

One Simple and Smart Moneymaking Marketing Big Idea in Every Issue!

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“Two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions, on a sesame-seed bun.”

The year was 1974, in case you're wondering. That's the year McDonald's introduced a jingle I'm sure many of you can easily recite. One that includes a unique ingredient that makes the world-famous Big Mac different than all the other fast food hamburgers available.

The special sauce.

Originally invented by Jim Delligatti, a McDonald's franchise owner in Pittsburgh, PA, this special sauce was a classic example of how to turn something ordinary to extraordinary.

While we can debate on just how "special" this sauce was. It was nothing more than a combination of common ingredients that formed a slight twist on Thousand Island dressing - what was special was the way McDonald's used it to position the Big Mac in the eyes and

taste buds of consumers. And therein lies the focus and challenge of this month's issue of the High Impact Marketing Letter.

My guess is you have competition and your products and services can easily be found elsewhere.

It's pretty much a fact of life today.

But as a High Impact Marketer, you are (should be) describing what you do in ways and language that are special, different and unique to you.

**Your
"special sauce."**

For some reason, this issue took a food angle, and I hope it gets you hungry for the challenge of either developing your special sauce for the first time, or dusting it off and revisiting it.

Bon appétit! ■



Create Your Own Special Sauce

Whether it's McDonald's *special sauce* or Colonel Sander's *secret 11 herbs and spices* making something normal into something special is a smart and high impact marketing strategy. In today's ultra-competitive world, business owners need to distinctly differentiate their products from their competitors - essentially you need your own *special sauce*.

If there is no differentiation, why would a customer buy your product or service compared to a competitive product or service?

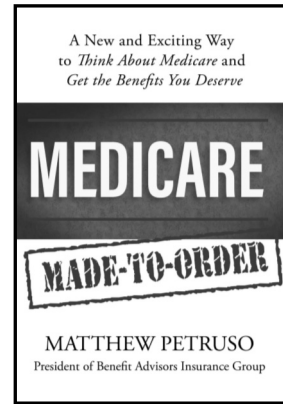
As a small business owner, you need to build your products or services with unique value or a unique competitive advantage; however, many times, your competitors will copy, or even improve upon, your unique values or advantages and therefore the advantage is soon lost. A quick review of marketing and advertising history shows most highly-valued attributes become commodity features over time.

To combat this loss of advantage or uniqueness, you should develop, name and promote your special sauce, which describes the specific and proprietary procedure you have developed for your product or service.

Your special sauce is your unique way of doing things that you and only your business can claim and offers a simple, yet distinctive reason to choose your business over the competition. It's not a single thing, but a series of things you do to help your customers.

To create your special sauce, you must look at the way you conduct business and develop a proprietary procedure or process built around what it is you do that offers your customers unique and distinctive value. Even if others in your industry do the same thing, the simple fact you are bringing the procedure to light and giv-

ing it a unique (and fun) name differentiates you. Any type of business owner can develop a special sauce with some intentional creative thought applied to the effort.



I helped my shook publishing client, Matthew Petruso, develop his **5 Step Medicare Benefit Assessment** to feature in his shook, **Medicare Made-to-Order**.

This gave him an instant point of differentiation.

Personally, my brand High Impact Marketing is my special sauce and one I wrote an entire short book about in the High Impact Marketing Manifesto where I put my own spin and recipe on traditional direct response marketing.



I think you get the idea, which is not only do you have to identify, create, and use a proprietary procedure or process, but you should also give it a catchy and memorable name and use it throughout your marketing.

Done right, your special sauce offers prospects and customers simple and clear reasons why you and your business is different, and motivate them to buy from you.

Study the classic consumer brands and you will see most have some sort of special sauce they have built the brand around (check out page 8 and the classic story of how Schlitz beer did this).

You can do the same! ■

Your Special Sauce Story

It's one of the most common and obvious "holes" in the average business owner's marketing toolkit. Fortunately, it's also one of the easiest to fix.

If you don't have your own unique "*special sauce story*" about you and/or your business, you need to make the promise to yourself, right now, to start working on it. Trust me, it will be one of the most effective and long-lasting value assets you can create for your business.

I'm betting you have competition in your business. This means the consumers who are interested in what you have to offer have **PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITY** to spend their time and money elsewhere, unless you give them a valuable and compelling reason to do business with you! Do not dismiss or ignore this truth! If you're doing plain-vanilla, *same-as-everybody-else* marketing, you're leaving a lot of money on the table.

Look at the "profit pyramid" below and consider where you fit into this. Most business owners are in the business of "*doing things*" like serving meals, selling insurance or even filling teeth. Marketing oriented business owners have discovered the real business they're in is the mar-

keting of what they do, e.g. the marketing of a restaurant business or dental practice.

While this is a vast improvement over the average business owner, there is still room for improvement and that is to become a **Marketer of You**. As a Marketer of You, you want to have:

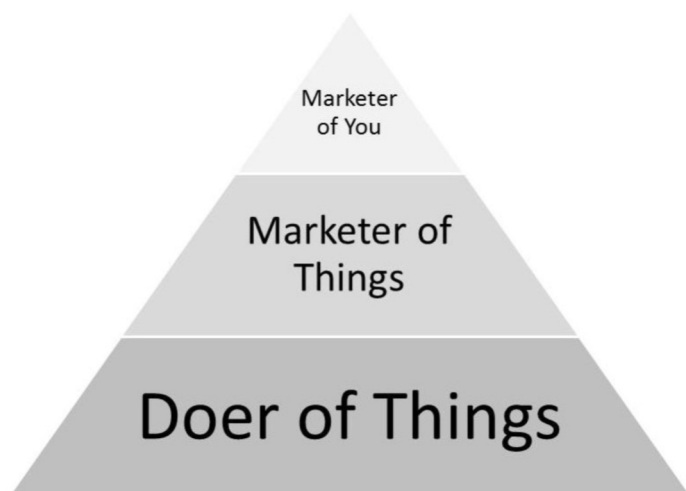
- High impact status
- High impact value
- High impact visibility
- High impact leverage (e.g. create assets)
- High impact productivity

The place to start is with what I call your special sauce story, which is simply a personal, authentic story about you, your business, why it exists and how you *uniquely* serve your customers. This is NOT a story that you pay a copywriter to create for you. This is a story you (and your business partners if you have them) craft together and if it needs polishing, then hire a pro writer or editor to clean up. But the onus is on you to start it. Remember, you are in the business of marketing YOU!

To get you thinking in the right direction, let me share a story about two local businesses. The first one was a local pizza shop style restaurant that opened near me in a location that was previously was home to another pizza shop for years.

As I drove by it the first time, its name caught my eye - Inside Out Pizza.

Now that's a unique and different twist on the traditional "Joey's Pizza" and I had high hopes this new place would be something different than the 20 other local pizza joints.



As it turned out, the new owner sent me a mailer (see Figure 1) announcing his opening and when I received it, my hopes started to wither. The mediocre marketing mailer was nothing more than a menu completely devoid of any story or compelling reasons to stop in and check the new place out (other than a few prototypical daily specials). Undaunted, I eventually stopped in and while ordering, started talking to the new owner.

I asked what the Inside Out Pizza was, and was pleasantly surprised to learn he came up with a new idea, which was a deep-fried stromboli. That was something I never heard of and even though I ordered a pizza, the owner gave me one to try (it was tasty). I asked him about his marketing plan and was further dismayed to hear his very typical responses. I started to give him a few ideas (I cannot help myself) and when I could see he was more concerned about his pizzas, I shut up. As I left, I made the comment to my daughter who was with me, *"I doubt he'll be in business in 12 months."*

As it turns out, he was out of business within three months of our visit and today, yet another boring and typical pizza place now occupies the location.

I have no idea how a new business could shut down in less than six months, and I am assuming the owner had more than just marketing problems, but his uninspiring marketing was surely one of the causes. He had so many opportunities to weave in his special sauce story, and even specific stories about his recipes and dishes, but alas... he missed all these.


Now let's compare this to another restaurant I once went to while visiting Arizona. This one was a Mexican restaurant in a town that has plenty of decent choices for Mexican fare (Phoenix, AZ). I visited after somebody suggested it and was immediately impressed with their

Figure 1: Mediocre marketing mailer

menu (see Figure 2), not because of the plethora of homemade Mexican dishes, but because it started with a story (I am including a PDF version in this month's downloads, so you can see it for yourself).

How many restaurant menus have you seen that have started with such a unique and compelling story like this?

If you're any type of foodie or fan of local restaurants, how can you NOT want to try this restaurant out? Hopefully you can read it above, but if not, look at the PDF I am including.



The Tee Pee Mexican Restaurant was started by Tony and Anna Duran in the 1960's. Tony bartended while Anna did the cooking. During the late 1970's their daughter, Kathy, and son-in-law, Zip, started to run the family business. Now, they are the owners and are teaching their children, Jefe and Julianna, to run the business. You can always find a family member at The Tee Pee. Your server is probably a niece or nephew. You will always be greeted at the door by a friendly face. Being apart of the Arcadia area for so long the vast majority of our customers are like family. We are all family at the Tee Pee.

The Tee Pee is nothing fancy. We have often been referred to as a Mom and Pop Restaurant. We serve our meals with paper napkins while you relax in one of our original booths from the 1960's. Some of our customers have been eating here for four generations. While you are waiting for your table you can browse the walls of fame. We have had many famous visitors at our restaurant. President Bush and Willard Scott, from the Today Show have been our guests. Not to mention, a great number of famous sports athletes and movie stars have eaten here, as well. Be it a famed celebrity or a local community hero, you never know who you might be sitting next to, here at The Tee Pee.

The Tee Pee has a fantastic full service bar equipped with televisions that are always showing your favorite sports. We also have a relaxing patio where you can just hang out or enjoy the music while you wait for a table. So come in and cool off with one of our great margaritas and homemade chips and salsa.

We serve traditional Mexican food. The recipes have been in the family for years. We serve all your favorites such as beef and green corn tamales, albondiga soup, and the President's favorite; cheese enchiladas. We are famous for our chili rellenos which are like an egg soufflé. All of our food is homemade and prepared fresh daily. We also offer delicious party trays and for your larger events we can provide full service catering.

Figure 2: A great example of a special sauce story

You can tell it's not written by some high-falutin copywriter, and its beauty is in its authentic, friend-to-friend approach. I have no idea how long the owners have used this story in their marketing, but I am sure it's been a High Impact Marketing asset for years.

Another example worthy of your study comes from a Philly-area furniture retailer, Leather Expressions. Owners Rick and Steve Erdman published their own educational buyer's guide and they deserve a **BIG KUDOS!** Besides containing super-valuable information for a leather furniture consumer, they crafted a two-page

special sauce story (see Figure 3) about their business, including the smart use of vintage photos of the founding family members. I highly doubt ANY of their competition has such an asset in their business.

If I've triggered an advanced yearning to learn more about how to craft your special sauce story, you'll soon discover a rather complex set of different types of stories you can craft - everything from the hero's journey to one of personal transformation.

My suggestion is to keep it simple and craft your story in a way which connects with your

target audience. Pull back the curtain on how your business started and the unique and special things you do to serve your customers. Go into detail about:

- the history...
- the how...
- the why...
- the who...
- and the special things you do

Consumers will love getting a behind-the-scenes look at your business and business processes. No unique detail or process is too small to share, and the more specific and unique to your business, the better!

Also try to include related visuals, photographs, etc. to make your story that much more impactful.

You can see great examples of special sauce stories (no pun intended) by watching the Food Network's Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives show with Guy Fieri. Guy travels around the U.S. sharing the stories of restaurant owners who go the extra mile to serve unique and amazing food. When you hear the various restaurateurs share their personal stories, you'll see an excellent formula to follow.


According to Paul Smith, author of **Lead with a Story**, *"People want to be part of something bigger than themselves. A nameless, faceless corporation with no real purpose, no story, is not an inspiring place to be."*

Once done, make sure you use it everywhere. On your web site, in your print advertising and marketing collateral, in social media, on display signs, etc.

Good luck with this and let me know how it goes! ■

THREE GENERATIONS OF SERVICE

The Leather Expressions Story




How we began - From Erdman Furniture to Leather Expressions Furniture

In the early 1920's, our grandfather Lloyd Erdman, Sr. worked as an upholsterer at Grand Upholstery. He was an ambitious young man, and supplemented his income by candling eggs in his parent's basement, where he developed a route to sell them. One day he purchased a piece of furniture from his employer, and brought it with him on his egg route in an attempt to sell it. Soon he was selling furniture to his egg customers, for installments; each week.



In 1927 he purchased a small store at 4947 Frankford Avenue in Philadelphia. Here he sold furniture, and also upholstered furniture. By 1932, he and his wife Marion gave birth to a son, Lloyd Erdman, Jr. Later, after serving his country, Lloyd joined his father in the furniture business.



Around 1960, the store moved to larger quarters at the corner of Frankford Avenue & Harrison Street, where Aria Frankford Hospital now stands. My father and grandfather serviced the Philadelphia area here for years, until my father eventually moved to 2217 Bristol Pike in Bensalem, PA in 1971. My brother Rick and I (Steve) joined my Dad, Lloyd Jr., in 1976.

Seeing the need for a specialty store, my brother Rick and I decided to take the business in a different direction. We became Leather Expressions and the rest is history. We now have one location in Montgomeryville. Although we took on a more specialized product, the goal that began on an egg route has remained the same, providing the ultimate in value and service.

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We sell only quality products, built to give you years of problem-free enjoyment. We are committed to you, our customer, with all the necessary information to make an informed buying decision. Our goal is that you are 100% satisfied. We are owner operators and are accountable thru every step of the sales ownership process. We have an exceptional delivery team and should a need for service after the sale arise, we have the best service team with over 15 years of experience to handle any post sale situation.

Reading this leather education guide was an important first step towards your dream living space. Your next move should be to reach out to a professional designer, like Leather Expressions, and schedule a design consultation to determine the best way to proceed with your furniture needs. The details are on the back cover of this guide.





Figure 3: Leather Expressions story

The Schlitz Beer Special Sauce

A classic example of how one special sauce story gained its place in advertising and marketing lore takes us way back to the early 1900's, when Schlitz beer was the number #5 selling beer in America, and they wanted to be #1.

In order to attack the enviable position held by Anheuser-Busch, the executives at Schlitz hired the Chicago-based J.L. Stack Advertising Agency, who in turn tasked one of its top copywriters for the job. This man was the now infamous Claude Hopkins.

At the time, just about every brewery sold beer the same way - they all described how pure their beer was. In fact, some brands even took out full page ads so they could get the word "**PURE**" in bigger letters.

But this didn't mean anything to the average beer drinker, because all beer companies claimed their beer was pure.

Hopkins didn't believe in doing anything until he really understood the products and the people who bought them. So Schlitz brought him out to their brewery for a tour so he could find out what "pure" really meant. What he saw there impressed him.

On the tour he was shown plate-glass rooms where beer was dripping over pipes. Asking why they did this, Hopkins was told that those rooms were filled with filtered air, so the beer could be cooled without impurities.

Next, he was shown huge expensive filters filled with white-wood pulp that provided a superior filtering process. The manufacturer then went on to explain how they cleaned every pump and pipe twice daily to assure purity, and also how each bottle was sterilized not once or twice, but four times before being filled with beer.

Then, Hopkins was shown the 4,000-foot-deep artesian wells dug to provide the cleanest and purest water available, even though the brewery sat right on the shore of Lake Michigan (which was clean enough to use at the time).

Finally, Hopkins was led into a laboratory and shown the mother yeast cell that was a product of 1,200 experiments to bring out the robust flavor. He was told all the yeast used in making Schlitz beer was developed from that original yeast cell.

When he asked his client why they didn't boast of their pure water, their white-wood pulp filters, their filtered air, their four separate washings of their bottles, the Schlitz executives told him, "All companies brew their beer about the same way."

"Yes," Hopkins countered, "but the first one to tell the public about this process will gain a big advantage."

Hopkins went on to create a special sauce advertising campaign where he made a common story extraordinary. In his own words, Hopkins later said:

So I pictured in print those plate-glass rooms and every other factor in purity. I told a story common to all good brewers, but a story which had never been told. I gave purity a meaning ...

Again and again I have told common facts, common to all makers in the line - too common to be told. But they have given the article first allied with them an exclusive and lasting prestige.

That situation occurs in many, many lines. The maker is too close to his product. He sees in his methods only the ordinary. He does not realize that the world at large might marvel at those methods, and that facts which seem commonplace to him might give him vast distinction.

On the strength of Hopkins' effort to "give purity a meaning," Schlitz jumped from fifth in sales to a near tie with the mighty Anheuser-Busch. I've included a number of the ads Hopkins created in this month's download. You should study them.

So what does all this have to do with you and your business? Your special sauce story needs to tell/ remind people why, how and what you do is important for them to get what they want. ■