



BrainHive Consulting

Survive & Grow: A Toolbox for Fledgling
Founders

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Survive & Grow: A Toolbox for Fledgling Founders

Hello and welcome. My name is Joachim Goerbert and I am pleased that you downloaded our "toolbox". In the next approximately 60 minutes of reading you will hopefully obtain a lot of professional knowledge for your startup. This is knowledge that you can easily apply in practice and give results that will soon show in your wallet, if you already are an entrepreneur.

Before we start, a few words about me so you can better understand where my knowledge comes from. I have been working as a managing consultant in market entry consulting for many years and I run an internet marketing agency called BrainHive Ethical Marketing alongside BrainHive Business Plan Consulting since 2012.

As a business plan ghostwriter, I have written more than 450 business plans since 2008 and have consulted over three dozen great companies as a copywriter and internet marketing consultant, above all in the sectors of lifestyle, wellness, product novelties and health.

I like being an entrepreneur very much despite the sometimes enormous effort that you have to invest to ensure that the business survives and prospers. This is why I want to support you as an entrepreneur colleague. In addition to the marketing effect of this publication, it is my sincere joy to support you.

Just a quick note: I am someone who, in doubt, will always think for himself. **However, it never hurts to know key aspects of other people's viewpoints.** I have spent many years studying the work of some of the best consulting experts in the USA and Germany. I recommend tapping into the free know-how offered in newsletters, online seminars / video and PDF leaflets in addition to this publication. You will find a selection of recommended readings / websites with links in this file.

I want to not miss the chance to recommend contacting BrainHive if you are planning on implementing some of the ideas that you will find in this PDF. We are proven professionals, yet our services have staid affordable. In addition, we know the regional markets very well. Much of what works in America works in Europe only to limited extent, and vice-versa. Regional customers / clients / consumers are each special in their own right - we will help you enter your market of choice quickly and ensure sustainable market status.

1. Use Your Competitors' Work

In most cases one operates in a market where one competes with other companies locally, nationally or internationally in terms of one or more products or services, to larger or smaller extent.

To leverage the strengths of your competitors, you should do some thorough research. Make an Excel table with the following columns: website, name, location, direct competition, correlation of the competing offer with your product or service on a scale of 1-3 (1 = weak correlation, 2 = average correlation, 3 = strong correlation), appearance and perceived marketing strength on a scale of 1-5 and a column for comments and notes.

Keep researching until you have found at least ten companies - the more the better. You will probably find when researching other interesting websites and orientation for further action such as corporate directories, comparison portals or industry associations. Write down all these "chance finds" below the table.

Spend at least half an hour on the websites of your three main competitors. Make test purchases or even call with a complicated question to examine, respectively, the user friendliness of the site and the performance of the underlying supported service infrastructure.

How does the competitor use:

- Images and texts?
- Marketing elements such as newsletters, blog posts or forms?
- Other media, resources and design elements?
- Testimonials from satisfied customers?
- Also interesting: How do you deal with operational issues such as the issue of data protection or recruitment?

Take the time to study domain names and the URLs of competitors with free analytics tools. Among these are [alexa.com](https://www.alexa.com) / [Majestics](https://www.majestic.com) for traffic and target group analysis or [Open Site Explorer](https://www.opensiteexplorer.org) / [Backlinktest.com](https://www.backlinktest.com) for backlinks of third parties to your competitor's site. This way you'll get some interesting ideas for your own online marketing. You can analyze the full SEO content on their site with a free one-month trial at [SEOMoz.org](https://www.seomoz.org) or [Linkspy](https://www.linkspector.com), if their ranking is particularly impressive. You can also use online crawler tools such as the [Quicksprout Analyzer](https://www.quicksprout.com) for this to a lesser extent.

There are many ways to utilize the market research of your competitors because nowadays there are numerous methods of including the search and navigation behaviors of users in your advertising. One excellent probing channel is PPC advertising either with [Google Adwords Marketing](#) or [Facebook Marketing](#). Just try to identify your competitor's best ads and to extract the keyword lines and pitch elements of the websites linked to the landing pages. **These texts and the structure have usually been tested and improved by expensive marketing professionals over years and years of ad spend and data crunching.**

Counsel-style advertising is powerful. Mentioning competitors' names in a positive context in one's own advertising copy is very popular in the US. **In accordance with marketing laws valid for your country, comparative advertising is permissible in certain cases if you are - in one way or another - praising the competition.** There is a way of praising the competition sincerely and yet through pitting your offer cleverly against theirs, at the same time make yourself stand out. See our [BrainHive Comparison Chart](#), which does not actually name competitors directly, but intentionally emphasizes our USPs nonetheless.

	Software	CPA/ Lawyer	Other Business Plan Agencies	BrainHive
Individual	X	✓	✓	✓
Verified	X	[✓]	✓	✓
Complete	[✓]	[✓]	✓	✓
Specialized	X	X	✓	✓
Financial Plan in Excel	X	(X)	(X)	✓
Correction Loops	X	[✓]	✓	✓
Multilingual	✓	(X)	[✓]	✓
Data Privacy	[✓]	✓	✓	✓
Pitchdeck/ Pitch Video	X	X	X	✓
Delivery Time	?	17-28 Days	12-17 Days	10-14 Days
6-Guarantees-Principle	X	?	?	✓
6-Eyes-Principle	X	?	?	✓
Express- and Emergency Service	X	(X)	(X)	✓
Contact on Weekends- & Holidays	[✓]	(X)	(X)	✓
Credit Interview Coaching	X	(X)	[✓]	✓
ASSIST & REGULAR- Offer below 600€	X	X	X	✓
From Restaurant to Valley-Startup	✓	(X)	[✓]	✓
Legend	X=No	(X) = Normally no	[V] = Normally yes	V = Yes

Image: BrainHive comparison chart as an example of advertising invoking comparison

These were just some suggestions as to how you can benefit from the work of the competition and their offer design. Give some thought to your competitor's analysis and keep your eyes open. **The best source of marketing inspiration, other than one's own creativity, is the competition.**

2. Use Your Clients' Satisfaction to 100%

Of course, you already know that your most satisfied customers are valuable to your business in many ways. You should collect **customer opinions and recommendations** the moment when they are most satisfied.

You can either ask the clients to write their opinions, possibly in exchange for a small discount coupon, or you can pre-formulate them depending on the nature of your business. Examples of particularly well-written opinions can be found on [our marketing consultancy's website](#).

Make sure that clients expressly agree to the unrestricted publication of their opinions and/or reports stating their real name and some general personal information. Anonymous testimonials can be detrimental to potential clients' overall confidence in your business offer in some cases. On the other hand, it will be great if you get a photo of your satisfied customers taken with you or holding up your logo with a "thumbs-up" gesture. Be creative within the limits of the prevailing mentality in your industry.

Video or audio testimonials may work even better than written opinions in certain niches, for example if you are opening a beauty salon, gym or even a law firm. Use of creative media testimonials is only practiced in perfection in the US at this time. With a little imagination and the right incentives, try to get your hands on a selection of these truly credibility-enhancing elements from your most loyal customers.

Let your customers strengthen your social channels. **One example is accumulating "Likes" on your Facebook page or by getting consent to write to the customer about special offers and innovations.** You probably shouldn't mention the word "newsletter", as newsletter marketing is largely practiced erroneously by organizations employing a weak content strategy. The word newsletter has thus become synonymous with spam for many people.

If a customer has bought something from you, it is very likely that they will buy something else given the right offer package. Make sure that you have partners if you cannot generate the potential for so-called **up-selling / cross-selling** yourself. These words often mean selling more expensive products or services in the same category or a similar/complementary category to a client. This way, you can fully cover the needs of your customers and accordingly generate the maximum revenue.

As an entrepreneur, you naturally know the value of recommendations. **Make the collection of recommendations a routinely ritual through which everyone wins.** Give special rates to customers who approach you through recommendations so that your customers have an incentive to share the "hot tip" with their partners and friends. If your loyal customers receive some sort of bonus or a thank you for making a recommendation, it also increases the chances of this approach's success.

3. Harvest Low-hanging Fruit: Duct Tape Marketing

Most companies we have consulted over the years showed a lot of untapped potential, which could have been taken advantage of easily. We call these easy-to-harvest opportunities "low hanging fruit".

This can be done in a few simple and inexpensive ways, such as:

- Placement of large-scale outdoor advertising at company headquarters
- Intelligent giveaways (such as refrigerator magnets with advertising copy in the how-to style, quality T-shirts and scarves with logo)
- Automotive advertising / bicycle advertising
- SMS advertising / radio advertising
- Content marketing (online) / Online PR / outreach (contact, for example, to bloggers.)
- Event marketing / Events visit marketing / Network marketing

There are many other original, smart and competitive marketing ideas out there. Conventional marketing forms such as expensive print / online advertising, time-consuming trade fairs and flyer campaigns are very widespread. **Chances are that you will be better off in the long term using unconventional, yet intuitive and logical forms of marketing.**

The whole issue of free how-to advertising is a good hook for downstream marketing activities, in particular regarding PR and outreach. Be generous with your know-how when creating educational content and don't be worried about giving away too much (if you have the feeling that you really should be asking a compensation for this content, then you are on the right track).

If your advertising is convincing, it will give you an expert status and boost your confidence. It may be comforting to know that some competitor would eventually discover the content gap and exploit it. Take the opportunity as long as you can still be a pioneer and easily capture a good following.

Be authentic and honest when introducing yourself and take the time to achieve a satisfying final result. Entire business models have been developed based on a single successful book, like that of my former employer, Cisema Certification and Quality Control Consulting. The manager had written a book about CCC certification many years ago and was recognized as an authority on the subject by the CICs. After several years of working in the niche, Cisema had built up a large portfolio of clients and many new customers came by recommendation. **Hardly any larger companies looked around for someone who could provide the same service at a lower price or with better quality.** Cisema had become established as an expert.

I would recommend the English-language marketing blog www.ducttapemarketing.com/blog/ by John Jantsch, who has also written a book with the same title, about everything on the subject of harvesting low-hanging fruit in marketing.

Advertising doesn't need to be expensive, but it should be smart. The right strategy is not always evident - you will find clients where there aren't too many competitors with the same message vying for attention.

4. Understand the Most Important Google Analytics Data

We here at BrainHive are always surprised when someone with a website says they haven't heard of [Google Analytics](#). It's a shame, because this **free statistics tool shows very clearly how successful a site is in communicating content to the user.**

2-3 hours of focused work with Google Analytics statistics can generate dozens of ideas in terms of spots where you need to improve your internet presence. **Google Analytics tells you everything: How visitors engage with your site, how and why they come and where you lose them.** The conversion rate (the percentage of successful sales in relation to the total number of visitors) of internet shops outside the US is significantly lower than in the US. Of course, markets such as for example Germany are inherently less consumption-oriented, but it is also due to the technical and marketing weaknesses of many German sites.

There are three components of your Google Analytics account that you either already have or lie just a few clicks away: **First, look in website content, go to "exit pages" and see if these bounce rates are due to natural behavior or if the customer simply loses interest at these locations.** Then look in the same main category at "*in-page analysis*" right on your site to see how many visitors click through which buttons or links. If you have problems calling up the interface, use the [Google Chrome Extension "Page Analytics"](#), as this is

compatible with a bigger number of web design systems.

Thirdly, and this is very important for the starting position in search engine optimization, **take a look at the category "Traffic Sources", subcategory "search" in the "organic" function.** Here you can see exactly what your main keywords are and discover important imbalances. If you want to know which keywords the "Not Provided" category is concealing, then work with [Google Webmaster Tools](#). This is another highly recommended free and easy-to-use tool with very good documentation on the net.

Many of the other Google Analytics functions also provide golden ideas when you explore them. In addition, it will be easier to understand the internet marketing strategies of your marketing consultant if you take a critical look at your Google Analytics now and then. Google Analytics is perfect for high small- and medium-size enterprises. Findings are of value not only for internet marketing, but also to offline marketing because the tool shows which keywords and types of information work well with customers.

5. Closing the Biggest Organizational Gaps in Your Company

When it comes to **closing the biggest organizational gaps**, I speak from experience when I say I know how hard it can be to sustain operational efficiency.

I believe that in this case **the 80/20 rule is the most important element** of a holistic corrective approach. The 80/20 rule, [also known as Pareto's Principle](#), seems to be a law of nature and has long been a subject of research in organizational psychology, yielding useful results.

The rule states that 20% of the input will usually generate 80% of the result. A certain small percent, the problematic 20% that remains, steals 80% of our time and resources. The secret of particularly efficient work is knowing exactly how you can best play to your strengths and what to remove from your list or delegate to partners or staff who would be more efficient at these tasks and / or perform them at a lower cost.

The 80/20 rule is a plea against perfectionism. I first came upon the 80/20 rule when I was working as a consultant in the Chinese CCC safety certification. The quality managers chart the quantity of defective products on a graph to see how 80% of all the errors are caused. **The concept of "Accepted Quality limit" does not compel the quality manager to bore into the details but to target the major factors.** And that is effective and efficient use of resources.

A good example of **enforcing the 80/20 rule** for growth- interested entrepreneurs is to find out what accounts for 80% of the objections of a customer to a purchase or contract and to address these fears early in the offer design process. Even if you work as an entrepreneur or are self-employed with interns, outsourcers or freelancers you will often notice that these people are not interested or only half-interested in your success. Compensation surprisingly plays only a minor role.

In most cases everything has to be explained very clearly to the vast majority of employees and even then one often struggles with poor quality, inefficiency and unreliability. **It is therefore best to write a quality control manual / training guide on the 80% of the contents of work that you expect.** It works and gives criticism more leverage when performance can consistently be improved. See below a process overview from a BrainHive staff manual for some inspiration.

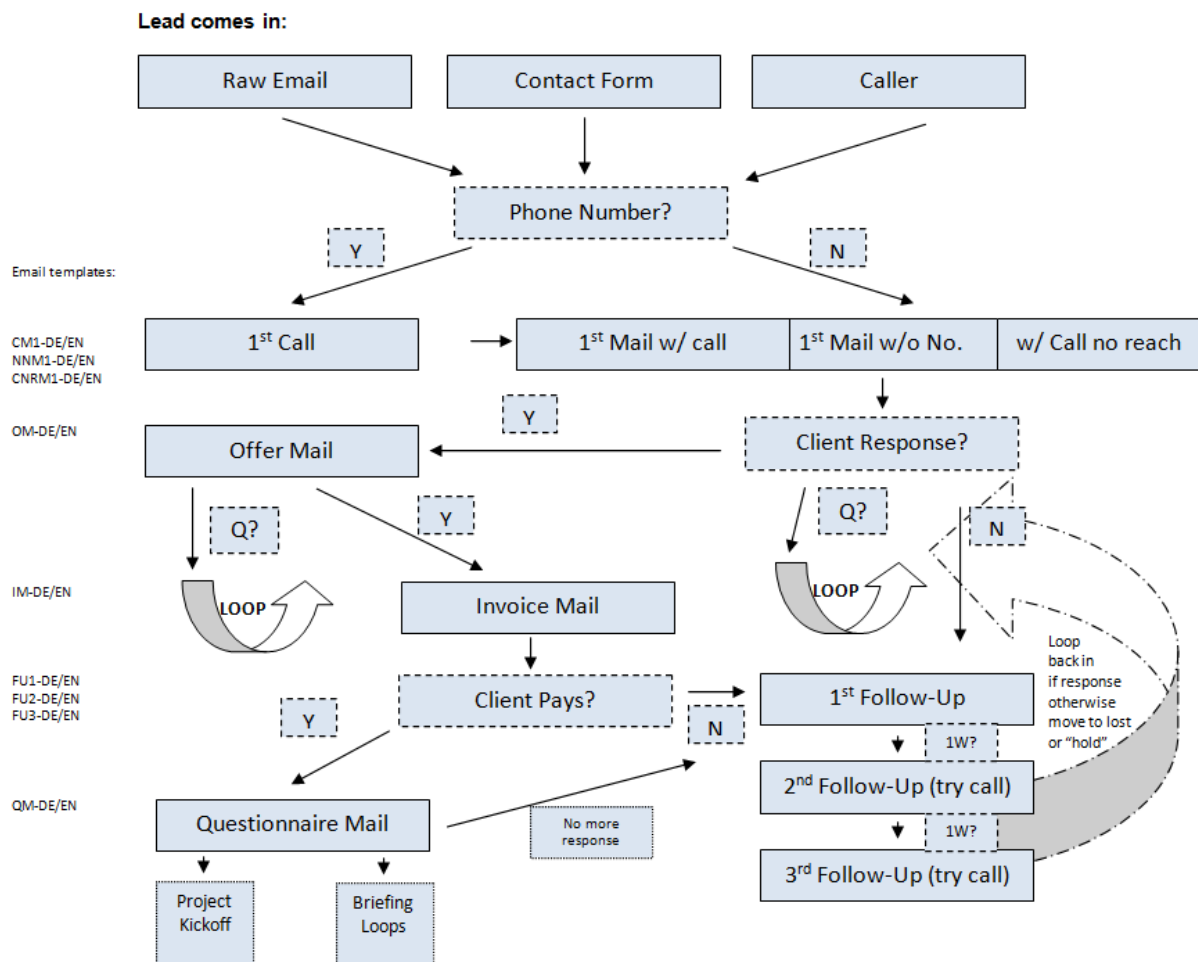


Image: Process overview from a BrainHive staff manual (Sales)

There are many possibilities of improvement of the organization of your company that can be used by enforcing the 80/20 rule.

Think about areas such as:

- The use of your own work time
- The use of resources
- Services for your customers
- Customer support
- Your strongest and weakest customers
- Your marketing

Especially in small and medium enterprises, management consultants tend to **focus on issues like micro-management and specialized tasks that are not important enough in the big picture considering the amount of time that should be invested there.**

It is important to have time for strategic measures, which fundamentally improve business processes. Proper elimination of obligations and tiresome routine tasks create this valuable "free" time. The tiresome chase of single fickle customers will become a thing of the past when you acquire some more of those 20% of "golden" clients that generate 80% of your sales.

6. Recognize and Fix Flaws in Your Brand Appearance

You can also apply the 80/20 rule to the following issue: Resolve any and all flaws and inconsistencies in your marketing immediately. If you don't, these dents, bumps, scratches and stains will remain painfully obvious to your customers and partners, which detracts from your credibility in the long run and the effectiveness of your brand's power diminishes.

Some companies make great effort to emphasize their appearance and neglect their "vital organs", their infrastructure, and even their finances. Then there are the bustling workshops, where everything is very dirty and the flyers are full of misspelled words, but customers flock anyway because of word of mouth spreading the impression that this business is an excellent business.

When I founded BrainHive and started building everything up from the ground, I tried to put things together meticulously - in my opinion, it had to be watertight. I proofread and edited the texts on my website 12-15 times. As I had a limited budget at the beginning, I then used the cheapest software and the cheapest programmers, so in the end, unfortunately, the "look and feel" of the result did not meet my expectations, no matter the text!

Still thanks to good copywriting and my personal contacts, clients did eventually start coming and I began to expand my services according to their requirements. This was a messy process, with quite a few sparks flying. When I sent out emails for the acquisition, there would be embarrassing spelling mistakes that must have cost me a lot of customers. But I can't complain about the turnover even in the first two years of BrainHive's coming into existence.

Eventually I acquired the resources and the right team to correct initial errors. But it was **tiresome, expensive and inefficient to go back and fix all of my initial mistakes** apart from the cost of losing tons of business.

My suggestion to you goes against the grain, namely the now-popular concept of doing everything "quick & dirty": **If you have reached a critical milestone, slow down.** Let a few customers pass you by and make everything look as mint as it can. Invest this effort specifically for the large, wealthy, respectable customers, to whom appearance means a lot, especially in times of cheap competition from Eastern Europe, the Far East and - what impacted us the most on the marketing front - from crowd sourcing (i.e. sites where freelancers without business infrastructure offer very cheap services). **A good appearance facilitates the acquisition significantly.**

Especially in times like these, you need to embrace the effort "to keep your own house clean". Every little mistake in the texts, in the programming, graphic design or in the handling of customer data and customer communication, every little slipup may cost you more money than you can imagine. Moreover, it is also simply a good feeling to know that everything is in its place. As Nietzsche's Zarathustra already knew: All a great temple needs for it to crumble to dust is a little moss and rain. **Brush and polish regularly, do not let the dust settle.** But always remember 80/20 and the negative aspects of perfectionism.

7. Use the Easiest Client Acquisition Tactics

BrainHive Ethical Marketing became successful entirely thanks to my personal acquisition efforts at local lifestyle product fairs. I would wander around, speak with each entrepreneur personally and give useful online marketing tips. Most of the time, the person I approached came to ask for my card without me having to offer it, that's how good my advice was.

It was a slow but steady process with some setbacks, but I was very relaxed because I still had a day job in China logistics. This calmness had a very positive effect.

Professionals always seem very relaxed and easy to "warm up to", and people want to work with professionals.

When you get to know your customers in a place where they are not under the constant siege of your competitors (or they're simply free to talk to you) and they get to know you not only as an entrepreneur with great offers, but also as a person, the chance of doing business with them skyrockets. I remember a key experience where an artist recommended me to her spouse as a business plan ghostwriter. The man was successful and established in his industry and basically did not need a business plan, he just wanted to help out an old friend of his.

Apparently I seemed so personable and competent that the client ended up making an order. This experience strengthened my confidence so much that I became even more active at the fairs, went from regional fairs to national ones and asked myself where else I could find similar environments.

The answer: CIC seminars of my industry and other industry branches, network events of industry associations and local business associations like [BNI](#) or simply walking around in the inner city in efforts to communicate with local companies.

For me, the keyword was „local“! In Germany, especially in southern Germany, people are very attached to their homes and you automatically have an advantage if a local address is on your business card. Is it great if you already have other local contacts and you can mention during the conversation that you love this part of town and can name a company the other person has heard of, or even the location of its headquarters.

Especially local interlocutors shouldn't react unfriendly even when learning that you're there to sell them something. It's ok to be based in the same area and to help your neighbors out. You might even be proud of being able to do the other person a favor. Therefore: Think local at the beginning.

8. The Best Cold Call Techniques in Three Steps

In this context, I would like to move straight to the next point, namely, the **art of cold calling**, known as the cold horror to many entrepreneurs. But it need not be!

When contacting a potential customer by phone or meeting him in person at a trade show or networking event, it is always good to use social intelligence and **make the conversation**

relevant to issues that are ideally connected with the sector and can invoke **trust and appreciation** on his part.

The art of cold calling is always the art of dealing with people, showing empathy, utilizing rhetoric and especially having a good offer in store, which is useful and, more importantly, affordable for the target customer. Then it will not be a challenge to shift to the sales communications and "close" the customer when the time is right.

Some examples: When I'm at fairs, I always praise the business idea and the beautiful appearance as I try to figure out who I'm talking to. I prefer to speak with the owner, of course. This is even more important on the phone: Identify your contact, keeping in mind that not as much small talk is necessary on the phone. It is also key to generate relevance once you've clarified whether the person has time to talk to you. You can generate relevance by mentioning the website or, better yet, the name of a meaningful reference, for example, employees, customers, partners, an association, the Chamber of Commerce or a newspaper. **Name dropping is an excellent technique and works very well in most cases.**

Both in person and on the phone, it is important to keep your voice and your nerves in check. It can be helpful for beginners to briefly point out how uncomfortable they feel calling in like this or to say they need only two minutes of the person's time, or something else that will make a similar impression. This psychological framework is never realistic, but serves to desensitize you to the horror of the situation and appease the interlocutor. It renders your voice stronger and more stable and emphasizes the character associated to it. Do not be afraid to let your personality shine in the acquisition process!

When it comes to entrepreneurs, character is often the most important reason to close a deal. Disarm your counterpart with compliments like, "You probably get a lot of requests like this" or "I hear of your business so often, you are just this good at what you do."

If your counterpart responds inappropriately, keep it friendly and dismiss him or her quickly. **In our interdependent world, no one has the moral right to refuse a first-time, polite, personal, honest and relevant inquiry brusquely.** In these moments you should retreat to your center and let your frustration peacefully ebb away. Cultivate these meditative skills as early as possible because you are a businessperson, and if you don't, you'll have many restless nights.

Cultivate your self-confidence and believe in your strengths: You can take care of yourself, you are independent, the master of your own destiny, you create jobs for others, and therefore you are an important backbone to your country's economy. **In short, you are the cream of the crop.** Therein and in the wise organization of your daily affairs and your finances lies the source of your serenity, the importance of which I touched upon briefly. **Impenetrable inner peace is the most important key to successful cold calling.**

Do you remember "old Mel", the recurring car salesman, real estate agent or fast-food restaurant employee, the nervous and faltering graying man from "The Simpsons"? This is the ideal anti-example of an unsuccessful salesman. The successful seller is above all relaxed, but also independent, a good talker **and extraordinarily persistent.**

Persistence is the most-often neglected aspect of cold calling. Your most important customer acquisition tools are a good mail offer, sales pitch guidelines sheet and the contact table with detailed follow-up activities. Customers often need 3-8 contacts before deciding to buy.

The art of cold calling is a very broad and complex field with a lot more relative potential that I could talk about, but to some extent your business also determines how to go about the acquisition most skillfully. The book „[Book Yourself Solid](#)“, which has been *the* top sustainable acquisition resource for years, is in this regard highly recommendable.

9. The Top Five Secrets of Excellent Copywriting

Good texts are the conceptual basis of all advertising. Many companies make the mistake of underestimating the power of words. A great picture or a nice video will not have the effect that is hoped for without the matching text.

This effect has to be: The customer buys.

Here are the five most important secrets of advertising texts that sell well:

1. Attention-grabbing captions
2. Structural dynamics
3. Exciting Story
4. Trustworthiness
5. Attractive call to action, abbreviated CTA.

Let me briefly explain each item. Please also refer to the [AIDA-Principle by clicking this link](#).

When you go to BrainHive-Ethical-Marketing.com, you might notice what most time was spent on: Creating the headings. **Invest half your time in brainstorming, assessing, combining and perfecting the headings.**

There are different types of headings. **A heading may also be the subject line of an e-mail or a chapter description and each subheading in a multi-page guide.** It has been statistically proven that captions that contain specific words awakening emotions or promising secrets as well as enumerations á la "15 Tips for YUMMY pancakes" attract attention particularly well.

Recall the [famous lecture by Eugene Schwarz](#), one of the most successful ad copywriters who ever lived: **Every word has only one purpose. This purpose is to move the reader to read the next word.** This word also has only one purpose. This purpose is to move the reader to read the word after this word. And so on.

The second secret is to make the text more readable, for example,

- Marking the first paragraph or keywords in bold
- Splitting it up into many paragraphs
- Bullet points
- Dividing longer segments with subheadings
- Adding feature boxes with background color, also works great with graphic feature icons
- In general, everything that isn't a wall of text

Of course, it's nice to have a common theme running through your ad text. In this context, I always like to mention the tl; dr, which you can place at the end of your blog posts if you want to be a particularly modern content writer: It stands for "Too long; did not read" and then the gist of the article comes in two sentences or less. Eliminating superfluous text is important. Only then do you begin to produce good content.

3rd Secret: The exciting story behind your product or - even better - behind the whole brand or the company makes your message more memorable and adds to its entertainment value. Both your creativity and your courage are needed. Ask yourself what kind of story is suitable for your target audience, what suggestions can be made between the lines and how detailed the story should be. **These days companies with character have**

the upper hand.

A very good example of a great story is the American company Saddleback (<http://www.saddlebackleather.com/Saddleback-Story>), which manufactures extremely durable leather bags and other such accessories. They tell, among other things, the story of how your grandson will still enjoy your leather bag's warranty certificate when he goes hunting in the year 2080 - because at Saddleback they do not offer lifetime warranties, but their guarantee lasts 100 years, and so will still be valid for the grandson.

This is a good example of a claim, i.e. an advertising claim that truly borders on incredibility. **It provides us with a wonderful introduction to the fourth secret of ad texts - trustworthiness.** Saddleback anchored the warranty of the grandson in the actual operational sales activity, as the warranty is explicitly expressed. If Saddleback did not redeem this warranty, they could legally be forced to. **This liability creates evidence of the veracity of the advertising message.**

You generally have fewer elements guaranteeing truthfulness of your claim. One way to show greater commitment involves the aforementioned customer testimonials. **Build a portfolio of references** or ask newspapers and online portals where you have hopefully published guest posts or messages whether you can use their logo as a watermark in the footer of your site. You could introduce a strong, legally binding guarantee policy.

Last but not least, the direct-action phrases in the ad text are extremely important. You have invoked the emotions and generated trust from your client, and he is now going to take the desired action that brings you closer to his money. The greater the commitment, the more expensive it is for the client or the greater the risk (for example that his personal information will be used somehow), and the more attractive your offer should be.

PS: The actual activity plan should be as simple, easy and visually appealing as possible. A particularly beautifully designed button or a compelling order confirmation symbol with a prepaid envelope would be some classic examples of an attractive call to action, which a client would respond to.

10. Grasp and Use Modern Media

When you have mastered basic advertising content creation well, you will be able to exploit the full range of modern media for your customer acquisition.

Great **graphic design** enhances web pages and print ads. In combination with scripts, illustrations and **animations** can be some useful elements for effective promotional videos, as can audio messages with music or other sound effects in some niches.

Not only the formats, but also the devices can help enhance your creativity. The value of targeted SMS advertising, apps and QR codes should not be underestimated. Use all channels skillfully. You could also perhaps create enough momentum for your content to go viral on social media.

Let us now go through the process of multimedia advertising step by step. I would like to start with audio, because it is much easier and cheaper to produce than video.

Good equipment for recording usable audio ads can cost less than \$100 US. Use an [H1ZOOM](#) or a [RODE Podcast-Microphone](#) that comes with a stand and pop filter if your budget isn't so tight. The only software program you need is [Audacity](#) and it is free. You can download [free-license music](#) for free or for a few Dollars online and mix it with your recording using the program.

It is easy to recite a script in a reasonably lively voice. With a little practice you will learn very quickly how to "remove" p-sounds, coughing and varying voice volume manually or by effect application. In a pinch, you can mix your recording on a micro-service site like [Fiverr](#) or improve it another way.

Audios and videos generate confidence if a customer is able to visualize a potential business partner and get the first impression of his chemistry this way. In addition, it is a sign that you're serious if you're going that extra mile to interact skillfully. As you can see with BrainHive.de, I like using multimedia advertising and think it need not always be perfect-looking.

A professional video or better yet a series of videos- The following main factors count:

- Good lighting, such as this [3-point softbox video lighting kit](#)
- Nice background / studio background
- High-performance camcorder, such as [Panasonic HC X-909](#)
- High-quality body mic, such as [Samson Airline](#) (H1ZOOM as receiver)
- For skillful production and brightness-contrast blend use [Adobe Premiere](#), its online reputation is excellent
- Perhaps add some details to the recording (shoot with [GoPro](#), stabilize with [Gimbal Stick](#)) or [Prezi](#) / other, screen video recorded with [Camtasia](#)
- Dress appropriately, convincing presence, perhaps use [HD-Makeup](#)

Video is one of the best and most affordable web content instruments today. You shouldn't settle for a poor-quality video on your site irrespective of your knowledge or budget. It is now no longer difficult or expensive to overcome barriers in the field of video production.

There are people who can advise you and lend you equipment all over the Internet.

Find someone in your area who has a video blog on YouTube. He would definitely be happy to share a few tricks. Alternatively, we at BrainHive have professional equipment and will consult you not only before and during, but also after production, help place your video well so it will be found by search engines and the appropriate users. In addition, we can supply animations, scripts and complete explanatory videos.

Many marketing tools are related to new multimedia communication devices. Today we get free drinks at the bar by agreeing to SMS advertising - we get QR codes on our mobile phone, which are photographed and scanned at the bar with the mobile phone of the bartender, validating the free drink. This allows us to be informed about the live concert next week at the club, and our friends too, because the message contains a Facebook event link. After we register through Facebook our FB-friends are automatically notified. One or another friend tweets about the event. If it goes well, these free drinks will have proven pretty profitable for the nightclub owner.

What I'm saying is this: Remember to link the communication channels smartly. This needn't be expensive or difficult. Online marketing professionals, especially younger ones, are often well-versed in these matters because they experience integrated multi-channel marketing every day.

You don't necessarily need to spend a lot of money to bring fresh marketing ideas into your organization. You could for example make a notice board at the university for a project-related internship. Show the candidates this publication here and let them create a 1-2-page concept paper as a letter of motivation. Then invite the candidate with the most intelligent concept paper to a second interview. Students of design, IT or marketing in their fourth semester will be grateful for the opportunity and you will get a lot of free ideas, and maybe even a loyal assistant in key marketing issues.

11. Use the Power of Emotion for Your Business

German, Austrian and Swiss consumers are for example very specific, as mentioned. Companies in central Europe are known worldwide to consist predominantly of consumption-cautious, extremely hard-working individuals.

A few examples: Germans love "sure benefits" and when something is a "bargain" or "organic". In recent years holiday ads have been featuring close-to-home elements like bare feet or family scenes, reflecting the fact that many Germans feel psychologically holed up in the narrowness of their society and many of their lives therein.

One can definitely say that the approach to German consumers must be more reserved compared to that to consumers in some other countries. Even if you do not like stereotyping, try to grasp the cultural and emotional peculiarities of your target group clearly. Also think about polarizing communication in a given direction to gain favor, which would be important for the success of your strategy.

This way you attract the right customers and remain true to yourself at the same time. What you're doing will work well when it makes you happy and reflects your beliefs. Passion draws attention. One can exaggerate everything, but there are still not enough people today who are bringing their passion and sensibilities to their daily business in a candid yet enticing way.

Be brave in advertising and play your passions (disclaimer: Do always take care not to express yourself thoughtlessly). In most cases you will be better off being courageous than giving off a mediocre, dull and indifferent vibe.

12. Overcome Your Clients' Lack of Motivation

Lack of motivation according to most reports out there typifies the young generation in scary proportion. **Action-Apathy is a psychological state brought about by overstimulation through modern-day media, aggressive marketing and an overwhelming array of choice. You will encounter it daily in your customers.** If you waited for a customer to make an enthusiastic buying decision all by himself every time, you would halve your earnings in most industries. Not only the follow-up of offers, but also the sale itself must be well-timed.

It is one of the most popular advertising strategies since market barker times to announce a fast-approaching clearance sale, creating **the false impression of scarcity** and enticing customers to open their wallets. While the barker method is of course somewhat primitive, there are many tactics to otherwise accelerate the critical moment when the customer moves to buy.

The psychological mechanism for use of resources works like this: Money is limited, so I have to hold on to it. Keeping the money does not actually satisfy me, except possibly insofar as giving me a feeling of security or approaching savings targets for the financing of major investments or consumer purchases.

When I see that a desired or needed item or service is limited and people are spending their money on it left and right, I get nervous. **My money subjectively suddenly has less value** and I am more inclined to spend it to be on the safe side to prevent a bad decision owing to my stinginess.

At the moment however, when the money starts flowing, further incentives must be set. Money should be spent on further bonuses and options. Skillful marketing sometimes generates a real consumer boom. Again, it is the temporal limitation of an offer or the special relevance of the offer from a spatial or emotional perspective that moves one to act.

Give your customers this incentive, this stick that breaks the camel's back in your favor. The following resource is extremely useful in understanding the concept in more detail: <https://www.quicksprout.com/the-complete-guide-to-understand-customer-psychology/>

13. The Art of Having Courage in Marketing – When to Invest and When Not to

Many marketing consultants want to sell more and more of a specific strategy regardless of whether this strategy is the smartest one at this stage of business. In addition, you are often blind to the best solution because of bias. The "consultant" who wants to sell usually acts quickly and will sell you nails when you are holding a hammer. But maybe in this situation the screwdriver would have made more sense. When you find out that you have been acting the wrong way, it'll be too late - or you indeed never will find out.

Basically, it never makes sense to spend money on marketing, if you do not need to. You should rather retain these expenses or invest in your other operations.

You do not need marketing:

- If you are satisfied with your customer development
- You have a basic, presentable set of communication tools such as a site and a catalog / a portfolio
- Continuously deliver good work, your marketing performance is adequate

Existing customers will remain loyal and recommendations provide good organic growth. **The best marketing is a good offer, functioning processes and friendly staff!**

Although good marketing can boost sales growth and keep strong or gaining competitors at bay, the question is: **How much does finding a good marketing solution cost? Is it worth the extra effort over other opportunities (the famous positive return on investment, ROI)?**

The manager or the team must be prepared not only to pay for marketing, but also to cover the additional operating expenses for the expansion and the greater (at least at first) utilization resources. **Therefore, any marketing campaign has a double risk: Namely (a) the risk that it won't work and (b) the risk that it will.**

A seemingly profitable marketing strategy that only works in the short term may put off loyal customers - for example, if the image campaign is too vigorous. It may eventually prove harmful to the company in the long term.

This is why many startup consultants agree: Marketing in young companies is **an intuitive decision in most cases**. In traditional Chinese medicine it is believed the courage to claim the world lies in the third chakra, in your stomach (hence the term "gut feeling"). In our case, replace the term "world" with "market share" and you get the picture. Trust your gut if you have exhausted all intellectual capacity to make a decision.

You know that you need to be brave in a highly competitive market. This is also the case if you are coming with a completely unknown product, its benefit is in need of explanation, and much communication is needed with the target group. **These are three examples of cases, in which marketing is no longer an option, but necessary for survival.**

It is difficult to determine when a small or medium business or a startup needs which dose of what marketing medicine to move faster or to cope with demand. **Usually measures need to be taken about 2 months before the need becomes evident.** Marketing does not work immediately in most cases; it takes some time to generate more business and reach full capacity again. If you're out of luck, the fixed costs have eaten into your liquidity by then and your maneuverability is critically reduced.

Also, there are many problems that marketing cannot solve. **In some situations, a strategy consultancy will be asked what operational and administrative errors are hampering growth.**

In any case I know that I from standing on the outside cannot be the one to judge what step you should take next.

My main recommendation, the 14th success tool therefore reads as follows: Love your company. My father always said: Love your muse wholeheartedly, and she will tell you all her secrets. If you know your business very well, you know your product, know your solution's benefits, and know what to do and who can help you achieve your goals faster and easier. **We are definitely here for you should you want our assistance growing your business.**

With this important conclusion, I would like to wrap up our small "toolbox" of advice for aspiring entrepreneurs. I hope you found it useful. **I would be very happy if you shared this publication with entrepreneur friends and business associates.** As you know, we at BrainHive believe in having each other's backs as business owners, because this is what generates the most value for everyone: From founder to founder.

Thank you for your attention.

With my regards, to your success,



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