

## Demonstrating Expertise as a Marketing Tool

Over the past few decades many industries have undergone transformations that have resulted specialties and sub-specialties in sectors that were once the domain of general practitioners. This has been both good and bad for business, because while it provides a greater level of concentrated, exact expertise, it also narrows perspective and limits the amount of broad experience applied to any specific circumstance. The pros and cons notwithstanding, the very fact that this has occurred, and continues to occur, indicates that companies want to do business with people they are given reason to believe are experts.

So one of the marketing tools you need to have is the perception of expertise. This article is about how you go about establishing your perceived expertise.

### Step One: Truly Know What You're Talking About

This may seem like an obvious place to start, but you'd be surprised (or maybe you wouldn't be surprised) at how many people are out there selling knowledge based not on what they know, but rather who they know. Knowledge, like experience, cannot be faked. You either know something or you do not. Experts know. If you plan to establish yourself as an expert, you have to know.

### Step Two: Demonstrate Your Knowledge

Demonstrating knowledge is a function of actual implementation of what you know. In order for your claims to expertise to be accepted and acknowledged, you need to have some form of track record behind you. You need to be able to point to real world instances where the positions, concepts, beliefs, theories, practices, methods and systems you claim to embrace (and which are the core elements of your expertise) have yielded tangible and measurable results. These results will form the foundation of your reputation and permit you to present yourself as a credible expert.

### Step Three: Project Your Expertise

The notion behind projecting expertise is that you engage in certain exposure tactics that serve to support the perception of your expertise among a certain sector. There are a number of ways you can project your expertise, including:

- Articles in the press
- A self-published newsletter that provides glimpses of how you think and what you know (like Tudog's)
- Lecture at local universities
- Serve on advisory boards
- Volunteer your time working with communal organizations, offering to assist in your specific field of knowledge

### Step Four: Reinforce Your Expertise

You can reinforce your expertise by securing exposure channels that are not self-instigated. Such channels have a tendency to have a greater level of credibility, as the use of your opinions by outside sources appears as an endorsement of your expertise. By being quoted in local press articles, presented as a guest lecturer, or being interviewed by third party sources, you are reinforcing your expertise.

Not everyone is an expert, nor should everyone try to be. There is plenty of room for the old time broad practitioners, who offer the basics and fundamentals, without any expert focus on a specific sector.

Then again, even these broad practitioners need to establish themselves as experts in the application of the fundamentals. So, it would seem, that using the perception of expertise as a marketing tool is something for everyone.