



I understand the lure of just hunkering down and waiting out the economic lull. And I know you're probably tired of hearing this....but if you are smart -- this is a huge opportunity for you to capture market share and solidify your position in the marketplace.

Please do not sit this one out. And I'm not even going to tell you not to cut prices or cut your budget, because we've beat that horse to death!

110% consistency: The buyers are already jumpy. Don't give them any reason to mistrust or doubt you. Live and breathe your brand integrity. Don't do or say anything that contradicts your brand.

Tactics:

- Review your brand values with each and every employee
- Refresh your website to put your brand promise front and center
- Ask your employees for ideas on how to bring your brand to life. Pay \$50 for every idea used. Make that very public knowledge.

Love on your current customers: They're the most likely to buy again and they are also most likely the audience you've ignored. Now is the time to appreciate them, remind them why they trusted you in the first place and over service them.

Tactics:

- Do a customer only mailing, spotlighting some of your best offerings at their best prices
- Hold a customer appreciation party and say "thank you" repeatedly
- Offer a pre-payment discount (you get cash up front and their commitment to follow through)

Give it away: Demonstrate to the world that you believe in abundance by giving away some of your product or services to a worthy non-profit. But don't do a drive by. Partner with them for the long haul and work your PR magic.

Tactics:

- Give your employees a voice in which charity you partner with
- Be smart - choose a charity that has an influential board of directors and make a point of being at those meetings to share your expertise
- Trade your products or services for an event sponsorship so you get publicity for your efforts

Listen, respond, repeat: Now is not the time to be ignoring the marketplace. You need to be listening to your customers, your competitor's customers and anyone else who is out there talking about your industry.

Tactics:

- Do a customer survey (while you are at it, do a past customer survey)
- Set up Google alerts
- Jump into conversations about your industry and offer value

Use content marketing: You're good at what you do. You want your prospects and customers to be successful. Why not position yourself as the expert by sharing your expertise?

Tactics:

- Create an e-newsletter (don't start it if you aren't going to consistently create/deliver it)
- Build a robust How To series for your website
- Launch a business blog (again...don't start it if you aren't serious about keeping at it)

What do you think? Most of these tactics will not cost you an arm or even a leg. And I'll let you in on a little secret -- they're pretty effective, even when we're not facing snug times.

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