



By Richard D. Czerniawski

## CREATING MARKETING SUCCESS

Establishing *relevant, meaningful differentiation that drives 'preferentiation'* is essential to creating marketing success in the absolute and relative to your competition. But what does this marketing principle mean?

### **Relevant**

Differentiation without relevance is meaningless. Worse, it's odd. It's weird. Prospective customers will ignore it at best and turn them off at worst.

Relevance speaks to satisfying an important need—physical or psychological—that's important to your target customers. Keep in mind that not everyone in the market is your target. People have different needs. What's relevant to one prospective customer may not be to another. So, we must carefully choose our target customer segment and understand what is relevant to them.

### **Meaningful Differentiation**

“Meaningful” gets at the degree of differentiation. The degree needs to be sufficiently great that your target customers can experience it. Accordingly, it's more than a promise of difference; it's something your customers fully realize and acknowledge from interacting with your brand.

Moreover, difference is a comparator. It addresses the question, "different than what?". However, this does not suggest that we marketers need to make explicit comparative claims by naming names, as many geographic, corporate cultural, and legal/regulatory bodies forbid it. It may be implicit (as in the realization that whatever the customer is using is failing them).

Claimed differentiation that is not meaningful is mere puffery. If we can't put up, it's best to shut up, as we're doing a disservice to potential customers and our brand.

### **“Preferentiation”**

Ultimately, our goal is to create brand loyalty. We need to go beyond differentiation to drive “preferentiation.” Specifically, relevant, meaningful differentiation needs to lead the customer to prefer and choose our brand versus our competitors and stick with it.

### **Stress Test Your Messaging**

Addressing the questions posed here will enable you to determine whether you are in a position to create marketing success:

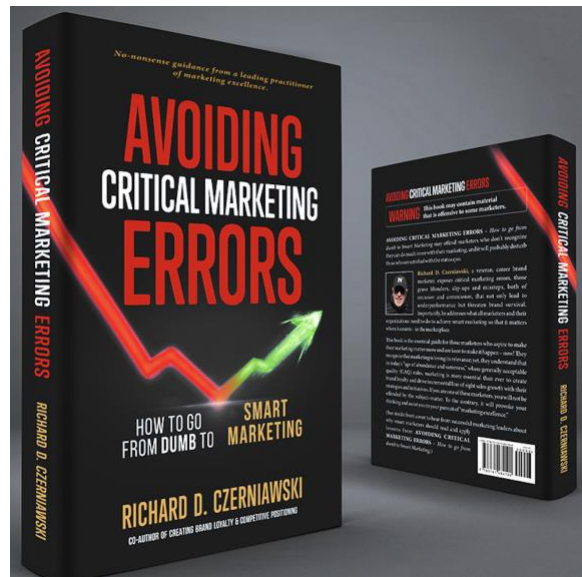
1. **Is your brand's promise different than your competitors?** If the answer is “no,” stop what you are doing and develop a differentiated proposition.
2. **Is it relevant to your chosen target customer segment?** If not, get back to work. This work starts with understanding the dissatisfactions and unfulfilled needs that you can (better) satisfy. If you haven't chosen a target customer segment, you need to do so.
3. **Does the brand promise "meaningful" differentiation?** Specifically, will your target customers be able to experience the difference? If not, your message is puffery, and you are likely to disappoint those that try the brand.
4. **Does your message lead to your target customer segment preferring your brand?** That is, do they choose your brand? Do you get an uptick in purchasing, using, or prescribing your brand? Success is about generating results where they count—in the marketplace.

If you cannot answer each of the aforementioned questions in the affirmative, you have your work cut out for you in creating marketing success.

So, demand and seek *relevant, meaningful differentiation that drives “preferentiation”* to create marketing success!

**Avoid marketing errors of commission and omission that are sabotaging marketing success.**

Please consider reading my most recent book, **AVOIDING CRITICAL MARKETING ERRORS: How to Go from Dumb to Smart Marketing**. Learn more here: <http://bdn-intl.com/avoiding-critical-marketing-errors>. It will not only help you avoid critical marketing errors but, importantly, suggest actions you can take to make your marketing matter even more.



Peace and best wishes in making your marketing and you matter even more,

*Richard Czerniawski*



## **Richard D. Czerniawski**

1812 Yates Avenue

Pensacola, Florida 32503

847-312-8822

[richardcz@bdn-intl.com](mailto:richardcz@bdn-intl.com)

[richardcz@me.com](mailto:richardcz@me.com)

[www.bdn-intl.com](http://www.bdn-intl.com)