

Purple Cow

From *Purple Cow: Transform Your Business by Being Remarkable* by Seth Godin (2012)

The P's of Marketing

- Traditional checklist:
 - Product, Pricing, Promotion, Positioning, Packaging, Publicity, Permission, Pass-along
 - Today's addition: Purple Cow → The idea of being "remarkable."
-

Key Concepts

Remarkable Marketing

- Build things worth noticing directly into your product or service.
- If your offering isn't remarkable, it's invisible.
- Stop advertising and start innovating.

The New Marketing Paradigm

- Old Rule: Safe, ordinary products + great marketing.
 - New Rule: Remarkable products that people seek out.
-

Challenges and Opportunities

The Post-Consumption Consumer

- Most consumers have what they need; they want very little.
- Traditional marketing to the masses is less effective.

The TV Industrial Complex

- A system where TV advertising drove consumer demand and company growth no longer works.
-

Key Strategies and Questions

Differentiation

- Find your most profitable group or the group most likely to "sneeze" (spread the idea).
- Ignore the masses; cater to your ideal customers.

Analysis for Success

- What viral elements will spread your idea?
- Is your product remarkable enough for long-term interest or just a short-lived fad?

Innovate Instead of Following

- Launch products that cater to underserved niches or compete with your own.
- Create something different instead of mimicking leaders.

Permission Assets

- Build relationships with your most loyal customers.
- Direct communication beats traditional advertising.

Tools for Remarkability

- Experiment with changing consumer behavior instead of meeting existing behavior.
 - Use prototypes and public releases to gather real-world feedback.
 - Focus on design and user experience as part of the product, not as an afterthought.
-

Inspiration and Creativity

- Study successful, remarkable products in any industry.
 - Explore “just not done” ideas in your field and do them.
 - Copy strategies from industries duller than yours.
-

Remarkable Thinking

- Think small: Identify the smallest viable audience and design for them.
 - Explore extremes: Fastest, cheapest, easiest, most outrageous, etc.
-

Practical Steps

1. Make a list of remarkable products in your industry.
 2. Identify underserved markets and target them aggressively.
 3. Shift budget from traditional marketing to world-class design or innovation.
 4. Embrace prototyping, experimenting, and learning from fans.
-

Miscellaneous Insights

- People with otaku (intense interest) are the sneezers who spread your idea.
 - Remarkable doesn't have to mean big changes—it could be as simple as a unique customer interaction.
-

Closing Thought

- The path to lifetime job security is to be remarkable. Being safe is risky.
-

Actionable Steps to Stand Out:

1. Identify Your Unique Factor
 - Pinpoint what sets your business, product, or service apart.
 - Focus on solving a problem or fulfilling a need in an extraordinary way.
2. Niche Down

- Target a specific audience instead of trying to appeal to everyone.
 - Become indispensable to your chosen group.
 - 3. Embrace Bold Choices
 - Take risks with design, branding, or delivery to stand out.
 - Be unafraid to polarize opinions; remarkable ideas won't please everyone.
 - 4. Tell a Compelling Story
 - Build a narrative around your product or service that resonates emotionally.
 - Use authentic storytelling to connect with your audience.
 - 5. Focus on Early Adopters
 - Cater to innovators and enthusiasts who will advocate for your product.
 - Build momentum through their excitement and feedback.
 - 6. Optimize Word of Mouth
 - Design your product or service to be shareable and conversation-worthy.
 - Encourage customers to spread the word by exceeding expectations.
 - 7. Iterate Relentlessly
 - Continuously refine your offering based on real-world feedback.
 - Stay agile and ready to adapt to new trends or customer needs.
 - 8. Create Memorable Experiences
 - Go beyond the product itself; provide a unique customer journey or experience.
 - Surprise and delight your customers with unexpected touches.
 - 9. Build a Community
 - Foster a sense of belonging among your audience.
 - Engage through events, social media, or exclusive offers.
 - 10. Stay Remarkable Over Time
 - Don't rely on one-time novelty; keep innovating to remain relevant.
 - Build systems that support consistent creativity and differentiation.
-

Specific Examples

1. Attend Niche Events
 - Showcase your product or service at places where your target audience gathers (e.g., a science fiction convention for sci-fi fans).
2. Use a Unique Packaging Approach
 - Experiment with unconventional, story-rich packaging like Dr. Bronner's soap bottles, which use text to engage and entertain.
3. Create Limited Edition or Collectible Products
 - Develop special editions that customers want to own and talk about, like Coca-Cola's collectible cans.
4. Tell the Truth About Your Product
 - Highlight honest, unvarnished facts that build trust and differentiate you from competitors (e.g., "Our product works great, but it's ugly").
5. Make it Shareable
 - Design your product to be easily shared or discussed (e.g., a quirky feature or bold design).
6. Borrow From Other Cultures or Genres

- Incorporate elements from unrelated fields to create something surprising and fresh, like using anime-inspired design for a fitness brand.
7. Collaborate With Influencers
 - Partner with niche thought leaders who can amplify your product within their trusted networks.
 8. Target Innovators and Early Adopters
 - Start with small, influential groups to gain traction. For instance, launch a beta version and involve users in shaping the final product.
 9. Host a Remarkable Launch
 - Make your debut a spectacle—throw an event or release that aligns with your brand identity (e.g., a midnight release party for gamers).
 10. Focus on a Memorable Brand Story
 - Share the journey or inspiration behind your brand. For example, Patagonia’s sustainability focus weaves its origin into its ongoing story.
 11. Offer a ‘Purple Cow’ Guarantee
 - Provide an unexpected warranty or refund policy that catches attention (e.g., Zappos offering free returns for 365 days).
 12. Surprise With Extras
 - Delight customers by going beyond expectations (e.g., including a thank-you note or free gift with every order).
 13. Break Traditional Marketing Rules
 - Use unconventional advertising tactics like guerrilla marketing or word-of-mouth campaigns.
 14. Become the Best at Something Specific
 - Dominate a small niche by doing one thing exceptionally well (e.g., the best vegan chocolate chip cookie).
 15. Leverage Scarcity and Exclusivity
 - Offer time-sensitive deals or limited availability (e.g., a pop-up shop or flash sale).
 16. Innovate the Customer Experience
 - Reimagine how people interact with your brand. Think of Uber’s user-friendly app or IKEA’s unique store layout.
 17. Go Against the Grain
 - Challenge conventions in your industry. For instance, In-N-Out Burger’s minimalistic menu contrasts with typical fast food excess.
 18. Make It Quirky or Fun
 - Add an element of whimsy to your business (e.g., cards with unexpected, humorous messages in your packaging).
 19. Reinvent Your Industry Norms
 - Change how your product is priced, distributed, or presented, like Warby Parker’s home-try-on glasses model.
 20. Encourage User-Generated Content
 - Inspire customers to share their experiences with your brand on social media (e.g., branded hashtags or contests).