You've Got Personality, Use It!

By Caroline Jordan, MBA

For the self employed professional, nothing is more important than the image you project to your clients and potential clients. Napoleon Hill put it best when he said, “People buy your personality and ideas long before they buy your products and services.”

Your image may be projected by the clothes you wear, the car you drive, and your posture. But, your image is also projected by the marketing contact points you make. What does your website say about you? What do your brochures or office sign say about you? Are you communicating the image you want to communicate?

I worked with one self employed professional whose target market was other small business owners. Yet his website had a very corporate feel about it. It wasn’t designed to attract the kinds of customers he was interested in attracting. The language he used on the website was formal and stripped of all “person-ality”. But in talking to him, I really “got” how much he loved working with small business owners and helping them become more successful.

Statistics overwhelmingly support that when people are shopping for a professional they buy the person first, the company second, the product or service third, and the price last. Your personality is a major competitive advantage. It’s what sets you apart from all the other people who do the same work you do.

Think about you favorite professionals. Why do you like working with them? My dentist is always jovial, laughing and telling stories during my visits. His personality carries throughout his practice and makes going to the dentist actually enjoyable. If he stripped away the personality, he would be just another dentist.

Let’s say you’re a real estate agent who loves golf and you communicate that to potential customers. You’ll find that you attract customers who also enjoy golf. It establishes a point of connection between the two of you. Your potential client starts out feeling like they know something about you. You’re not a stranger. You’re a fellow golfer. That builds rapport and trust.

Don’t be shy about letting people know who you are and what you stand for. If you’re an eye doctor who travels to Guatemala once a year to provide eye care for children, post a picture on your website or in your office. Send a press release to the local paper about your trip. Not only does it encourage others to support worthy causes, it establishes you as a caring person and a dedicated professional.

Give clients and potential clients multiple opportunities to get to know you by carrying your image and personality throughout your business.

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