



market available for sale.  
□ marketable adjective.  
**marketing** ► noun the prom  
selling of products or servi  
**marketplace** ► noun 1 an  
market is held. 2 the wo

# What is Marketing, Really?

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People talk about marketing all the time but rarely do we step back and consider what marketing really is. When I was fresh out of college, I actually had difficulties with the concept of marketing versus selling. There can be dense overlap between the two. Plus, on top of it all, there are different types of marketing. Business owners have plenty of reasons to be confused. Let us see if we can bring some clarity to these concepts.

## Everyone does marketing

Everyone does marketing in their daily lives. Why? Because marketing is how we present ourselves to the world and how we want to be perceived. For example, most of us do not roll out of bed, grab a cup of coffee, and head to work in our sleepwear. The freshly-woken-up look gives a different impression than a made-up-for-work look. Both visuals convey a meaning that is unspoken. Typically, an individual wants to give off a certain image—which is a type of marketing. Clothing companies have leapt all over

this idea by offering different fashion choices for what we wear, how we style our hair, and how we decorate our homes and businesses.

Marketing, either by an individual or a business, is the creation of an image that will help bring authority, credibility and meaning to a product, service or conversation.

The message that is crafted by marketing and presented through various mediums is the impetus or the “lever” to trigger a sale. Humanity in the United States and elsewhere has been molded by major corporations to consume marketing messages. Most of us know the slogans of our favorite brand names and the logos of products we buy, and make assumptions about individual and corporate credibility based on the images portrayed. For example, why do a majority of women who deliver the news or work in congress have the same type of haircut? Because it portrays confidence and trust. On the flip side, if the marketing

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is not the narrative we are used to seeing, then we start to distrust and wonder what is wrong with the service or product. Consistency is the key.

## Types of marketing

In the United States, more than other countries, we have two distinct types of marketing. One approach is empowering, enhancing and uplifting, while the other avenue is deceiving, negative and depressing of a person's sense of self. Both versions are utilized to make sales. The upbeat approach tends to be used when longer relationships with an individual or company are desired. The negative focus tends to target a quick sale and no relationship past the short term.

Let us look at dating as an example. When people are looking for a relationship, they tend to put their best foot forward. How a person markets themselves can indicate many things to a potential love interest. Typically, individuals take the approach of showing how they look on their best day. This might mean photos of themselves taken at a special event or in the right light. A negative approach might be what is called "catfishing" where a person puts up a photo of someone else and claims it is them. In this case, the marketing of another image by the person who has put up the dating profile is negative marketing. Once a love interest finds out they have been lied to, typically, any interaction ends.

## Marketing considerations

At the veterinary hospital, being aware of the image that is presented and how it is distributed is key. Life happens and it can go at the speed of light. After reading this article, grab a beverage and take a moment to complete these tasks to see if your marketing message is on track.

1. Write down the message the hospital should be portraying to its current and future client base. Use adjectives and concepts that would be discussed when explaining it at an event or recommending the services to a friend.

2. With the message in hand, review all the marketing avenues where the practice's brand can be seen, e.g. website, Google search, Facebook, Google My Business, and Yelp reviews. Does the message match the image presented on the internet?

Any discrepancies should be fixed to make sure the message is consistent, positive and on target. Marketing at a veterinary business should be empowering and uplifting, and should strive for a long-term relationship—not a quick sale.

Need help honing your marketing message and approach? We make it easy with simple marketing plans that keep your marketing car on the road. Marketing done right matters greatly. Give us a call or stop by and see us at VMX and WVC. Beyond Indigo has been conducting internet marketing for 22 years. We focus on results first and discuss costs second. We are committed to staying up to date with the changing online environment, such as ADA compliance. Plus, we are Google Ads Partners, and we know how to build Google mobile-friendly and fast websites. Need help creating a marketing plan? Call 877.244.9322, ext. 100, or go to <https://www.beyondindigopets.com/contact/>.

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