

## subtlety in marketing.

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In defining marketing, we say to our clients that marketing is any type of communication; any part of their business that communicates with the outside world is marketing. From email signatures, to business cards, fee structures or a website, all of these elements of your business communicate some type of message.

Some may say that marketing is blatantly obvious; I would say that the best marketing is done subtly. So what is subtle marketing and who does it the best?

I was on a Qantas flight this week and while waiting for the 747 to back away from the terminal, I noticed a faint tune over the cabin sound system. What was the noise? Qantas was playing their latest soundtrack Atlas. The song was composed specifically for Qantas and their communication by ex Silverchair front man Daniel Johns and appears in their latest 'You're the reason we fly' campaign.

Daniel Johns said in a recent article for news.com.au, he wanted the song to be big, something special...and not just a jingle. Getting comfortable in my seat before take off, I felt like I was being serenaded by Qantas; all passengers were being hypnotized by Qantas as the music was being played ever so softly throughout the aircraft. This is very clever of Qantas, creating an affiliation with the brand its campaign.

Being in marketing, I tend to block out any advertising, so the fact that I remembered the tune and linked it back to Qantas was testament to the fact that Qantas achieved their intended desire.

### Is subtle always effective?

If a message can be converted in the way a business, product or service wants without it being misinterpreted or misconstrued, subtlety is exactly what you want.

It is fair to say people don't like the idea of being bombarded with messages from various businesses trying to promote a product or service, therefore creating the thought that marketing efforts should be a little less obvious in the way they communicate them.

On the flip side, something to consider is people admire and liken to honestly and upfront communication. Australia's campaign to eat more lamb or pork campaigns were both as straight as they get. The campaign themselves had humor but there was no hidden message just straight to the point that Australians should eat more lamb/pork.

### The art of subtlety

The art of mastering subtlety is creating powerful messages in a cool yet confident way. If your marketing communication isn't pushy or needy, consumers are more likely to respond positively to your message.

Strong brands now create relationships with their clients by creating stories within their campaigns. Many perfume and cosmetic brands do this to entice their target market into a fantasy as opposed to simply trying to persuade them into buying their product. This is a very subtle way because people aren't fixed on the product but the development of the story. Obviously the last second or two promotes the product but consumers need to sit through the first thirty seconds of a story.

Take bloggers for example, they have an audience but need to entice them to continuously keep them coming back. Titles of blogs, the content and even images is what draws them back, so the more interesting and less sales driven the blogs are the more receptive to what you are selling they will be.

Overall, the message is clear that subtlety in marketing is key. The more subtle your communication efforts are the more powerful they can be. Consumers don't want to be told what they should buy but they still like to buy so the key is the entice them to want to buy your product or service.

As any part of a business that communicates with the outside world is marketing it is vital to take control of the content going out and make it work for you and your business.

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