

From the Editor's Desk

On the off chance that you've been living on another planet during the past 25 years, you may not be aware that Oprah Winfrey has become one of the most influential people on Earth. (Full disclosure: I'm one of the few people in this galaxy who's NEVER SEEN *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. Nope, not a single episode.)

Now that she's left daytime television to nurture her new network, we fear Oprah fans may be feeling a sense of loss. And since a clear case can be made for Oprah's marketing genius, we've decided to pay tribute with a "Favorite Things" issue of *Creative Compost*. Hopefully you'll pick up a useful idea or two to add to your marketing arsenal.

Putting together this newsletter for you is one of our favorite things here at Fahoury Ink. As always, your comments and contributions are most welcome. Have a favorite marketing "thing" you'd like to add? Or an idea for an article you'd like to write? We'd love to hear from you — email compost@fahouryink.com, or connect with us at [facebook.com/FahouryInkLLC](https://www.facebook.com/FahouryInkLLC).

To your marketing success,



Lisa Fahoury, Editor

Marketing Lessons from the Queen of Daytime

From the marketer's perspective, one of Oprah Winfrey's most notable achievements is being among the first people to be recognized as a "brand" in her own right. Winfrey's personal story, combined with her belief in self-improvement and controlling one's own destiny, have made her uniquely identifiable — and marketable.

And then there's her motto, "Live your best life." Certainly not the world's most inventive position (see the U.S. Army's "Be all you can be"), but Oprah evolved it into a consistent tagline that's become part and parcel of all of her ventures — a level of continuity that's key to effective branding.

So, what other pointers can we glean from the Oprah marketing machine?

It's all about the customer.

Oprah has always been uniquely devoted to her audience in a way that even customer-centric giants like Proctor & Gamble and Apple haven't been able to manage. Oprah connects directly, dynamically and continuously with her audience across a

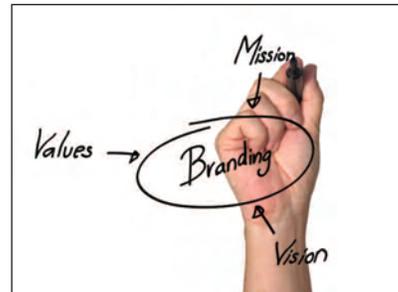
wide variety of media — TV, books, magazines, movies, now an entire network.

Marketers who seek to create a bit of Oprah's magic will find ways to make compelling connections between their

audience and their brand. Whatever your field, and whether you use social media or other digital or traditional channels, be sure to tell your audience who you

are, what you're doing, why you're doing it, and invite them to get involved every chance you can.

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Favorite Things: The Marketing Edition

How did business get done before the internet? Yeah, it's often a time suck, but for every "I Can Has Cheezburger?" there are a dozen tools for improving the strength of your marketing. Best of all, many are free or low-cost.

Here's a sampling of various creative and marketing tools we've got bookmarked:

Lexical FreeNet (lexfn.com)

This "connected thesaurus" is a clever little brainstorming booster. Use it to find relationships between words or phrases. We put Lexical FreeNet to frequent use on product naming and tagline development assignments — or when looking for fresh new ways to insult people.



WordCounter (wordcounter.com)

Tend to overuse a particular "business speak" word or phrase? Copy and paste your text

into WordCounter and it will tell you if you're being redundant when trying to effect a paradigm shift at the end of the day.

Poll Everywhere (polleverywhere.com)

Advertised as "the easiest way to gather live responses," Poll Everywhere can be used at conferences, presentations...pretty much anywhere you have an audience to survey. Live results can be downloaded directly into your PowerPoint or Keynote deck.

HubSpot (hubspot.com)

Bar none, nobody gives away as much free and fabulous content as HubSpot. Our fave: The Content Creation Kit (hubspot.com/content-creation-kit), which includes two e-books and a webinar with tips for creating the kind of content that generates qualified leads.

Damn, I Wish I Thought of That! (damniwish.com)

Filled with "unusually useful ideas for smart

marketers," this weekly newsletter never fails to impress and inspire. Front man Andy Sernovitz is the brains behind GasPedal Consulting and the Word of Mouth Supergenius conference.

Google Scholar (scholar.google.com)

In the quest for quality content creation, more marketers are being asked to produce long-form or edu-marketing pieces like white papers and bylined articles. Nothing adds gravitas like a well-positioned academic citation or research statistic. But how to find them? Google Scholar scans articles, abstracts, academic works and more from a variety of disciplines and sources.



Spotify (spotify.com)

Every creative effort needs a soundtrack. Spotify is a giant secret jukebox underneath the earth's core, one that contains seemingly every song & artist known to man (except AC/DC, dammit!) Enter at your peril — Spotify can quickly become one of those dreaded time sucks.

The Power of Print

At the risk of dating ourselves, we still believe in the power of print — as evidenced by the fact that you're holding this newsletter in your hands, not reading it on your iPad or smartphone.

To paraphrase Mark Twain, the demise of print has been greatly exaggerated. It's a constant source of surprise that more trade magazines aren't on marketers' radar. Sure, they've got websites and electronic versions, too, but to us there's nothing more valuable than tossing an issue into our briefcase to read during downtime over the course of the business day — waiting for an appointment, on the train, or in between meetings.

Here's a quick recap of some of our favorite offline reads...



Direct Marketing News (dmnews.com)

Hot trends and technologies from around the world, plus a monthly focus on various verticals — education, government, mobile — and in-depth special issues like the annual "Essential Guide to E-Mail Marketing."

“The only people who never tumble are those who never mount the high wire.”

Oprah Winfrey

(cont'd at right)

Oprah As Marketer (from p. 1)

Communicate, communicate, communicate.
If you want to connect with your customers, you'll need to seek out opportunities to hold a genuine conversation.

Don't talk at people; talk with them. Sounds like a job for social media, doesn't it? Make each communication meaningful in ways that are important to the recipient. If you treat customers like numbers or sales targets, don't expect to achieve Oprah-like loyalty.

Be true to your brand promise.

Oprah has built a one-of-a-kind brand by being viewed as genuine and honest. With calls for such high levels of transparency now extending to government and business, the bar is set pretty high for companies of all sizes — not just corporate America.

Honesty and transparency always serve you well, but especially so in the case of an error. The simple act of owning up to a mistake can very often save a valued customer relationship. Did viewers jump ship when it

was revealed that James Frey managed to snooker Oprah with his so-called memoir? Nope, they loved her all the more for not being perfect — and being completely honest about it.

Leverage multiple channels.

Oprah began her career as co-anchor of a local evening news show at the age of 19. From there, she grew her brand into a multi-dimensional media empire. Many have attempted to replicate this approach, but few have succeeded. The difference may be that "Brand Oprah" has consistently maintained a unified voice. All her endeavors work in sync, reinforcing one another and amplifying the lot in the process.

If you can adopt this disciplined approach to brand integration, you're more likely to make a true connection with your customers. And the richer the connection, the more likely buyers will be to interact with you and your brand in interesting and lasting ways.

Finally, create some drama.

Oprah has always been a master at keeping people on the edge of their seats. She gives just enough information to get us interested, but not enough to be sure about what's coming next.

When you want to create buzz for your brand or your company, give a "save the date" for the big announcement. Tease your audience with some intriguing facts. Find ways to create more buzz via word-of-mouth or networking. And make sure that, when you finally do open the curtain, it reveals something that's worth the hype.

Though her daily TV show is now history, Oprah's brand lives on, and millions can hardly wait to see what she does next. By adopting her successful approach to branding and marketing, you'll engender the same sense of loyalty from your audience — without having to give away cars in the process.

TARGET *Target Marketing* (targetmarketingmag.com)

This monthly gem offers insights into boosting response, using lists more effectively, acquisition strategies, cross-selling, and more.

BtoB (btobonline.com)

If you're in the B2B end of the business, this is a must-read — insightful analysis, in-depth reports, what's working in integrated marketing and what trends should be on your radar.



NY Enterprise Report (nyreport.com)

A local favorite, *NY Enterprise Report* connects small business owners to the best practices that have brought their area colleagues success. A great resource for practical, how-to advice in all facets of running a growing business.

Of course, these magazines offer much more than simply a monthly print issue. Check their websites for a host of downloadable resources, blogs, interactive discussions, virtual conferences and more — a terrific way to connect with fellow marketers and join the conversation!



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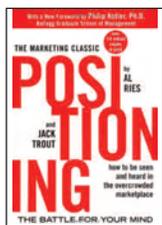
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Inside: The “Favorite Things” Issue



No “favorite things” issue of *Creative Compost* would be complete without some reading recommendations.



The first is a slim volume that’s managed to fly under the radar for many marketers.

Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind by Al Ries

and Jack Trout contains a remarkably simple idea. As Al Ries puts it, “Positioning is not what you do to the product; it’s what you do to the mind of the prospect. It’s how you differentiate your brand in the mind [and] . . . cut through the clutter.” Or, to put it bluntly, as Jack Trout has written: “Differentiate or die.”

One of the book’s best examples is 7Up. After many years trying to compete with Coke and Pepsi, Seven Up, Inc. took a thoughtful look at the product’s positioning. They knew if they didn’t differentiate they would perish; thus “The Uncola” was born.

Ries and Trout have written many books since *Positioning* was first published, and continue to be highly regarded marketing strategists. But we think that the original remains a must-read for anyone who wants to fully understand this foundational marketing concept.

Three other books that have earned a coveted spot on our list of favorite things:

Duct Tape Marketing, John Jantsch — Get ready for practical, head-slapping takeaways on just about every page. Jantsch preaches that every business is a

marketing business. And everyone who comes into contact with your clients or prospects is a marketer, regardless of their “real” title. The question is whether they are viewing these contacts with a marketing intention or not.

212: The Extra Degree, Sam Parker and Mac Anderson — More inspirational than marketing-focused, this little book packs a powerful punch. Raise the temperature of water by just one degree and you suddenly have enough force to power a locomotive. What a wonderful metaphor for the rewards of going the extra mile in life.

Creative Whack Pack, Roger VonOech — A funky, fun book/card deck combo with hands-on creative strategies for turning your ideas into action.

Have a book to recommend? Email your suggestions to compost@fahouryink.com.