

The Ten Commandments of Marketing

7TH COMMANDMENT:

Always Sweat the Small Stuff.

The reality is that the difference between greatness and mediocrity is really very small. Don't believe it? Here's a concrete example: A baseball player with a batting average of .275 is considered middle of the road, while a player with a .300 batting average is destined for the hall of fame. The difference between the two is 15 more hits in a typical 600 at-bat season. That's getting more hits just 3% of the time.

We've all heard the phrase, "Don't sweat the small stuff." Well, in marketing, and frankly, many other aspects of life, you should *always* sweat the small stuff. In our experience, 80% of all purchase decisions have already been made before you ever get an at bat with the client or prospect. The question is: what do you do with the other 20%?

You may be competing with their cousin Murray who offers the same products/services that you do. Perhaps they are determined to go with a company that has better name recognition than you have — after all, nobody ever got fired

for recommending IBM. Maybe they've had a perfectly good experience working with another firm, and you've been invited to pitch just to keep them honest. Chances are, you may even have lost a pitch somewhere along the line due to the color of your tie, the style of your shoes or the length of your hemline because, all things being equal, your prospect was making subconscious judgments they were not even aware of.

Regardless of the reason, if you're going to make a dent in their decision, you're going to have to play with the 20% that exists around the edges. That means you have to pay attention to every detail, maximize every advantage and take nothing for granted.

They are already prepared with the reasons they were going to say no. Now you have to make it impossible not to say yes.

HOW TO LIVE BY THE 7TH COMMANDMENT

- *Do your homework*
- *Know who the decision-makers are*
- *Understand their target audience*
- *Identify their key differentiators*
- *Distinguish yourself from your peer group*

The Right Point of View Comes With Experience

For 38 years, Adler Branding & Marketing has been advising clients about all facets of brand strategy, communications and design.

"The Ten Commandments of Marketing" series is the distillation of our decades of experience, epiphanies and, of course, mistakes into something useful. We welcome your thoughts and comments.



For more information on Adler and the Ten Commandments of Marketing go to stanadler.com or e-mail maura.ryan@stanadler.com.

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