



By [Sandy Cahill](#)

ATTEN-SHUN! ACH-TUNG! And HEY YOU! *(Or, how to pave the way to a successful sale)*

Ducks, blocks of clay, singing geckos, Tabasco Sauce. Got your attention? That is exactly what marketing executives and small-business owners should be striving for even before they try to make the sale: getting a potential buyer's immediate and undivided attention.



It's marketing 101. People are inundated with marketing 'clutter' and the key to success is to immediately grab their attention. Small- and medium-sized business owners are often intimidated and overwhelmed by marketing, so they either end up doing nothing or they unsuccessfully attempt a tactic here or there. Even though

word-of-mouth is still the number one way to market a product, you can't rely on just one marketing avenue for success.

Consistent and honest marketing is important because consumers are becoming savvier (translate: skeptical) about the way products are being marketed, and pricing is being presented. But there are many cost effective, budget-driven and clever ways to market wisely. What is the best way to catch someone's attention? Give them the unexpected.

Three dimensional mailings of nearly any kind are guaranteed to be an attention-getter for several reasons. Yes, it's unexpected, but it's also a curiosity for most folks. They'll want to open it up just to see what's in it - especially if you put a good teaser line on the outside. You know those tiny bottles of Tabasco Sauce you see in restaurants? When I worked for an advertising agency, we sent out one of those in a flat box and asked prospects if they wanted to spice up their creative. This isn't award-winning creative, but it sure gets their attention.

One of my clients is about to send out a small block of clay for designers and other creative types to mold into a sculpture and submit a photo for a 'best sculpture' competition. Since designers are a target market for this company, this is a creative, unexpected way to get their products in front of them and pave the way for increased revenue.

Marketing efforts must stand out above the competition and connect with the prospect. Food works. Microwave popcorn is inexpensive and easy to mail. If you were a real estate broker, you might ask prospects if a new home will be “popping up” or if you can “pop in” to discuss a new listing. Who could pass up an opportunity to have a bag of popcorn in a desk drawer available for sometime in the near future when hunger strikes?

No idea is too corny (sorry, no pun intended) or crazy. Remember, the goal is to GET THEIR ATTENTION.

What is attention-getting has to be unique and captivating from the start.

From the AFLAC duck to the GEICO gecko to Brittany Spears' bare belly, it's about impact first. Then you've gotten their attention so you can start selling them your products.

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