10 Marketing Tips to Learn From Mad Men

The AMC show Mad Men is still the craze, and a lot of people are happy the new season has started. That said, Man Men gets some things right, but also some things wrong. Here’s a list of ten things to learn from Mad Men:

1. **Do What Sells**. Creativity might win awards, but it doesn’t always sell. That ad you created might have the catchiest jingle, the most innovative storyboard, or the best animation, but if it doesn’t produce sales, it’s a failure. Remember to always think like your prospect, about what keeps him awake at night, what he needs help with, what are his pain points, and you’ll craft compelling copy that creates sales.
2. **Be Unique.** “Success comes from standing out, not fitting in,” says Don Draper in Season Two. Don got this one right. Make sure your Unique Selling Position (USP) is truly unique, not a carbon copy of a competitors. And make sure it meets the needs of your target prospects. A USP that is targeted towards your niche market is the most effective way of generating sales.
3. **There’s No “I” in Team.** Don’t pull a Draper and go renegade on pitches. Don has a habit of disregarding his associates’ ideas and efforts during a pitch and coming up with an idea from left field. This alienates your team, causing bad feelings. You want your team to be a solid front, united and willing to do whatever it takes to exceed your clients’ expectations. Once you exceed their expectations, clients will be more loyal.
4. **Research is the Way.** Speaking of expectations, Don Draper goes the extra mile for his clients. Rather than relying on his client for background information, Don digs and digs until he can think like his clients’ customers. Only then can he come up with the USP that rocks their world. Research is key to any marketing scheme, and you should spare no expense and leave no stone unturned in digging up those golden nuggets that can make or break a slogan/pitch.
5. **Change the Story.** Don’s advice to a client: “If the story is making your brand look bad, change the story.” Being able to see around corners is great, but most of us have to react to negative press after it happens. If your brand is getting hammered in the media, turn the tables and make it a positive, Draper-style. Look for ways to make your brand the hero in the situation rather than the infamous. This is where creative geniuses are made.
6. **Don’t Put All Your Eggs in One Basket.** Unlike the Draper method of print or television advertising only, spread your marketing dollars around to a variety of mediums. Diversifying will help you target your niche market and makes for much more cost-effective advertising. You need to be where your customers are, so make sure you know the different platforms where your customers hang out.
7. **Image is King.** Image is important to a brand. Everyone recognizes the golden arches of McDonalds, and you know exactly what to expect when you walk through the front doors. Be consistent in your branding messages across all platforms. As consistent as the suits and ties on Mad Men. Be consistent with your words, your offers, your sales strategies, even your color schemes. Make sure people can recognize your brand anywhere.
8. **Learn to Love Spreadsheets.** While Don Draper is a creative genius, marketing persons today need to be more analytical. Measure everything you do. Use those analytical tools that capture the essence of internet marketing. You will be happy you did. Not only can you make informed decisions based on analytics, you’ll know where your money is being spent and the return on investment.
9. **Test, Test, and Retest.** Test your advertising methods to see which ones are most effective. If you can, use focus groups like they do on Mad Men. Focus groups will help you pinpoint exactly what is and isn’t working in your current marketing mix. There’s nothing quite as effective as a focus group to get down to the essence of what your customers think and feel about your product or service. Don’t ever assume you know.
10. **Don’t Try This in the Real World.** Only on Mad Men can you drink heavily and pass out on the couch in your office.

And there you have it. Golden nuggets gleaned from Mad Men and Don Draper. Use them wisely.