WIRED TO BE WOWED

Great Marketing Isn't an Accident

MATT BAILEY

Contents

Are You WOWING or Being Wowed?

3 Are you Wowing or Being Wowed?

This desire to be Wowed can work for us or against us.

The Wow factor not only exists for your customers, but also for you, the business owner.

The problem in business is that we get distracted by new social media, the latest sales guru, or the next big marketing breakthrough system that we hope will redeem our last ten attempts that failed miserably.

This is a problem. A sickness, really. And now we are going to define it.

SHINY OBJECT SYNDROME

Yes, that's the diagnosis. What are the symptoms?

- A strange attraction to headlines about the latest social media
- Thinking that the latest tactic will increase your business
- Self-diagnosing marketing choices based on articles, hearsay or assumptions
- Lack of internal marketing measurement and data
- A string of past marketing agencies that couldn't do the job
- Stagnation – a lot of activity, but not a lot of results

Ultimately, I've found that Shiny Object Syndrome (SOS) is a mindset that believes the answer is *out there*, and not *in here*. Those suffering from Shiny Object Syndrome are always looking to **external factors** such as new technology, social media tactics, or a new agency.

However, those that are immune to Shiny Object Syndrome are laser-focused on **internal factors**: marketing and website analytics, cross-channel tracking, sales tracking, and customer insights. They know *what's* working, *why* it's working, and *how* to leverage that data into informed decisions.

At the most basic level, a business that suffers from Shiny Object Syndrome is one that is negatively distracted by advances in technology and media. In contrast, a business that is Wired to Wow is one that proactively implements those advances as an extension of existing strategy. We all want to be a part of businesses that Wow, but what does that look like? What are the functional differences within this dichotomy?

In this chapter, I want to demystify the major distinctions between these two kinds of operations and present to you what a business that "Wows" looks like.

THREE SHINY OBJECTS

As a consultant, I've discovered three major Shiny Objects that distract and paralyze business leaders and employees alike: *new technology, the assumptive promise of technology, and emotions*. Understanding each of these will help us avoid distraction and stay on course with the true vision of our companies.

Technology offers to simplify our work and lives. But it does more than just that. To businesses, it offers the prospect of greater profit (more money) and the idea that it will make our work better. Frequently, we hear of businesses making lots of money through technology channels like Twitter. From the outside, it appears so easy. *Well, we could do that too,* we think to ourselves. Unfortunately, when we are Wowed by the technological success of others, we only see the attractive return, but we rarely consider the investment it cost them.

New technology provides an easy answer to why you may not be successful—I call this its **assumptive promise**. Underneath the external lure of technology is the promise that it will fix all your problems. It is something like: *x amount of new customers, x amount of sales in x amount of time*. As tempting as it looks we both know it is unrealistic. The Wow of technology lies in its promise to immediately revamp productivity and bolster the success of our businesses. But, it's a false promise. Yes, new technology is a fundamental tool in marketing today (and one with great potential), but we cannot count on it to fix our business' foundational problems. Usually, the problem is too deep for technology alone to solve.

The last major element of Shiny Object Syndrome is our own **emotions**. When we sense that our businesses are failing in an area— or altogether—we worry as we seek answers. I have consulted with businesses that are deeply convinced they *need* to incorporate a new website into their strategy. They believe the primary reason they are falling behind is that their current website is not up to date or on par with the trends. However, when I ask *why* they believe a new website will fix their problems, they generally lack facts and data to back up the belief. In essence, they are responding out of emotion. I think you and I can agree that a business driven by pure emotion will not thrive for long.

When a business is enamored by the headlines, technology, or trendy conference talks of the day, they are losing grip of the dynamics in their own business. When shiny objects are distracting your team, it means you are looking for answers outside of the data native to your organization. Ironically, that is the very information you need most. Among other havocs, this habit breeds a culture of instability within your business which results in constant turnover, shifting direction, and perpetual confusion. On the other hand, a successful business must grow teams that are Wowed by their own internal information. They are Wired into their data, website analytics, business measurements, and customer feedback. Those are the teams that come up with ideas about how to better serve their customers and how to improve themselves.

The most significant mark of a thriving business is that they value and depend upon their own data. Don't look outside. Look inside.

LEADING TO WOW

I want to spend some time specifically addressing business leaders about these ideas. The leader's role is to provide the direction and wherewithal for his or her followers to complete a job or arrive at a destination. If leaders themselves are distracted by the Shiny Objects constantly presented in the media, they will simply never be capable of guiding their business to success. Especially as one with influence and power, it can be tempting to frequently "field test" new tactics. While it's good for a leader to be aware of trends in the industry, a better leader understands how to use them as a compliment to their strategy. What I mean is this: your data is the most accessible and valuable information you have to increase profits. Looking elsewhere is only helpful to a degree if you haven't looked inside first.

Also, leaders must remember that if they are distracted by shiny objects, their teams will be distracted by them as well. Employees learn quickly that they will be rewarded for finding new shiny objects, if that is the goal. If you are continuously adjusting your company's strategy to accommodate every new and trendy social media channel you will eventually overload your team with too much work. As I have already mentioned, the process of keeping up with technology today is a constant sprint. Weighing down your employees (and yourself) with too many channels or too much external information will only hinder your strategy's momentum. This is evidence that proves a lack of direction. Before you find yourself suffering from Shiny Object Syndrome, decide where you are going and which channels will help get you there.

To help you answer questions like these, I want to offer a three-step-guide which will allow you to filter the plethora of new concepts and influences in your industry. These steps can function as guardrails to keep you on track with your business's strategy and overall objectives.

1. Data & Analytics

You guessed it: the first step is to know your own data. This means knowing what makes you the most money, what particular channels are the most profitable, and why. Being able to analyze your own data and measurements is *the single most important step of the filtering process*. Becoming effective in this area will prove a lens through which you will see every aspect of successful marketing differently. Your own data is the standard. If you have objective data that proves one channel (i.e. your blog) is generating income, you now know it will be counterproductive to take money from your blog and allocate it to another channel. Essentially, if you are not familiar with your own data, you will not have a good basis for making decisions.

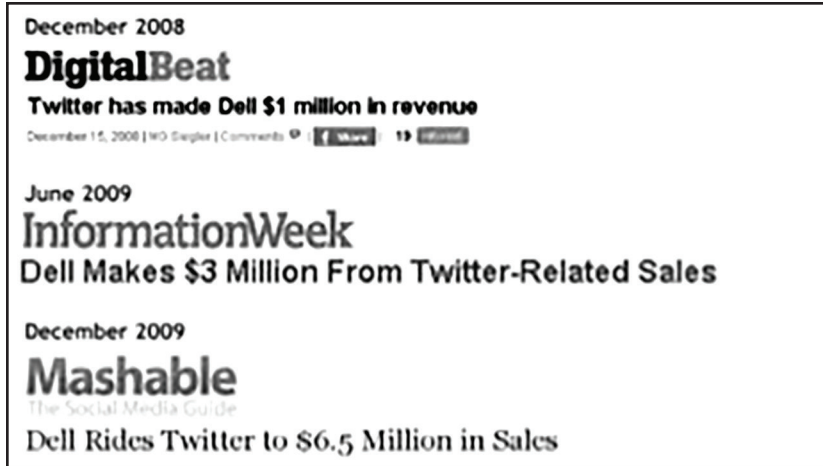### 2. Ask, "How does this channel fit our culture, message, and personality?"

With the appropriate analytics in place, you are now free to make choices based on their effectiveness to support and extend your strategy. Does this new possibility amplify what you are already doing, or do you have to adjust your strategy to make it work? This is about accommodation. Certain channels may fit your personality and resources as a company, whereas others simply won't suit the company at all. If you have the assets, talent, and resources to incorporate a new channel—great! If not, what resources do you need to attain it? When considering a new business idea, first discern the *return*. Will this monetize? Secondly, measure the investment it demands. What will this cost?

3. Strategy

The objective of utilizing new channels is to enhance and support your strategy. Signing up on Pinterest and posting motivational quotes probably doesn't count. Just *using* a social medium is not a strategy—but how you use that medium can either help or hinder your strategy. Of course, this requires that you understand both strategy and audience. The worth of every tweet, blog post, or email can be gauged by how closely it supports and works within your strategy.

Here is an example of Shiny Object Syndrome and how seductive it is. In the early days, Twitter was the darling of the tech media. Here is

a headline specifically about Dell and their Twitter usage:

Now, that's not attractive at all, is it? Dell making millions of dollars from using Twitter?

That is one big Shiny Object.

Let's apply our 3-step "filter":

1. Data & Analytics: Let's add some perspective and context to these numbers. One of the most important numbers that jumps out is the "millions of dollars." Who doesn't get excited about that? Well, even more thrilling is doing a quick search to find Dell's annual revenue: around $60 billion! Have you done the math yet? At an average of $3 million/year, that Twitter revenue would only account for less than 0.01% of Dell's annual revenue.

2. How does this fit? Now that we have some context, let's look at how Dell used Twitter. Primarily, they used it as a customer-service mechanism. Dell put a team of customer service technicians on Twitter to respond immediately when someone had a Dell-related issue or question. Dell had the resources available to apply an existing resource to a new medium.

3. Strategy. For Dell, Twitter allowed them to reach their primary

audience through an immediate conversation. Dell is a computer brand and their customers are computer users, most of whom are online, and many are early adopters. By gaining traction among the early adopters, they were able to reach one of their target audiences.

Context is everything, isn't it?

I'm not saying that Twitter isn't useful. If that's what you are thinking, then you are thinking tactically, not strategically. The context of this example is to help us better evaluate how Twitter was used to reach a specific audience by a specific company and to help you think creatively. Looking for the additional context on how new technologies are used in these "headlining" case studies enables you to fill in the gaps between the use and the profitability of a tool.

To avoid getting distracted by Shiny Objects, protect yourself by evaluating them through these steps. By understanding how other businesses are utilizing tools and technology, you'll start to see that success is based on HOW it is used, and not by simply being used.

To conclude, I want to paint a picture of a business that is Wowing—a business that has the industry's attention because of their impeccable dedication to *their own success*. I believe the first goal of such a business is *customer service*. They have defined their customer base and a long-term customer journey. They are invested in those customers, and they know the appropriate conversations that need to take place within those relationships. Further, this business has the data that provides feedback to root them in the reality of their situation. In other words, such a business is not so concerned with externals. This is what I call a data-centric feedback process. Such a process ensures that they are reaching the right customers with the right message at the right time.

Whether or not such a business exists for you right now, it is an ideal worth the effort. My hope is that this chapter has provided you with enough information and motivation to pursue the right changes in your business—changes that will keep you from distraction. Maybe your business will be exactly what Wows us next.

1

**What percentage of your day are you
spending getting Wowed and by what?
What about your team?**

**What are you going to do in order to make sure
you and your team have a clear filter?**

2

3

**Who are some other sources
you trust that can give you feedback
for your filter and when will you reach out to
them to discuss this?**

About The Author

Matt Bailey resides in the heart of Hall of Fame City (also known as Canton, Ohio). Aiming to carry on his city's legacy, he is a Best-Selling Author, Marketing Expert, Trainer, and Speaker. Matt is the Digital Marketing Instructor for the Direct Marketing Association in NYC, a member of the Digital Marketing Faculty for Market Motive, and an Online Marketing Certification Instructor.

In February 2006, Matt founded and was the President of SiteLogic Marketing (an e-marketing agency focused on action from data) until he sold it in 2014. He now focuses on education through his speaking and writing. His marketing finesse spans well over two decades and his key know-hows lie in Digital Marketing Strategies, Marketing Analytics, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Web Site Usability, Content Marketing, Making People Laugh, and many more.

Matt's aim to fame doesn't stop there… he has worked with a vast and widely-known clientele, including Google, ESPN, IBM, Gerber Life, Johnson&Johnson, American Medical Association, Travel Weekly, Apple Vacations, Disney, American Greetings, Proctor & Gamble, Toys R' Us, and countless more. He keynotes conferences around the world, speaking at more than 30 engagements a year, in addition to providing in-house training for companies.

Matt is the author of the must-read book entitled, Internet Marketing: An Hour a Day which focuses on a recognized and simple task-based approach to developing enticing internet marketing campaigns. This gem in book form helps businesses keep the $$$ rolling in and their customer engagement at an all-time high. Ultimately, Matt's wit is especially evident when he takes the overly complex aspects of marketing and shrinks them into easy-to-digest tidbits. Even the most non-internet savvy folks can grasp marketing gibberish when Matt guides them.

When he isn't immersed in the universe of marketing and technology, Matt spends most of his time being a husband, a dad (to four girls) and whatever time is left is spent reading history, culture, or philosophy books. As a self-proclaimed coffee snob, he absolutely loves a good cup of Joe—especially while reading.

To find out much more about Matt, visit www.sitelogic.com.