



The Essential 4M Report

Marketing Principles No Business Can Survive Without



Version 1.05

By Luke Harlan
www.HarlanMarketingSolutions.com
www.LukeHarlan.com

HARLAN MARKETING SOLUTIONS
Stand Out From The Crowd

Copyright Notice

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical unless as used in the paragraph below. Any unauthorized use, sharing, reproduction, or distribution is strictly prohibited.

The Essential 4M Report does not come with any resale rights.

Legal Notice

While attempts have been made to verify information provided in this publication, neither the author nor the publisher assumes any responsibilities for errors, omissions, or contradictory information contained in this document.

This document is not intended as legal, investment, or accounting advice. The purchaser or reader of this document assumes all responsibility for the use of these materials and information. Luke Harlan and Harlan Marketing Solutions, LLC assumes no responsibility or liability whatsoever on behalf of any purchaser or reader of these materials.

© 2009 Harlan Marketing Solutions, LLC

INTRODUCTION

Hello and welcome to The Essential 4M Report: *Marketing Principles That No Business Can Survive Without*. I want to congratulate you on taking this step into the realm of effective marketing.

This report is not a step by step guide on a particular strategy but on the underlying principles that all successful marketers live and breathe by.

You are about to learn the fundamental truth about how to effectively and correctly Market your business, services, product and yourself in this and any market.

This will be eye opening and contrary to the mainstream institutionalized way of approaching Marketing.....which is good news for you and bad for your competitors.

Soon you will be re-examining your business and know with absolute clarity how to proceed with the knowledge to stop following and become the leader in your marketplace if you have it in you to take the reigns!

Also be pleasantly assured that I am not going to bore you with who I am and my life story. (if curious, www.lukeharlan.com or call my Mom) Simply know that I am in the business of helping motivated professionals grow and market their business the right way learned from years of being a dedicated student, business owner, mentor, coach and practioner of exactly what you will embrace today.

Furthermore, I do not pull any punches. So, if you are happy in your current course and not motivated or serious about taking control of your business, this report is NOT for you.

For this REPORT is about dynamically taking ownership of the foundational principles of Marketing and taking action to implement them in your business.

So let's get started....

DISPELLING THE MYTH

The biggest wool pulled over on Business owners and professionals is Corporate America making people believe *Advertising is Marketing*.

So let's clarify, define, & essentially detox your mind of what is what.

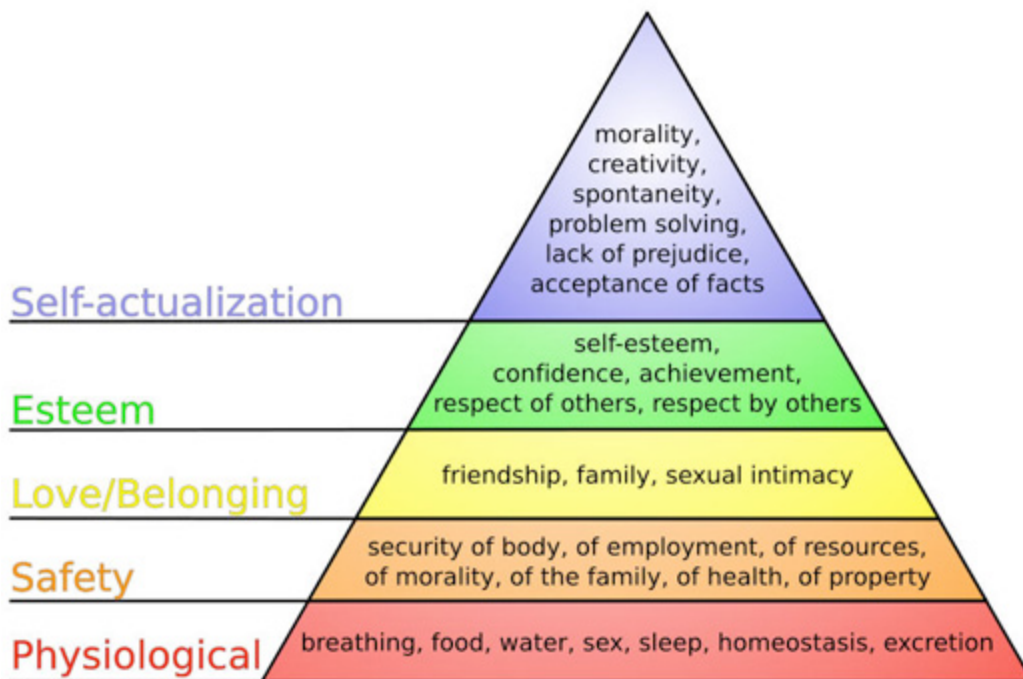
ADVERTISING is simply using MEDIA (Print, Radio, TV, Online, Billboard etc.) to showcase your Message. A mere tool in your marketing arsenal.

MARKETING on the other hand is getting the RIGHT MESSAGE to the RIGHT MARKET (target audience) via the RIGHT MEDIA.

Therefore, in this report, you at no time will be getting some watered down 1960's Rah Rah **BS** Corporate Branding Lesson on "Getting Your Name Out There" that unfortunately we've been conditioned to.

Honestly, no one gives a dam (*substitute stronger expletive*) what your name or your company's name is. They are ALL tuned into their favorite Radio Station: **Wii FM** (What's In It For Me)

Your future customers and clients operate on a want and need basis.



Unfortunately, nowhere on Maslow's hierarchy of human need do I see your name or that of your company.

Sorry to burst your bubble but the truth is that the only person who cares about the name of your company or you for that matter is YOU, possibly your mother (on a good day) & the guy selling you Ad space.

For Example:

My name is Luke Harlan with Harlan Marketing Solutions, LLC and I am a Marketing Consultant.WHO CARES?

So Let's Try Again...

My name is Luke Harlan and in the following Report I am giving you the absolute essential principles of Marketing that will bullet proof the way you think, market and provide a proven success blue print to apply and grow your business like never before to create the lifestyle of your dreams.Care Now? You should!



Why? Because it's not about me. It's About YOU!

....and the sooner you understand this critical principle the easier it will be to identify, shape and distribute the right message to those that have the greatest need of your services or products. Trust me; there will be plenty of room for egos to implement in the more strategic and valuable areas like expert positioning and commanding premium pricing.

For now, let's get right into The Essential 4M's of Marketing.

They are **Mindset, Message, Market & Media**. Although I could dedicate a whole book on each, this Report will get into enough detail so you will have a firm handle on the absolute importance of each. Another critical and truly essential component is the specific order in which you develop them in your business guaranteeing your marketing strategy has the complete advantage over your marketplace.

THE FIRST **M**

“If you think you can do a thing or you think you can’t do a thing, you’re right” - Henry Ford

Mindset is the first M and most critical area because it is the most overlooked in business because it is unfairly assumed that everyone has the “right” mindset or even has the capacity to execute or deliver on what is necessary to bring about that success.

Mindset is more than just having a positive attitude. It’s a way of thinking, analyzing, reacting and taking specific actions that are aligned with your goals and dreams. Really, it is a core belief system that enables you to operate in a state of focus.

Simply put, it allows you to keep your eye on the ball!

However many dismiss this underlying force which drives your subconscious and thus your conscious decision making ability because it’s not sexy or glamorous. It’s not a bell, whistle, widget, gadget or thing that they buy or hire to improve their business. All those are external things, tools or resources to solve a problem or improve upon a solution.

Also, no one wants to admit that the corrective measure they need could actually start with them..which is more often than not!

“The significant problems we face can not be solved by the same level of thinking that created them.” -Albert Einstein

Mindset is the pinnacle of the hierarchy of our needs which is Self Actualization. Don’t worry this will not be drawn out psychological lecture but hopefully an informative insight to what makes all of us tick. And if the wiring is bad, you cannot expect to build upon it with any confidence of success whether you realize it or not.

With that said, by the time we hit the work force we are programmed and conditioned with expectations that mostly keep us operating in the status quo.

For example, most are conditioned on a principle called “ladder climbing”. This is the societal engrained philosophy that we have to meet and pass a sequential timeline of achievements to meet out measured rewards dictated by our parents, teachers, superiors and companies.

All of your life you have lived in a system where your next level of achievement was awarded to you by someone else even though **YOU** did all the work. Your teacher passed you to second grade, your college conferred upon you a degree; your company hired you & your boss promoted you.

However, that is exactly what binds most professionals to their own self limiting positioning in the marketplace. The fact that all of your advancements were not validated until **someone else** deemed it so.

In business you will come to the realization, if you have not already, that no one authority is going to come out of the woodwork and declare you to be the EXPERT in your field. That is something you must declare to yourself first, start living it and people will accept it.

Being an expert is NOT permission based. You have to take it. You “leap frog” over all those rungs to the top. Just make sure you have the goods to back it up.

I highly recommend reading Robert J. Ringer’s book called [“Winning Through Intimidation”](#) where he goes much deeper into the “Leap frog theory” and will help liberate those conventional shackles.

So take the time to make sure your head is in the game. And know that business is a game with winners and losers. Losers make excuses, blame the world and imprison themselves with their own limited thinking and behaviors. Winners seek the advice and counsel of other successful people, model their behavior after them, become successful themselves and in doing so transform their lives and live it on their own terms...And it all begins with **MINDSET**.

Here are some quotes that I keep handy to keep grounded.

If we did all things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves.
-Thomas A. Edison

It's time to start living the life you imagined. -Henry James

Learn the fundamentals of the game and stick to them. Band-Aid remedies never last. -Jack Nicklaus

You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. -Jim Rohn

The man who complains about the way the ball bounces is likely the one who dropped it. -Lou Holtz

The indispensable first step to getting the things you want out of life is this: decide what you want. -Ben Stein

If you limit your choices only to what seems possible or reasonable, you disconnect yourself from what you truly want, and all that is left is compromise.
-Robert Fritz

Everything you want is just outside your comfort zone. -Robert Allen

Authority is 20% given and 80% taken...so take it! -Peter Ueberroth

Confidence is contagious. So is lack of confidence. -Vince Lombardi

Our lives improve only when we take chances--and the first and most difficult risk we can take is to be honest with ourselves. -Walter Anderson

A man is literally what he thinks. -James Allen

Argue for your limitations, and sure enough, they're yours. -Richard Bach

Everyone who got to where they are had to begin at where they were.
-Richard Evans

I not only use all the brains that I have, but all that I can borrow.
-Woodrow Wilson

There is no such thing as a self-made man. You will reach your goals only with the help of others. -George Shinn

Don't wish it were easier, wish you were better. -Jim Rohn

THE SECOND M

MESSAGE:

Now that your head is in the right “Mindset” it’s time to evaluate your business message.

And for our definition, **Message** refers to what you “put out there” that best identifies and accurately represents your business, services or products in the market. Yet another pivotal area where businesses make the same conditioned and repeated error.

They let “others” decide what that message is or let the industry itself dictate what it perceives your business to be and lumps you in with your “so called” competitors. (*Don’t beat yourself up, we all do it or at least did it at some point*)

“Others” refer to Advertising Representatives (Ad Reps) which we will cover in the last M (Media).

Our focus in this chapter will be on the Industry or Main Stream. Typically we go out there and look at what our competitors are doing and pretty much do what they do. To prove this to be true, take a moment to do this great exercise taught to me by Marketing Guru and mentor Dan Kennedy.

Go to the Yellow Pages, find your industry, and copy down all the bullet points (the promise, benefits, features etc.) of the first advertiser. Now every time one of those bullet points is repeated by another advertiser put a check mark by it.

You will soon see that you will have multiple check marks for the same bullet points becoming glaringly obvious that everyone is saying the same thing and therefore delivering the same message.

And if you are copying them and saying the same thing, how do you expect the consumer to choose YOU over THEM? Furthermore if you want all A’s, don’t copy the answers from the “C” students.

And this is why the Essential 2nd M of Marketing is creating a Unique **Message**. A message that differentiates your business from all your competitors by answering a very specific question that is always in the minds of all your future customers or clients.

“Why should I choose your business, product or service versus any and every other competitive option available to me including the option of doing nothing?”

Now that question knocks most of us back on our heels.

For the answer to this question is what is commonly referred to as your USP: **Unique Selling Proposition**. And ultimately the most tactical weapon in your marketing arsenal as it should swiftly articulate and answer the following:

Who you are?
What do you do?
Why do I need It?
How do I get it?

But here is the reality hammer. If you cannot answer this question about your business effectively in 30 seconds right now you do not have one. Meaning your business doesn't have a concise razor sharp message that separates you from anyone else out there with similar products or services.

YOU ARE A COMMODITY! No different, no more special, and no more appealing to consumer than the guy or gal next door. But hey, I still love you. *(Thought you needed a little pick me up)*

Now for some good news! You now know what to ask of yourself and your business. However, knowing is only half the battle. It's time to take ACTION and apply this question/s to your current message to refine, tweak or to scrap and start over.

Once you have come up with a few good USP's, test them on friends, neighbors, associates and strangers to get feedback on whether they really understand what your business is and what it can do for them and why.

This is really something you need outside perspective than just yourself of those closest to your business. Often, you are NOT the ideal customer of your own products or services and because when you have the intimate details of everything your product or service does it is unreasonable to think that you can really be an objective party to whether your message delivers with absolute clarity.

Remember, you want a clear and concise message to attract the right client or customer to your business. The more specific and targeted you can be for your core services or products the better. The reason is that your future customers & clients have specific needs and it is far better for them to qualify or disqualify themselves as a prospect than for you to consume your most limited resource (your time) by doing so.

I.E. You may be a Lawyer or a Doctor, but being telling me you are such in general terms doesn't help me. Are you a Divorce attorney or an orthopedic surgeon? How you best match your niche to the most interested person in need of those services is essential to your productivity, efficiency and your bottom line.

“The Jack of All Trades is the Master of None”

You may have a firm, practice or business that covers multiple disciplines or areas. However when you project too much you merely confuse people and the perception in your generic message is that you are a commodity and not a specialist or expert.

Understand that your message CAN & SHOULD differ when targeting different niche markets. You need not abandon all your services or products. Simply design and cater to that market's needs and wants by positioning yourself as “the Expert” of that niche or specialization.

You may say that “Hey Luke, but I am not a specialist, I am a plain old Dentist, Family Doctor or car salesman, what then?”

No worries! Differentiating yourself in the market is not always bound to the services or products you provide. It can also be how you provide them. What can you change in your business to create a unique, positive and memorable experience for the customer or client?

You can change the delivery mechanism of you sales process to be 110% consumer focused and reassuring. You can install an Espresso machine and mini fridge with complimentary refreshments in your waiting room or lobby. How about free internet access?

Another area is to remove yourself from competition by creating your own niche within your industry. Do some research; get feedback from your existing customers and clients on their likes, dislikes and pet peeves of their experience with you or in general. Change those and market yourself as the business that doesn't do them.

A FEW EXAMPLES

CARMAX: Think of their No Haggle Price policy. I.E. “What you see is what you get.” They addressed the number one complaint and fear of car buyers which was their absolute dread of haggling over the price.

DOMINO'S PIZZA “We'll deliver fresh hot pizza in 30 minutes or less.. Guaranteed” This has to be one of my favorites as it is one of the greatest examples of Unique Selling Position. Examine it! It doesn't say that it is the lowest price pizza , that they use the best ingredients or even that it tastes better than the box it comes in (*which it does not*)

Dominos created its own USP that changed the industry. They didn't compete on price or quality! They filled the need of the consumers who wanted their pizza hot and on time. They even backed it up with a guarantee which is a Sales lesson on its own by removing risk.

Absolute Genius! And what did the mainstream competition do. They first all started doing the same old “me too” strategy of offering delivery but then Papa John’s developed their own USP with “only making their pizza’s with the Freshest Ingredients” thus differentiating themselves and not copying or commoditizing themselves.

So go back to the ultimate question on your future customer or clients mind and see how you and your business most exceptionally answer it. If you need any help or second set of eyes, [let me know](#).

THE THIRD M

MARKET:

Generally this pertains to who is your target client or customer? Who out there is most in need of your product or service?

Too often we choose or are sold the “Shotgun” approach to marketing. Where we spend too much money showing our message to everyone and not just to those who actually have the need. Thus wasting your hard earned resources. This is inline with the idea of “Branding” or getting your name out there. Inefficient and ineffective.

You need to remember that all products, services and businesses either appeal to or could appeal to a specific group of people with similar characteristics and NOT all people.

Therefore, the chance of the right people finding your message when you throw it out there are considerably smaller and the business you may get from it is more accidental than intentional.

So where do we go from here? Where do we find our customers and clients?



The first and best place to start is with you existing client and customer base. What commonalities do they have?

- Gender (Male vs. Female)
- Age (Any pattern?)
- Location: (City vs. Suburb OR by Zip Code)
- Married vs. Single
- Income Level
- Etc.

What demographics or geo-demographics do they have in common?

Outside of your existing database there are multiple resources to purchase highly targeted lists by such criteria as well as simple online and offline research methods to test the market before committing larger sums of money to full blown client & customer acquisition campaigns. Testing being highly critical yet often over looked.

The bottom line is that the most common and costly error is that businesses do not do their Market Research. They assume if they build the perfect mouse trap that people will come running. The problem is that you may be marketing to a demographic where there are simply no mice and so they have no need for your products or services.

The issue becomes that the traditional thinking for a new restaurant owner would be to concentrate on creating the best food, a strong logo, the greatest Chef or a commanding name. However, before you can do any of that, you **FIRST** must find the starving crowd.

Fortunately, many of you have a starving crowd that are in need of your products and services but your hurdle so far has been identifying your USP (Unique Selling Proposition) , making it congruent with your business and now positioning it in front of that right target market that's most susceptible it.

A true bonus and the most liberating aspect of target marketing and integrating your message (USP) is that you alone now have the ability to attract the exact clients you want to work with and exclude those you don't. Imagine actually working with people you like.

THE FOURTH M

MEDIA:

Media as we previously define is the method or vehicle in which your Message is presented to the Marketplace. I.E. Advertising

Which takes us back to the heart of dispelling the Myth that Marketing and Advertising are synonymous (the same thing) which Advertising representatives would like you to believe.

For Advertisers will gladly take all your money and paste your name & logo on any ad space (MEDIA) they can sell you. (TV, Billboard, Magazine, Radio, Newspaper, and Yellow pages) You name it.

They are not interested in you or your company.

Remember, the advertiser's ONLY JOB is to sell you ad space.

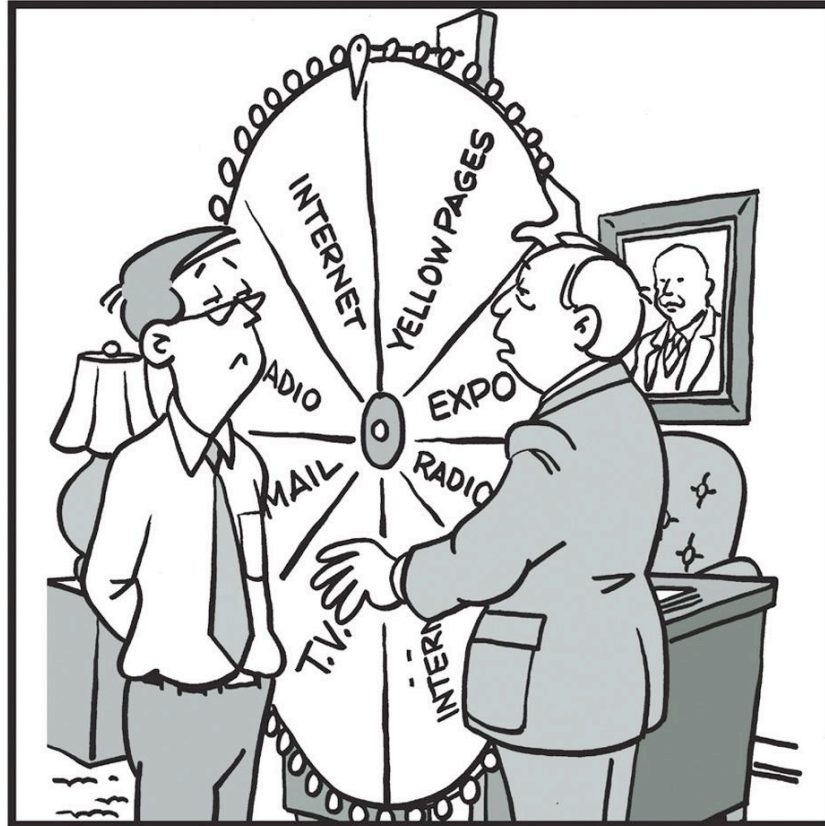
- Not Understand Your Business
- Not Understand Your Market
- Not Spend a Second More on Your "Campaign" than most do ordering from a menu.
- Not Track Results nor be held accountable for them

Therefore your MESSAGE will be the same boring repetitious one that your competitor is saying right next to your ad that the same Ad Rep just sold him after walking out your door with all of your money.

If you question this or think I am being a tad cynical then I would ask you what's the first thing an Advertiser masquerading as a Marketing Specialist ask you? "What is your budget?" And you will have your proof as that's the biggest loaded question in the history of Sales which should raise red flags and sound alarms.

That question is leading and self serving for the Advertiser. Meaning that you will undoubtedly be presented a solution that just so happens to meet that exact budget. (*Go figure, what are the odds?*)

No one is or should be more qualified in understanding YOUR Business or your customers than you? Therefore you need someone that understands EFFECTIVE MARKETING and can help you apply that to your business. *(like me ofcourse)*



"IS THIS HOW YOU PLAN YOUR MARKETING CAMPAIGNS?"

By now you'll recognize that Media is the Fourth M for a distinct reason as it should be clear that delivering a generic "me too" message on a deaf market is ineffective and quite expensive in time and money.

Whereas before, most businesses would start their Marketing Campaigns with what Media to use prior to going through the absolute Essentials of Developing, identifying and integrating a unified, strategic and cohesive Mindset, Message and Market for their business.

However, Now you are now much wiser...and better looking.

Congratulations!

IN CONCLUSION

Now that you have the fundamentals of understanding how to effectively analyze your business core with the Essential 4M's...

The real question is whether you will step up to be the lead dog or if you will continue follow the wrong pack of "C" student advertisers?

For if you recall this REPORT is about dynamically taking ownership of the foundational principles of Marketing and taking action to implement them in your business to achieve your ultimate success.

I am here when you are ready to take action.

To Your Success!

Luke Harlan

www.HarlanMarketingSolutions.com

www.LukeHarlan.com



HARLAN MARKETING SOLUTIONS
Stand Out From The Crowd