

THE FUSION MARKETING BIBLE

FUSE!

**Traditional Media + Social
Media + Digital Media**

Lon Safko



The McGraw Hill Companies

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Foreword

Imagine Marketing as a lot of Lego blocks. Any company's marketing strategy is constructed by bolting together some of these Lego blocks. A small and inexperienced company may use only a few, like direct mail and the yellow pages, the equivalent of a tiny building. A sophisticated company will construct a large marketing strategy building with several stories and many rooms named TV, radio, Internet, and so on.

Now when a new technology comes along, as personal computers did in the 1970s or the Internet in the 1990s, the building owners wonder if it will be of any help to them. The bigger ones generally will try the new technology first since they have the experts who can figure out how to use it. But there is always a problem. Their strategy building is already built. There are no vacant rooms. So the new technology room is simply bolted onto the backside of the building and is used sporadically, often with very little integration with what goes on in the other rooms. Finally the new technology may become so important that the management decides to remodel. That is what happened at a lot of companies around 2004, when it became clear the Internet was no longer just another room out back, but was a central component in the twenty-first century marketing strategy.

Today's new technology is social media. Most small companies don't understand it well or know how to use it effectively. Big companies have done what they always do: try to bolt it on as a new room out back, not integrated into much of anything else. Most just talk about their new room and let the people in it do what they want to, since no one else understands the new technology anyway, and it doesn't cost very much.

The building owners may expect to do some major remodeling in a few years, just as they did to integrate the Internet. Normally, the remodeled building looks the same; it just has more rooms. But this time they are in for a big surprise.

Social media cannot be contained in a room. It cannot wait like others for a knock at the door and a cheery voice saying, "OK, time for some direct mail" or any other sort of one-way media, which is pushed out to the public on various media channels. The smartest businesses will realize they cannot remodel their old building. rather, they will need to design a new building around the strengths of the new media that make it different from nearly everything that has come before: it is

instantaneous, it is two-way, and it is virtually free. In short, the hallmark of this new building's design will be one word: collaboration. Collaboration with customers, and customers' collaboration with each other. Like a critical nuclear mass for a bomb, these collaborations can lead to spectacular new marketing achievements—but only if it is assembled in the right way to achieve that mass.

The new building will have almost all of the same rooms as before—TV, outdoor, print—but they will all be interconnected, and every one of them will also be connected to social media and to the Internet, just like every room in a real building is connected to the electrical and air conditioning systems. That is the marketing strategy building of the early twenty-first century.

But few people can visualize it, much less know how all those rooms must fit together to create a sleek, efficient, and powerful marketing system that creates the integrated, collaborative, multimedia messages that can hit the same target from eight different directions, each with a message specially designed for that medium. Buyers are already bombarded by a thousand or more “buy me” messages every day, and that's growing. Only the companies that find a new way will prosper. The old ways will always be important, but the new ways are what will separate the winners from the losers.

In marketing, most everyone is adept at looking backwards to what has worked. They have little skill in forecasting the future until someone explains it to them. That is the role of this new book by Lon Safko—to explain in detail how to construct your new marketing strategy building so all that potential social media collaboration can pay off for your company. This is the new vision you will read about, a modern, forward-looking blueprint for all of those companies that want a new, more competitive marketing strategy that works. Just as in Lon Safko's *The Social Media Bible*, which demystified social media as a marketing tool, so in this new book does he lay out the step-by-step construction for your individualized twenty-first-century marketing strategy for success.

Just fifteen years ago, most companies didn't know exactly what the Internet was, but they were pretty sure they didn't need it for their business. Today, in the minds of buyers, any business without a Web site is the equivalent of a business without a telephone. Social media will be equally important, but the transition will be much faster. Businesses need someone to tell them how to get ahead of that curve—and Lon Safko's book will show you how.

Gary A. Witt, Ph.D.



Professor of Marketing
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Owner, Marketing Psychology Group
www.MarketingPsychology.com