

Ho! Ho! Ho!

Why Santa's Marketing Works Better Than Yours!



By Sean D'Souza



Santa's Secrets

Let's face it. The jolly guy from the North Pole has one heck of a following. Corporations have come and gone, but the ho! ho! ho! reverberates on through the centuries. Stop for a second and look at his loyalty program. You've never got off it, even though you've grown up.

All this for someone that doesn't even exist.

Scary, huh? So why bother reinventing the wheel? Why don't we just put on our woolies and head over to brrrr-land and find out what secrets Santa has up his sleeve.

Enjoy this perspective on good ol'St. Nick.

And Merry Christmas. (Yes, even if you're reading this in June, which I know some of you will!)

Warm Regards from close to the South Pole
Ah well, Auckland, New Zealand :)

Sean D'Souza

P.S. If you find any errors in this document, please email me at sean@psychotactics.com.

P.P.S. Your feedback is vital. It's encouraged and will be suitably rewarded. Nothing is too small or too big to fix.

P.P.P.S. There's a big bag of goodies in this document. You get a whole bagful of Santas that you can use on your website, email or even in your Christmas cards. You'll find it within this report. No, I'm not telling you on which page. You'll find it just like you found your gift on Christmas day!

Why Santa's Marketing Works Better Than Yours

Santa Claus Inc. is well and profitable, right through recessions, depressions and just about any economic scenario. The reason why his marketing strategies work better than yours, is because he uses solid, dyed-in-the-wool psychology. He knows he doesn't have to use new fangled techniques, when his simple marketing has stood the test of time.

If you don't believe in Santa, you'd better change your mind, because the fat man from the north pole rocks on -- and you too can do the same if you stick to the basics. Find out if your product or service matches up by reading the article below.

Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle All the Way...

If you go to the heart of Santa's marketing, the one word you come away with is 'consistency'. Generation after generation have been exposed to one brand, one message, and the same powerful imagery. Just like Mercedes own the term 'luxury' and Volvo owns the term 'safety', Santa owns the word 'hope'. Every kid worth his Nintendo, hopes he's got enough points on the goodness scale to justify a mountain of gifts.

Yet, most companies get tired of their own brand. They chop, change and pour thousands (if not millions) of dollars into a bottomless pit of mindless change. Take a look at McDonald's advertising, for instance. McDonald's own the word *family outing* yet their ads have been straying down the *teenager* path.



Which word does Santa own? Try the word HOPE. I hope I get a Barbie Doll. I hope I get a toy train. And what word does your company own? Santa knows what to deliver because he knows what he stands for.

Does it make sense to consistently occupy one niche?

You bet it does! Families go out with their kids to McDonald's. These kids sprout into budget-conscious teenagers that hang out at McDonald's. They have kids and grand kids and guess where they all end up. At the big yellow 'M', that's where!

Santa doesn't waver. His customers are kids. Like several marketers, he might have been sorely tempted to enter the *gift market*. With bad advice, he would have tried to get to teenagers, adults and everyone. Can you see the magic still working? Even the tiniest of niches is huge and niches have a way of expanding by themselves.

At the end of the day, it's the consistency that takes the jingle all the way to the bank. Too many companies lose focus and give you seven reasons why you should buy from them. Santa sticks to one: Be a 'good' kid or you can keep hoping!

You Can Spot Him in the Middle of a Crowded Sky

Do you know anyone who comes to visit on a sleigh in the middle of the night? With reindeer and gifts? The reason why Santa stands out so vividly in our memories is because he's different. The postman does the same thing, but leaves without the flourish.



Have you ever considered that Santa's just a courier guy? Yes, just like the Fedex guy Or the postman who delivers your mail. So what makes him different? How does he create imagery that customers buy into?

It's really important to work out how your marketing message differs. Santa's core marketing term is not built solely on consistent branding but also on a very hard-nosed differentiation. Too much communication out there fits in with what's safe. Customers have just one slot in their mind. You have to enter that slot at such an obtuse angle that they remember you for life.

Rose Richards runs Office Doctor. The term that set her apart from all the rest of the administration crowd is the term, *Small business pain relief*. Can you imagine your reaction when you hear something like that? The human mind is intensely curious and a marketing statement like that is pure bait. You want to know what pain relief she brings and how she goes about it-specially if you're the one in *pain*. That's only half the story. The construction of the message elevates her from simple number crunching to brain surgery and makes her unique.

If you want differentiation you need look no further than the guiding light of Santa's sleigh-- Rudolph, with his shiny nose. Can you even remember the names of the rest of the eight reindeer?

One very important point, however, is that the marketing message isn't just different, but also customer-oriented. Rose takes the clutter out of administration and Rudolph provides a beacon for clearer navigation.

If you don't have a benefit for the customer, just being different is going to get you nowhere.

Give and You Shall Receive

How many of you are out there networking like crazy? Trying desperately to fill in your steadily depleting bank reserves? You want, want, want! Take a look at Santa's style.

He's into giving first. If you probe deep into your mind, you'll find the people you like best are those who have given you their time, their money or their knowledge. You trust them, and it's very hard to say no when they ask you for a favour in return.

The deepest core of human emotions is fear. Every single product or service, without exception, is sold on the basis of turgid fear. The only known antidote to fear is TRUST. When trusts struts upwards, fear banishes itself to penguin land. The more you pile up the trust, the more you can do business.

Wouldn't Santa be able to sell you just about anything? Would he be able to cross-sell and up-sell product? Santa could knock on your door next summer and you'd be more than happy to have him join your barbeque.



Why is Santa so um...plump? Because he gets invited to all the turkey feasts. Santa is well loved because he's trusted. The trust doesn't come from full pages in the Times. It comes from Giving.

It's up to you to build up the trust one Lego block at a time. Identify your clients and see what you can give them. It could be information, time or even a chocolate covered scrumptious cookie. It's the old '*What's in it for me?*' theory. If you can't find something calorie-ridden for their minds or bodies, they won't want to see you.

Play Santa. It works.

He Knows if You've Been Bad or Good...

Heck Santa knows his customers. He even knows when you are sleeping, or awake.

Then, there's you. Look at your biggest customer. What's her name? When is her birthday? Does she like Indian curries or sushi? In curries can she handle hot or medium? What does she think about you? What doesn't she like?

You're guessing for sure. You can't be dead certain because you've been so busy looking at dollar signs that you've missed the plot completely.

The reason why Santa's marketing works is because he intimately knows your individual needs. If you want a drum kit, you get one. If you want a Barbie, you don't ending up sulking with a xylophone.

Santa knows because he's interested in giving. To give, you have to know exactly what the receiver wants or your gift is not worth the packaging it's wrapped in.

Some people worry about invading personal privacy. Hogwash! When was the last time you got upset because a supplier turned up with a big chocolate cake (your favourite) for your birthday? or with rare stamps for your son (because he loves collecting stamps)?

Santa's invades our privacy gently and uses it to *give*, not to *take*. That's why we don't mind it. The tax department on the other hand, uses our information to *take* and therein lies the principal difference.



Ever tried dealing with a new customer? They cry, wail and then suddenly your Santa suit is a bit damp and smelly. Know your existing customers well. Learn from Santa. Don't fuss with the new ones. Concentrate on your existing customers.

Once a Customer, Always a Customer

Santa Doesn't Lose Customers. Period.

One of the primary reasons why he's able to achieve this amazing feat is because he thinks of his *customer's customer*. His customer is the kid, who in a few years gets a little wiser about Santa and his customer's customer is the parent who has the amazing power to get their children to be *nice* not *naughty*, if only for a short while.

Since the concept works in their favour, they do all the advertising. Without TV, radio or the internet, Santa's message gets a grip on millions of kids around the planet. These kids grow up and the marvel of Santa is handed down through the generations.



Were you Santa's customer? Are you still Santa's customer? Will you always be Santa's customer? Are these questions even worth asking? Santa lives in your brain and you're a lifetime customer!

While It's OK For Santa, How Would This Work In The Real World? Say, If You Sold Jeans.

Jeans West, a jean retailer, has several of the answers. I needed one pair, but Stephanie (the sales girl) sold me two--not by hassling me, but by gently reminding me I would get \$20 off the second pair. Then, with my purchase, she gave me a gift voucher of \$10, for my use or to pass on. They, also signed me up for a loyalty program that offered to give me a 10% discount if I purchased over \$250 worth of product in the next 6 months.



Is Marketing and Branding a juggling trick? Santa doesn't think so. Neither does Jeans West. Read the case study to the left of this very active Santa and you'll see exactly what I mean.

This Is Effectively What Jeans West Did to Make Me a Permanent Customer.

Step 1: The sales person asked the right questions to find out my need.

Step 2: She up-sold the product giving me good value for money.

Step 3: A gift voucher with a validity date, ensured an additional purchase. Or even better, the chance for me to pass it on to another person thus 'creating a customer' for Jeans West.

Step 4: Tying my fickle consumer head into a loyalty scheme. They wanted me to stay with them forever.

Santa's steps may vary, but in essence he ties you into a solid loyalty program that is near impossible to get off. It's 'customer get customer', rather than 'advertising get customer.' It's cheaper and it works!

In conclusion here are the main points why Santa's customers keeps coming back. These concepts may sound old, even trite, but have been proven time after time to work well. Test them against your company and brand to see where you can learn from the man from the North Pole.

1) Solid branding:

We're not talking lease here. Consistency is the key. This applies everywhere from networking meetings, advertising to any sort of communication that goes out. Keep hammering home the same unique message and put it up front. The weather changes all the time which is why we can't trust it.

If you must change, it's because your old message isn't doing a complete job. I changed our first baseline from *'Recession proof business principles'* to *'Reactivating dormant business clients.'*

The proposition was the same but the second line got 10 times the response.

2) Differentiation:

Santa knows he can be a courier with a difference. You, too, can create your own legend. Nike used *Just Do It*. Coke threw in the concept, *Rum and Coke*, indelibly burning the word *classic* into our consciousness. Sameness is in your mind. No matter how many brands exist on the market, your product has a fingerprint of its own. You just have to dig deep to find out.

3) Build trust by giving first.

Life is all about sowing, then reaping-but sowing comes first. If you don't give first, you will only get limited results. The more you stop thinking of yourself and focus on what the customer needs instead, the more you are trusted. Business is all about trust. If you don't have it, you're yesterday's soup.

4) Know your customer...

Like you know the hair on your head. Data collection and its optimum usage will get you right into their minds and keep you permanently rooted in. Every time they see you, they should think you are Santa coming to town.

5) Reactivate dormant clients

They are all volcanoes. Sitting there with the power to erupt mightily. Figure out who they are and how you can work in tandem with them. Forget your product or service. That's a given-- It has to be good. Find out the '*everything else*' factor and you will keep them for life.

Like Santa does...



Goodies for You

As you flipped the pages of this Santa Report, you saw the power of words juxtaposed with the Santas. And here's the goodie news! You can have all of these Santas for your own use.

Yup. Just like that. Is there a catch?

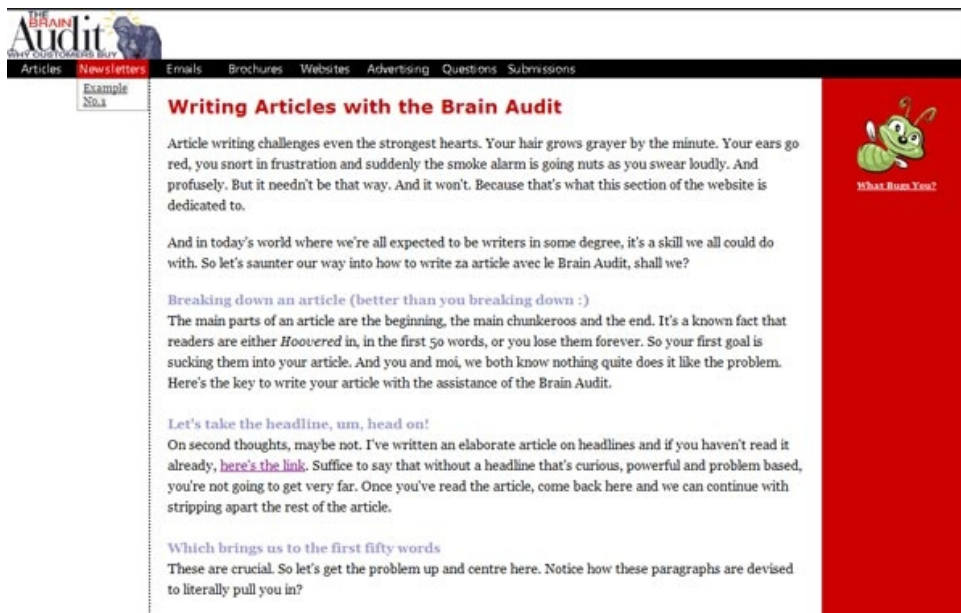
Nope. No catch. Though you would have to fill in a form to get the Santas. Why? Because it helps me to save time when you use the form, instead of having to retype every detail all over again. (Aaaaaaaaarrgh!) The second reason is even better. I'll be doing some more cartoons this year and in the years to come. I can then send the cartoons to you directly, so you never have to think about it ever again. Come Christmas and you'll have a whole bunch of new Santas in your box. Cool eh?

Here is just a sample of what you can get. Click on this link or retype it in your browser to get your FREE Santas! <http://www.psychotactics.com/hohoho.htm>



Plus Even More...

Other Resources



The Brain Audit Website

You've read the **Brain Audit**. You have haven't you? The Brain Audit describes how customers think. Why they hesitate and what stops them from buying. Imagine an entire website with dozens of before and after examples of sites, emails, brochures etc, that have been improved by applying the Brain Audit. If you've read the Brain Audit, here's how you can enhance your knowledge on the subject with real life examples. Find just how you can improve your marketing considerably by enrolling at www.brainaudit.com (Available on Dec 25, 2003)



Clients on the Treadmill

The Treadmill

In life and in business, everything is general, until it becomes specific. The Treadmill is about specifics. It's about YOU and YOUR Business. In fact, it goes one step further. In the Treadmill, you learn how to break free of the rat race. Working every single day may be great fun today, but how would you like to do it when you're 70 years old? The Treadmill shows you how to break free of the shackles. It's specific and guaranteed. And very affordable. But not for long. Find out if you qualify at www.psychotactics.com/treadmillone.htm



The 'bug' stops here. If there's anything that bugs you, please write directly to me at sean@psychotactics.com. And be assured you will get a response from me.



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