

Thank you for inquiring about the marketing tactics that we have used to successfully grow Palitto Consulting Services, Inc. (PCS). I will focus on what I consider to be the top four tactics that we have “discovered” and developed. We believe that marketing must begin inside the business before it can be taken to the market place.

I am Bryon Palitto, Founder, President and CEO of PCS. I launched PCS in 1996 because I had a strong desire to provide competent, timely and cost effective technical solutions for small businesses.

Small businesses are the fabric that weaves our American economy. Small businesses support the large businesses as vendors, supply our households with the basic services of life, make it possible to live in rural areas and provide the seedbed for ingenious innovation. I believe that small businesses deserve competent, timely and cost effective help in the areas of business in which they are inexperienced.

From my observations there are three broad categories of people who start a small business. Entrepreneurs in the first category are Technicians that excel in the production work. Owners in second category focus on selling. They find (or create) a product or service their company takes to market. People in the third category are financially motivated and interested in money. Each of these three broad categories of business owners has their distinct areas of strength and specific areas of weakness.

Experience has taught me that there are seven areas of business that need to be competently covered for a business to grow and prosper. For the purposes of this article I will focus on marketing.

In April 1996, I officially created PCS as a vehicle for serving small businesses. My focus was on providing expert services in technology. My vision was that improvements in the implementation of technology could help improve operational efficiencies: helping in Finance by supporting accounting systems; helping in Sales by providing a way to easily track leads, document needs, and generate quotes; and helping with Production by supporting the business systems. I started out with three customers. PCS still serves those original customers today and has served over six hundred other customers over the past ten years. We currently add an average of two new customers per week. We are serving these customers with a team of eighteen very gifted servants.

You can see from my vision that we are dedicated to making a positive contribution to the lives of people; business owners included. I believe that this bit of understanding is important because it serves as a foundation for who we are and how I arrived at the following four marketing tactics.

ONE: Relationships mean Serving.

The most important marketing tactic I discovered is the great value of having a very sincere, passionate desire to make a difference in the lives of people.

Why do I conclude this? An overview of my history provides insight.

I grew up in a home where my father, Ron Palitto, worked in a very large, multi-national business. I am the oldest child and loved to listen to his stories about his work. He shared with me, through stories, what he was learning and being challenged with and the outcomes. I first remember this taking place when I was around 6 years old. It continues to this day, 32 years later. I am honored that my father joined PCS in 1999. He continues to be my personal mentor. He is now my business mentor, coach and consultant as well as providing these services to the rest of our team and numerous customers.

Servitude, discipline and perseverance were also a part of my youth. At 9 years old, I began my first job as a paperboy with the Cuyahoga Falls City Press. At 10 years old I graduated to delivering the Akron Beacon Journal, 7 days per week, rain or shine, 365 days per year; no exceptions! I had a 3 mile route that I walked every day delivering papers door to door. I did this for 6 years. I first discovered that life was not about me at this point. Delivering papers at 6:00am on Sunday morning in -10F temperatures taught me that life is about serving people.

Beginning at age fifteen, I had an opportunity to work for a local dairy farming entrepreneur for five years. This farmer started several creative farm related businesses that I helped operate as a teenager. Again, I further discovered that it is not about me. Working outside all day in temperatures over 100F to provide feed for the animals continued to teach me about doing the right things for the right reasons at the right time.

During my full time college career, I worked 60 hours per week for a local Akron area entrepreneurial team which owned and operated numerous recruiting and staffing organizations. I was their IT guy who also ended up supporting all the remote users and supervising the data entry crew. The owners shared much with me about the beauty of operating and serving small businesses.

After graduating from college, I worked in a small, Akron area software company where my business education was further enhanced by a mentoring relationship with the owner.

As time progressed, I joined a big, national consulting company. My role was as technical account manager to Cleveland and Akron based Fortune 500 companies. I was very successful in helping to grow this Cleveland branch. I was disappointed; however, that I could not help the small business from within this big business.

It has become obvious, to me, that in each instance my success was hinged on a serving attitude.

TWO: Touching People.

I learned early on that I was not able to do all that was required. I needed help. I discovered early on in the history of PCS, that recruiting is very important. So far this

year I have interviewed over fifty people. Some years I have interviewed over one hundred individuals. You ask a great question: what does this have to do with marketing?

The answer is a little complex. First, I do most of the initial interviews. I have three items on my agenda.

- 1) Is this person a candidate for our team?
- 2) Who does this person know and where have they been?
- 3) Can they become an apostle of PCS?

The second and third items are all about marketing. By the time I am finished with the hour and a half interview, this person knows all about who we are, what we do, why we do it, where we are going, what kind of team members we are looking for, what kind of customers we are looking for and how they may or may not fit into the PCS team or other teams that I am helping to build. Often these interviewees tell me about potential customers. Sometimes they find work somewhere and call us to help them there.

My first interview agenda item also relates to marketing in a round about way. It leads to the third tactic I would like to share with you.

THREE: The Team.

The team is everything. I know that popular business thinking is pretty convincing that the customer is everything. I read a great deal. I go to seminars. I spend lots of time with other business owners. Here is what I have discovered: Customers are everywhere! How do you find them? With a team. Once you find a customer what do you do? You have to perform. How do you perform? With a team. After you have performed, how do you continue to do business with that customer? With a team. The team is everything!

Who is this team you ask? The answer to this question is the secret to my tactic number three. The team is made up of people that I and the other existing team members have recruited, qualified, tested, tried, approved and developed. It is also made up of all the other alliance partners who have team members that are useful in fully serving the customer. It is the team of teams concept being promoted by the Business Technology HUB. I could go on and on about this concept. I believe it is the secret to success in our new economy!

FOUR: Personal development.

The fourth tactic is personal growth. I know that I am a lid that limits the potential of PCS. This concept is described very well in Dr. John Maxwell's Law of the Lid. In case you were wondering, I also realize that if it were not me, it would be another person. I realize that everyone on the team or in the team of teams can be a lid at one time or another. We all need to grow. My experience is that in developing myself and others in

leadership, strategic thinking, discipline in character, understanding people and their character and behaviors, project management, and all the while still truly caring about them and their success, we are better able to effectively serve the market. The market responds by providing opportunities to help others.

In conclusion, it is my firm conviction that relationships are the business. Therefore, relationships are begun inside the company so that they can be extended to the marketplace.

Marketing is only one of seven core competencies required to be successful in business. Don't forget to work on the other six.

Wishing you the very best!
Bryon

Bryon Palitto resides in Guilford Township, West of Wadsworth Ohio, with his wife of 15 years and 4 dear children. His passion is described above. He also enjoys teaching, mentoring and coaching young people. He can be contacted via e-mail at Bryon.Palitto@palittoconsulting.com or via telephone, fax or US Post via information listed at www.palittoconsulting.com.