

Act Now Or Get To Know Us?®

by Kathy Ellis, The Business Lab Marketing Coach

The next time you send out a message to your client or prospect, think about what you want them to do. Do you want them to act now? Or, are you saying “welcome, please take your time, get to know us, look around?”

Both are valid messages and you may use both at different times over the course of your marketing plan. Which message you send will depend on what you want to say at a given time.

The overall goal is to build a long-term relationship with your client. For some products/services, the “act now” approach is the best way to begin the relationship, for others, it may be something that is offered during the courting period.

This month’s article will give you ideas on how both approaches can help improve your overall marketing plan.

Act Now: With an “act now” strategy you intend to initiate the action/sale with a one time message. For example, dating services typically use an “act now” approach to begin the relationship with their clients. Large headlines such as: Still Single? Meet Someone Today! etc. are all carefully crafted to move you to action the moment you see them.

You may also use an “act now” strategy to get an interested prospect to take the next step. For example, you’ve been marketing to a targeted audience for several months (you’ve sent a letter, your brochure, made a sales call, sent a postcard/newsletter, invited them to your Web site, etc.) and you decide to use an “act now” strategy to help take the relationship to the next level. Here you may invite them to a seminar, offer a free booklet or sample/demo of your product/service, offer them a gift if they visit your Web site, etc.

Tip From The Business Lab: “Act now” strategies involve presenting the compelling benefit of your offer. Use large headlines and typefaces that match your message. When you can use color, use bold colors and if space allows, use big/memorable graphics.

Design your message for the medium you are using to convey your message. For example, newspaper ads are typically laid out differently than magazine ads because there is a complex mix of information and images unique to newspapers.

Make it completely obvious what you want your prospect or client to do and how you want them to do it—“Please send me my FREE Services Booklet, below is my information...”

For some real life examples, please visit our Web site at www.thebusinesslab.com and click the ACT NOW button on our home page.

Get To Know Us: The “get to know us” strategy is all about cultivating and building the relationship. It’s about credibility and trust and even if you’ve used an “act now” strategy to initiate the relationship, the “get to know us” strategy is the cement that will hold the relationship in place.

Allowing your prospects and clients to “get to know you” is about developing the image and identity of your company. It is sharing with them who you are by continually reinforcing your philosophy, educating them on how you can help, sending consistent messages about what it is like to do business with you and your company. Letting prospects know you exist, then allowing them to get to know you will build long-term relationships but it is also a long-term strategy.

Tip From The Business Lab: With your team, decide how and when you want to send your “act now” or “get to know us” messages. It may help to create two distinct categories and place information about your product/service into one of the two categories. For example:

Category 1—Get To Know Us:

- * How do we want prospects and clients to feel about our company?
- * What is our image? Are we serious, fun, conservative, high-tech, high-touch, etc?
- * What features does our product/service have that we can educate prospects and clients about?
- * What are the best ways to continually reinforce our presence and ability to help our clients? (Advertising, direct mail, newsletters, seminars, direct selling, telemarketing, promotional events, Web site and Internet advertising, etc.)

Category 2—Act Now:

- * What immediate benefit can we offer our prospects and clients? (Free newsletter, seminar, booklet, sample, demo, etc.)
- * What benefits about doing business with us can we create? (Find out what objections your sales staff has to overcome most often or what offers they may have to make to take the relationship to the next level.)
- * What product can we show or what service can we demonstrate?

In addition to setting up your game-plan, with your team, determine the best way to monitor the results (surveys, tracking responses, counting subscribers, reviewing Web hits, etc.).

More Information? If you would like to learn more about this important topic or would like to receive our FREE Service Ideas Booklet, please send an E-mail to kathy@thebusinesslab.com, visit our Web site at www.thebusinesslab.com, or fax a note on your letterhead to 281-517-0789.

Author’s Note: Kathy Ellis is a Marketing Coach and the owner of The Business Lab, a full service marketing and graphic design company. We specialize in creativity and helping you think outside the box. We then help you implement those creative ideas through programs including database marketing, Web sites, interactive CD brochures, company brochures, client newsletters and promotional marketing materials. We share with you our FREE newsletter to showcase powerful marketing tips, techniques and ideas to help you improve your business. The Business Lab is based in Houston, TX at 281-517-0998 or by E-mail at kathy@thebusinesslab.com