



Social Marketing at Your Fingertips:

A Quick Guide to Changing the World

MarketingProfs Book Club Edition



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Social marketing is not just about public service announcements, focus groups or the latest internet tools. It's about helping people adopt behaviors that will make them healthier or happier. It's about creating positive social change and making the world a better place.

By applying the same effective marketing tools that companies like Nike and Apple use, social marketers persuade individuals to take action for change. Whether you are at a nonprofit or public agency, or are a commercial marketer who wants to change the world, you can use social marketing to understand and connect with your audience by addressing the values, needs and desires that motivate them.

This e-book will provide an introduction to using social marketing to make a difference through your own work.

What is Social Marketing?

To many in the nonprofit world, marketing equals fundraising and nothing more. At government agencies, marketing may be primarily about publicizing services. But by using social marketing methods, you can boost the effectiveness of programs and activities that are the reason your organization exists in the first place – to make a difference.

Social marketing uses the same tools and techniques of commercial marketing, but its purpose is to bring about positive health and social change. Rather than focusing on sales or funds raised as the ultimate outcome, social marketing's bottom line is behavior change. Did you increase the number of people getting screened for prostate cancer? Do people now put their soda cans and plastic bottles in the recycling bin rather than the garbage can? Are youth getting more exercise?

Social marketing as described here is distinct from the more recent usage of the term by bloggers and social media marketers to label peer-to-peer or social network marketing. The field of social marketing has been around for over a quarter of a century, used to address issues around the world, including family planning, HIV/AIDS, obesity, pollution, breast cancer screening, cholesterol, tobacco prevention, civic involvement and much more.

What social marketing is not:

- Social media marketing
- Viral marketing
- Word of mouth marketing
- Dating or matchmaking services
- Public service announcements
- Cause marketing (companies adopting a cause to improve their image and get more sales)

...though these things could be used in a social marketing program (okay, not the dating service).

The Social Marketing Mix

When social marketers develop a program strategy, we have to consider the same elements of the marketing mix as commercial marketers. However, the social marketing mix has to be adjusted somewhat to take into account the unique nature of the types of products and environments with which we work.

Product

The social marketing product is not usually a tangible item, though it can be (e.g., condoms). Generally, social marketers are trying to sell a particular behavior. While you may be promoting a life-saving or life-improving practice, quite often social marketing behaviors are things that people don't particularly want to do – eat more fiber, conserve water, exercise, get a colonoscopy.

To address this issue, use the same effective tools as commercial marketing to promote the product's benefits based on the target audience's core values to show them how using the product helps them become the person they want to be.

Price

While adopting the product may have a monetary cost, the more important considerations are social and emotional costs. These might include the hassle factor of performing the behavior, time, embarrassment, deprivation of something they enjoy, fear of finding a medical problem, or social disapproval. The strategic issue here is to figure out how to reduce the price as much as possible and make it easy and stress-free to perform the behavior.

Place

How will you make the product available? In other words, when and where can people perform the behavior? The concept of aperture is relevant here; just like a camera's lens opens and shuts very quickly to let in the light when you take a picture, you have only a small window of opportunity to get your messages through to the target audience at a time and place they can act on it. Your potential participants will not go out of their way to look for your messages — you need to go to where they are and give them the opportunity to easily learn about the product and perform the behavior.



Photo Credit: schizoo23 [desert punk]
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/schizoo23/65064057/>

Promotion

Promotional approaches for social marketing do not differ much from those used by commercial marketers. However, one key difference may lie in the types of target audiences addressed by social marketing programs. Many are not the types of consumers that a for-profit business would even consider going after; they may be low-income, unable to speak English, difficult to find, and/or uninterested in making any changes in their lives. Social marketers may need to be very creative in the ways we promote our products to these hard-to-reach populations, such as those who are homeless, illegal immigrants, drug users, or sex workers.

And because of the inherent challenges faced by social marketing programs, I have **added four more Ps** to the mix.

Publics

To be most effective when planning and managing a social marketing campaign, think about all of the people who can affect the success of the program. This includes the external publics – the target audience, groups that influence the target audience, policymakers, the media, and others outside the organization. Just as importantly, nonprofit social marketers must involve their internal publics in the development and preparation for the program implementation. These are the people within your organization – everyone from your Board members and management staff who must approve your plans, down to the receptionist who answers the phones and needs to know what to do when someone calls in response to the campaign.

Partnerships

Many social marketing issues are so big that one organization cannot address them alone. Potential partners include organizations (other nonprofits, government agencies and businesses) that have one or more of the following attributes: similar goals to yours, access to the target audience, credibility with the target audience, interest in sponsorship of your program, or resources that fill gaps in your organization's capabilities.



Policy

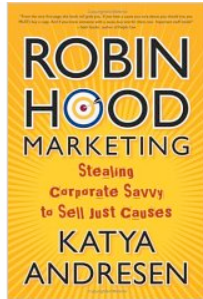
Governmental or organizational policies can act as a catalyst for social change on a large scale. When policies are put into place that provide an environment of support for a particular behavior, individuals are much more likely to sustain that behavior change. For example, workplace nonsmoking policies make it easier for smokers to quit by ensuring that they do not see others lighting up around them and removing those social cues to smoking.

Purse Strings

“How will we pay for this?” is the \$1,000,000 (more or less) question. When working with nonprofits, social marketers must be creative and proactive in seeking funding for their campaigns from sources such as corporate partners, foundations, and government agencies.

*BOOK REVIEW***Robin Hood Marketing:
Stealing Corporate Savvy to Sell Just Causes**

by Katya Andresen



Katya Andresen's *Robin Hood Marketing* is an engaging, well-written introduction to social marketing concepts for nonprofits (though she does not often use the term "social marketing"). Katya comes from the worlds of both journalism and nonprofit marketing, and this comes through as she obviously knows her audience and craft well. The book avoids marketing jargon, and she conveys marketing concepts in an easy to understand way.

The strengths of this book lie in her clear writing and extensive use of real-life examples to illustrate the concepts she discusses. At the end of each chapter, she also includes interviews with people like Bill Novelli (currently head of AARP and a social marketing pioneer), Sharyn Sutton (currently at AIR), Andy Goodman (who wrote *Why Bad Ads Happen to Good Causes*) and many more. She also lays out a content summary at the beginning of each chapter and highlights key points in text boxes throughout.

This is not a how-to book, but it should be the first step for people who want to understand how to apply marketing concepts to their nonprofit work. It will give you a good overview of the lens through which you need to filter your messages and materials. She accepts the reality that many nonprofits have tiny budgets, and she works from there.

The Magnificent Seven

Katya's "Magnificent Seven" (playing on the hero theme) lays out seven principles of a successful marketing campaign:

1. A campaign should be designed by beginning with the **desired actions**.
2. A campaign must **CRAM** from the perspective of the target audience. (CRAM refers to how you design a message -- it must create a sense of personal **Connection**, offer a key benefit or **Reward**, promote an **Action** and be **Memorable**).
3. A campaign must be **inescapable**.
4. A campaign should stake out a **unique** competitive position.
5. A campaign should be **emblematic** of the cause and extend the brand.
6. A campaign must be **flexible**.
7. A campaign should be **tested** many times.

Five Laws of Branding

I also found the "five laws of branding" made in the interview with marketing strategist Raphael Bemporad to be useful. They are:

1. **The Law of the Word** - own a word in the mind of your audience that differentiates your organization from all others.
2. **The Law of Focus** - identify the one thing you do better than anyone else and focus your brand on that unique value proposition.
3. **The Law of Leadership** - be the first to develop a unique approach or service.
4. **The Law of Authenticity** - the brand should truly reflect who you are and what you do.
5. **The Law of Consistency** - communicate the brand clearly and consistently over time.

Social Marketing Resources

If you want to learn more about social and nonprofit marketing, here are some resources to get you started...

Blogs

Getting Attention - <http://gettingattention.blogs.com/>

Katya's Nonprofit Marketing Blog - <http://www.nonprofitmarketingblog.com/>

Nonprofit Communications - <http://www.writing911.com/blog/>

On Social Marketing and Social Change - <http://socialmarketing.blogs.com/>

Spare Change - <http://www.social-marketing.com/blog/>

Websites/Online Publications

NetSquared Resource Centers - http://learn.netsquared.org/resource_centers

Social Marketing del.icio.us Links - <http://del.icio.us/weinreich>

Social Marketing Lite (pdf) -
<http://www.aed.org/ToolsandPublications/upload/Social%20Marketing%20Lite.pdf>

Social Marketing Squidoo - <http://www.squidoo.com/socialmarketing/>

Tools of Change - <http://www.toolsofchange.com/English/firstsplit.asp>

Turning Point Social Marketing National Excellence Collaborative -
<http://www.turningpointprogram.org/Pages/socialmkt.html>

Why Bad Ads Happen to Good Causes and How to Ensure They Won't Happen to Yours - <http://www.rwjf.org/files/publications/other/BadAds.pdf>

About the Author



Nedra Kline Weinreich is a consultant, author and blogger working in the field of social marketing. Since 1995, as the president and founder of Weinreich Communications, Nedra has worked with nonprofits and public agencies across the US and internationally to promote health and social change. She is the author of the widely used book *Hands-On Social Marketing: A Step-by-Step Guide*, writes the *Spare Change* blog (<http://www.social-marketing.com/blog/>), and contributes to the *MarketingProfs Daily Fix* blog (<http://www.mpdailyfix.com/>).

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