



# The Dog's Bark

A Murphy Broadcasting Publication

## I Hate Surprises

By Rick Murphy



Okay, there are SOME surprises I like. I like getting cards, especially ones handwritten. I like when my accountant says I overpaid my taxes and I am getting enough back to buy a decent bottle of wine. But I don't like things that I am not counting on jumping up and biting me.

This past weekend I had the chance to stay at Loews Lake Las Vegas Resort. If you ever have the chance to go to Las Vegas and are not interested being hassled by the tourists from Sheboygen, Loews Lake Las Vegas Resort has fabulous restaurants and amenities, without the crowds. I

enjoyed the adult pool. I rented a cabana, had a massage and still was able to drive to the strip to see Mystere in just 30 minutes. I had found heaven and all through Hotels.com for just \$199 per night!

On Sunday Morning I got ready to leave. There under the door was my bill. For some reason I decided to read it. I really wish I had not. You see, besides my room rate of \$199, which I had felt so good about, there was a "room tax". This is usually some confiscatory amount that the local government tacks on as if to say "Let's lay off our income problems on the tourists". Below that was a \$15 fee to park my car, and below that was a \$15 per day, per person charge as a "Resort Fee". Suddenly, my \$199 room

was \$262 a day. To be fair, this place is worth every penny of that \$262. But I was not expecting it. I guess I just did not read the fine print.

I get the same kind of feeling when I book a rental car for \$39 per day and it costs \$55 per day. There's the "Airport Concession Fee", the "Parking Tax", The "Reimbursement, Vehicle License Fee", and many times a series of state and local visitor taxes all there on the bill after my \$39 per day fee.

I know businesses are out to make money. But surprising me with additional fees will not make me a loyal customer. I would rather have just gotten a nice card.

## How to REACH Your Market

By Ron Nickle



From time to time someone will call me and say that they are going to advertise their business in LA or Phoenix because that is where their BUYERS are. This has been put to us from people selling real estate to people selling boats. They say they want to REACH people who come to this area. The problem is, while you can reach those people, you will also reach 99% of the rest of the population of those areas who either don't know where we are, don't care or both. But, you will still PAY to reach all of these people.

A far better idea is to TARGET your marketing directly at people who come to the area. Holiday weekends are a great time to REACH into these outside markets with media that these people use. What are you trying to sell to these people and why would they want to buy from you?

A number of years ago, the radio stations ran a very successful campaign for a home development in the area. The campaign was designed to REACH the boater from Southern California. The ads all talked about the hassle of towing a boat across the desert, checking into a hotel, packing and unpacking. The solution was the purchase of a home in the area at an affordable price that included water access, boat docks and boat deep garages. The campaign ran every Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day week for three years. It

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## Are You Ready for A Market Change?

By Tim McDonnell - Sales Manager



**CHANGE** *cheynj* –verb (used with object)

1. To make the form, nature, content, future course, etc., of (something) different from what it is or from what it would be if left alone: to change one's name; to change one's opinion; to change the course of history.

Sometimes I hear "Business is so good that I couldn't possibly handle one more customer". That's terrific! Things are so bright for the Tri-State area that the Target Corporation broke ground on their new store in Fort Mohave, and I've heard this has gotten the attention of a few more of the Big Box retailers. Hmm.... some businesses will not last long after the big chains come in. Yet, at the same time, some businesses will thrive. What separates them? Solid planning.

All successful businesses have three things in common: Dependable employees; outstanding customer service; and customers to serve.

There are two things that are key to keeping good people; good pay and a good work atmosphere. Sometimes you need to ask yourself this question; "How long would I work here if I were paid like this and treated like that?" Your answer will direct your planning. If you decide some things need to change, change them now. Just remember, when people like their jobs you don't suffer the expense of employee turnover.

Outstanding customer service can only come from the top. Joey over at Mattress Land loaned me a book, "Always Think Big" by "Mattress Mack" McIngvale. He started a furniture store in Houston Texas over twenty years ago. Before he opened his doors he decided that his customers would be treated with unbelievable service including same day delivery, every day, seven days a week. People said he was nuts. He's been doing it for twenty years and Gallery Furniture is now the most productive single site furniture dealer in the world with over \$200,000,000 in sales per year (two-hundred million... makes me think about quitting this radio gig and getting a real job, but I digress) .

In business, no customers means no business. So how do you protect what you've worked so hard to build?

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## Because Everyone is Saying It, It Must be True

By Chris Rolando - President/CEO



The other day I was speaking to someone who is trying to sell their home. They were not happy with their realtor. I asked how they chose the realtor and they said, "We drove around and looked for the Realtor with the most SOLD signs".

I saw their logic, but I also saw the problem. The logic was that this realtor had so many sales, they must be the best. But this approach told little of the story. My friends did not know the average time 'til sale... the average ask-to-sold numbers (discounts offered) nor much else except that this realtor was able to get people to leave their sign up with SOLD on it for quite some time. In their case, the rubber met the road when 13 months

later their house had still not sold. The reason? It had little to do with a perceived slow down in the market and more to do with the fact that the Realtor had shown the house only three times.

If you ask me about hamburgers, I am going to tell you the best burgers I've ever had came from a place called The Kona Grill. But when I drive past a burger place familiar to all of us, there is a sign out front that says how many MILLIONS they have served. The perception is that this place makes the BEST burger. The reality is, they sell a LOT of burgers.

The perception I have of the HUGE home stores is that they have everything I could ever want for my home. The reality is, when I need a 3/8 inch bolt, or advice on how to re-plumb a broken water heater on a Sunday afternoon (how is it those water

heaters always know what day it is?), the local hardware store is a much better resource for me.

The bottom line on all of this is simply this... what YOU say about your business is important. Biggest is not always best. In the case of the Realtor, fastest is much better, as is getting the listed price. In the case of the hardware store, the KNOWLEDGE is worth far more to me than unlimited selection. "Puffery" in any kind of advertising goes in one ear and out the other ("the largest selection", "family owned and operated", "lower overhead so we pass the savings on to you", "the freshest and finest ingredients"). But words that meet the need of your customers, said in human terms, can join buyers with sellers.

## How To REACH Your Market...

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worked and the project sold out.

A casino one time came to us and told us they advertised heavily in LA because they needed REACH marketing. We came up with an ad campaign for them that ran Sunday afternoon until late Monday night. This campaign was designed to reach the person who already came to Laughlin, but was on their way home. The theme of the campaign was "If you had paid just a couple dollars more, you could have stayed at....". The campaign was run on radio and also put on billboards on River Road on the way OUT of Laughlin. This campaign REACHED people from LA, but

the ones who were already coming here. That is what made the campaign affordable.

Remember when calculating the ROI for an advertising schedule, you don't need to REACH the MOST people. You need to REACH the RIGHT people.



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## Market Change...

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Mattress Mack says "Advertise. When I learned the power of advertising, I made a huge commitment to it. Early on we poured nearly every dollar of profit into advertising. Today, Gallery spends nearly 30 percent of its gross profit on advertising". Mattress Mack says it's all about "building and protecting the brand" (pg 126). People forget. They need to be reminded about your outstanding customer service and advertising is how you remind them".

So, ready or not, the market is changing. Now is the time to take stock of your business, your human assets... and plan to thrive!



Mike Anthony  
Sales Manager

## How Am I Doing?

Ed Koch, former mayor of New York started every press conference with "How am I doing?" That takes guts.

Many of us have filled out surveys. But the questions are always so carefully planned that it doesn't seem to be possible to say what you think. I have been in stores that offer me surveys. One of the latest ones came from a restaurant that said on the receipt that if I filled out the survey on line I would get a \$25 coupon. The problem was there was no place on the survey to say what I wanted to say, and I am STILL waiting for my coupon.

I have a feeling that a one question survey that is left for your customers to fill out that asks "How am I doing?" is going to get you much better information, and who knows, maybe even a compliment!

P.S. If you are going to give me a card to fill out with a mailing address on the front, at least put a stamp on it!

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