have consistently connected best with viewers, regardless of the economy. The study found funny ads were 47% more appealing to consumers than the average ad pre-recession, and 33% more appealing during and following a recession.

Nielsen, Economy-Proof Ads: Funny Beats Frugal in Advertising, June 21, 2012

### DIRECT MAIL STILL GETS MOST RESPONSES

According to the Direct Marketing Association's 2012 Response Rate Report, telemarketing and direct mail surpass digital channels in generating the highest conversion, while email demonstrates the highest ROI.

Direct Marketing Association, June 15, 2012

### EYE OPENING QR CODE RESEARCH

It appears that when in a retail environment, almost 20% of US smartphone users have scanned a product barcode. This is roughly the same number of people who take pictures of products or call/text a friend about them. Furthermore, 73% did so to find product information, 32% to uncover a coupon or offer and 25% did so to find event information.

www.scanlife.com, March 30, 2012

### WHAT BENEFITS DO BUSINESSES GET FROM ADDING VALUE?

The benefits of adding value are clear. The majority of businesses that add value see some impact across a range of measures. For example, nine out of ten businesses say it has had a positive impact on their competitiveness and 83% say it has boosted their turnover and profits. A significant proportion go further and say adding value has had a great impact on performance - a third say this applies to their competitiveness and nearly as many report a great impact on turnover. Almost a quarter say the same about the effect of added value on market share (24%) and their ability to open up new markets (23%).

www.designfactfinder.co.uk

## SEVEN RULES FOR THE RULE OF 7

- 1. Never rely on only one type of marketing method.** Even if you are getting stellar results today, that might change in the future. Email used to be much more effective than it is today. Now with spam filters, it's harder for legitimate marketing to get through.
- 2. Utilize technology.** Automate the process as best you can. New technologies such as trigger emails, search engine optimization, and variable data printing can increase the likelihood your message will be seen by your prospect.
- 3. Set aside regular times to engage in marketing activities, even when you're busy.** Too many marketers only market sporadically because they are "too busy" to market themselves. Then they wonder why they don't have enough clients. If you continue marketing even when you're busy, you'll have fewer slow times.
- 4. Utilize content marketing.** By providing free information to your prospects on a regular basis, you are building a solid relationship. Information offered in a newsletter or blog doesn't set off alarms because it's not a sales pitch; it's a genuine attempt to educate and help.
- 5. Stay consistent with your message.** Make sure the message you want your customers to hear comes across loud and clear each time you touch them.
- 6. Stay consistent with your brand.** That's not always easy across multiple mediums, but it's essential your prospects recognize who your message is from.
- 7. Track usage - give yourself a benchmark time frame.** For example, two weeks after an email has been distributed, check to see how many opened the email, how many continued to take action from the email, etc. This will provide you with the information you need to determine if you need to adjust the time frame for the various pieces and will gauge your overall results.





## Seven Rules of Good Design

Just as you need seven exposures for your marketing to be effective, I've listed seven easy rules to help your design promote and enhance your marketing efforts.

### Rule One: Limit Your Fonts

Good design should have an overall look that is consistent. The fonts you select are the first variable you want to limit. I typically like to pick just 2 fonts per design; a header font which can have flare that your audience focuses on and a secondary body copy font that is very legible for larger amounts of content.

### Rule Two: Limit Your Colors

Start with a color strategy and stick with it. Use the color palette you've set up cohesively throughout your design. Keep in mind color values, the brightness or darkness of the color will allow flexibility within your color scheme.

### Rule Three: Add Contrast

Contrast is the value difference between the colors in the design. Contrast, when used properly can be an important tool. When misused can cause vibrating, which happens when two colors together of the same value seem to pulsate. If you use contrast properly you can draw attention to a specific area within your design.

### Rule Four: Be Aware Of Spacing

Try not to put too much content into too small of a space. Space allows your copy to be easily read and your overall design to have flow. You can accomplish good spacing by using a grid, it's your underlying system of organization for your entire design.

### Rule Five: Add Depth

Depth (or dimension) is basically, what makes something look extraordinary. Adding depth to your design will help it bust off the page, or conversely, pull the viewer in. Here are a few techniques to help accomplish depth: overlap objects; vary object size, line weight and depth of field or focus; add drop shadows and adjust perspective.

### Rule Six: Have Movement Throughout

Creating a sense of movement through a design assists in giving the end-user a clear path for their eye to follow. Sometimes this movement is instrumental in directing the viewer's eye to the places you want them to look and even the sequence in which you want them to look.

### Rule Seven: Put It All Together

Design composition is what you get when you skillfully combine all the pieces together to form a whole. The design should achieve function (purpose), which is determined by the client. Understand your design's goal, know who the target market is and keep the industry history in mind.

It's a challenge to educate about good design practices and why they should be done properly. But my motto is clean, consistent, functional and less is best. And finally, when you know the rules you can break them successfully!

Beth Rutherford, Creative Director

## News Makers

### WHAT'S NEW FROM OUR CUSTOMERS AND ASSOCIATES

**Laura Ehrlich** has founded ellee marketing communications, a boutique firm offering complete communications consulting services that support your marketing initiatives from idea-generation through creative execution. Laura is operating as president and CEO.

ImageSet delivery driver **Austin Reyna** is spending his summer vacation doing mission work in Nairobi, Kenya. Austin is surrounded by children from the Gifted Hands Primary School. Coincidentally, Austin is the son of ImageSet owner **Debbi Briggs**.



**Tom Hair** of Axiom is especially proud of their new office, a completely restored 100+ year-old fire station in the Heights area which now provides 9,000 square feet of office space for the marketing and communications agency.

**Eric Johnson**, formerly of Delta Rigging & Tools has joined Energy Solutions International as their new CMO. He was replaced at Delta by **Jeff Miller**, the new Director of Marketing.

**Katie Clark** is now Executive Director of the Greater Houston Restaurant Association.

**Charles J Kohl** is retiring from Lone Star College System August 9th.

**Donna Harwell-Aylor**, formerly with Manzanita Services, has started N-Sight Graphics, a graphic design company.



ImageSet is pleased to announce that **Mike Broussard** has joined our sales team as an account executive. Mike has spent over 20 years in the graphics industry. He has served in a variety of roles in our industry and brings with him a great deal of experience that we are delighted to have on board.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- The Rule of 7
- White Ink for Digital Printing

### COMING NEXT ISSUE:

- New ideas and products for creating inviting invitations

# ImageSet

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## YES, WE PRINT WHITE INK!

### Introducing New ElectroInk White

Finally, an opaque white ink for digitally printing white onto dark or transparent substrates. Our new ElectroInk White opens up endless new creative options, including:

- **Winning wedding invitations:** Create four-color images and white type on colored paper
- **Bold business cards:** Imagine the visual and tactile impression of white ink on dark textured paper
- **Dynamic direct mail:** White ink on colored stock or clear polyester makes your message pop off the page
- **Economical security applications:** Use ElectroInk White on white paper to create a watermark
- **Packaging that pops:** Digitally printed packaging on transparent or colored substrates.

For more information or to order samples, contact Kathi Woolsey at 713-869-7700 or at [kwoolsey@imageset.com](mailto:kwoolsey@imageset.com).

