



# 7 Lessons Learned Doing Marketing for 50+ Businesses with Kan Huang

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When you handle other people's marketing for a living, you learn a lot. Kan Huang shares his top marketing tips from helping 50+ businesses.



**James Schramko and Kan Huang**

**James:** James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. Today is something a little bit special. I've asked some of my friends to submit some short and insightful, usable episodes that we can run on SuperFastBusiness podcast here, so that I can get experts in on topics that you want help with.

So in today's episode, 908, can you believe that, I've brought along my special friend, [Kan Huang](#), he runs a company called [socialwave.com.au](#). And he's put together a little presentation called 7 Lessons Learned Doing Marketing for 50+ Businesses. It's not a very long episode, but it's super useful. I hope you enjoy it.

At the end of the episode, I'm going to give you details where you can get in touch with Kan, if you're interested in talking with him more about the types of things that he talks about in this episode. Enjoy.

**Kan:** Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, wherever you're listening from, to the SuperFastBusiness audience. My name is Kan from Social Wave. I am very, very grateful to be recording a solo episode, of all things. In the past we've done interviews with James, and this is a bit of an interesting format. So I'm really excited, really looking forward to it.

### **What to expect in this episode**

And the topic I wanted to cover in this episode, the seven lessons learned running B2B marketing for over 50 service-based businesses. So bit of a retro, something a bit more reflective, and I wanted to share my insights and learnings with you. So if you are a business owner who is in B2B, and particularly if you're in a particular service, it doesn't matter if you're in more traditional businesses, or you may be running, say, an online membership, or even a SAAS company, this will be super relevant for you.

And for those of you who may not be in B2B, who might be say, direct to consumer, or may not be running a service-based business as well, I believe there's actually a lot of overlap in terms of, I suppose, really, really actionable insights that you can take away even in your businesses as well.

So I guess to start things off, I wanted to talk about the fact that if you've tried every tactic or strategy for your service-based business and nothing's worked, then don't worry, you know, I was the same as you, I tried every tactic and strategy under the sun. And it wasn't until after doing this for our clients over and over again that I sort of realized what those reasons were.

So like I said, I'm going to share those seven lessons I learned running marketing for 50+ B2B service-based businesses. That's because the buying process for service-based businesses is quite different. So a lot of these lessons and experiences are off the back of working with businesses like accounting firms, legal services, dentists, doctors, brokers, coaches, consultants, memberships, all that sort of stuff. So let's get into it.

## **Capturing demand versus generating it**

So lesson number one, most businesses focus on capturing demand and don't do enough of demand generation. So what does that mean? Or what's the difference between capturing versus generating demand? Capturing demand is when your customer is in the market at a very specific point in time and looking for the type of service you provide.

So if you're position number one on Google or running ads at the exact time they're looking for what you provide, then there's a chance they could buy from you. And when they do, you are capturing that demand. The problem with that, though, is that 95 percent of your target buyers aren't looking for you or aren't actively looking for you.

So to generate future demand, you need to do what's called pre-marketing. So this is the idea of being in front of mind or having mental availability. You need to start with raising awareness of what you do, what are the benefits, and when. So these are things like being active on organic social media or brand ads, so that when people finally move from non-buy to buy mode, then they'll potentially come to you instead of your competitors or Google.

So the analogy I like to use with demand generation is that it's kind of like planting seeds. The seed is the idea, or the awareness in the mind of your audience. And when you tend to the proverbial crops, right, which is the seed that you planted, things like watering and keeping the weeds away from it, it's like the equivalent or posting regular content you create to keep that mental availability.

Now, the better quality of the content, the more likely you'll see great results. And the opposite is also true. If you use poor-quality content, or you create poor-quality content, don't expect to be able to see a return on investment.

Now, let's just say you do great-quality content, then once you're in season, which is when your buyer is ready to start their purchasing journey, you want to be ready to harvest, in other words, capture demand. But you can't do it without doing all that upfront work of tending to it, leading up to that. And that is the act of ongoing education and teaching, so that once they are ready to buy, that they'll think of you, not your competitors, and they won't go to Google.

### **Features can be copied; brand is what counts**

Lesson number two, most businesses spend too much time focusing on their features rather than their brand. So features are things like how many years of experience your company's got, or you do things to differentiate yourself like, we have feature x that they don't, right? But the big problem with this is that these can be easily copied.

And you can probably toot your own horn for a little while. But you know, as the market gets more competitive, as it gets more saturated, they'll eventually catch up to you. So for example, Tesla used to be the only one that could do long-range electric cars. But now, there are a whole heap of carmakers who will either eventually get there or are there already.

So you're constantly, if you're Tesla, having to innovate if it's based on features. That means when a category or industry matures, the more commoditized everything gets, and you end up finding that everything looks basically the same. The only thing you can do to separate yourself in this case, is your brand, right? Brand keeps you original. The only problem with that is, being original is actually really hard. And most businesses struggle to understand how to do it.

So for example, accountants are stereotypically perceived as boring number crunchers. Right? You imagine an old guy in a musty old office, swimming in paper and doing everyone's taxes. So when one of my clients started to create marketing content, he was this sort of young, brash, high-energy sort of guy who was using things like memes and cracking internet jokes, at the same time while teaching his target audience everything there is to know about accounting and business.

So if you are a lawyer, you can do the same. If you are a business coach, you can do the same. If you run a membership, you can think about that. Think about what is the stereotype and how would you actually make yourself different, whether it's by personality, by qualities, whether it's by values. Just don't compete on features.

### **Remember, it's a long-term game**

Lesson number three: if you want to sustainably grow leads and revenue for your business through marketing, it actually takes longer than you think. Now, I've mentioned this a few times in [previous episodes](#) with James, but in the past, I've had business owners come up to us after a month saying that they're not seeing ROI from their marketing.

I actually think marketers are very much so to blame for this, right? If you've seen marketing out there, particularly, you know, Facebook ads, about how someone spent \$50 and managed to turn that into \$80,000 in their first month or running just this one email helped them make \$24,000 in 21 days, I'm telling you, it's all smoke and mirrors. It is not sustainable, right?

And firstly, it might work once for them, but it won't work again, which means you constantly have to reinvent the wheel with these tactics. It's not something you can wash, rinse, repeat, and it's not predictable. Secondly, ad spend is progressively getting more expensive. You have to spend more today on Google ads or Facebook ads to get the same results you got five to 10 years ago. It's simple supply and demand.

The more people who spend on the platform, the more expensive it gets, because there's only a certain number of real estate. And what I mean by real estate is there's only a certain number of users or attention online. So you can't actually, I guess, essentially grow your audience necessarily once it hits to a certain size.

Now instead, to build this sustainably, you need to think about building an audience. Now, that doesn't happen overnight. A lot of people think that if you build, they'll come. I'll give you an example. A lot of people build podcasts, do no active promotion, expecting that people will just discover their podcasts and start listening to it. That is not how it works, right? It just doesn't work like that anymore.

People have either too much choice, or not enough time or attention to give you, right? And you have to go to them and actually give them good reason to spend their hard-earned time with you. So what I'm trying to say is, there's no quick hack, and there's no silver bullet. You have to do this stuff day in, day out, and that takes time.

So instead of measuring the success of your marketing, based on some arbitrary one-week or one-month window, you need to recalibrate and start thinking about this in 12, 24-month windows and beyond. I mean, you only need to look at James who's been doing this podcast for eight to nine years, and close to 10 years now, to understand what success really looks like when it comes to brand and marketing, right?



## **Consistency goes a long way**

Now, if we look at some of the most successful brands, they didn't build any of this stuff overnight. What makes you think you can? Lesson number four, consistency wins. If you show up week in, week out with quality content that educates and entertains your audience, then I guarantee you, your business will grow.

And I want to stress, high-quality content that educates and entertains, right? B2B marketing isn't about creating the sort of equivalent of the Super Bowl commercial, right? You're not trying to create that one viral piece. So the impact and influence on people's buying decisions happen in the consistency of publishing on a regular basis that makes your audience better, helps them succeed, and builds a strong affinity with your brand. And you can only do that by delivering value. It's basically the sum of all parts that make up the majority of the success.



## **Don't look to the big guys for inspiration**

Lesson number five, don't look at what the big brands are doing. So the big brands that have a large market share can get away with more complacency, okay? Coca-Cola or Nike can get away with crappy marketing, because they have a brand presence already. Small businesses, on the other hand, need to fight tooth and nail to even have a fraction of that presence.

So when you're looking for inspiration on what to do for marketing, you shouldn't be looking at these big brands. For example, MailChimp is number one for email marketing and doesn't need to try too hard to be different or market its brand too differently. You have to differentiate yourself from MailChimp, if you are looking to get into that vertical or that industry.

## **Personal brand beats company brand**

And that leads me to lesson number six, personal brand is now more important than company brands. Well, this podcast episode helps service-based businesses. So if you run a service-based business, or you're in B2B, then you need to understand that people buy from people. So the classic example, Tesla with Elon Musk, or Apple had Steve Jobs. So big companies are even using personal brands.

In our experience helping our clients, we actually help all of our clients build personal brands, because when another brand or competitor comes along and tries to challenge them, they can't. They might be able to copy the features, like I mentioned, but they can't beat them. And that is the ultimate moat.

## Not your father's marketing strategy

Finally, lesson number seven, traditional selling is dead, and in its place is modern-day marketing. This is because of the power of the internet. Buyers now have more information at their fingertips than at any point in history. Before the internet and social media, businesses couldn't specifically find and target their audience using marketing efficiently.

So you had companies with big sales teams who'd do these outbound sales, like telemarketing or cold calling. But for those of you who are old enough to remember, if you think about how you bought, or how you actually buy now versus 10 to 15 years ago, it's wildly different. Now, when you buy, you do a whole heap of research, right?

You read up on Google reviews, you ask your friends or colleagues for recommendations, you're in communities like Facebook groups, or Discords, you're watching YouTube videos, or you're checking out a company's social media accounts. And only when you finally made your decision, and you're narrowing it down to the last couple of steps, do you go and get in contact with someone from the company you want to buy from.



Sales reps are now more facilitators than salespeople. They're like the exit lights of an aeroplane, they're just there to illuminate the best pathway for you to take. And in its place is marketing, because good quality marketing now is all about educating and teaching the audience the benefits of your service and positioning you as the trusted expert. Then when they finally bite the bullet, and they're ready to choose a service provider, you'll be in that set of consideration.



To put a cap on that out of the seven lessons, right, basically, you need to understand that, forget about these tactics, forget about these funnels, forget about these tripwires that you're setting up, right? Go really simple. Focus on delivering value to your end audience, help them improve their lives, get better at what they do, help them succeed, do it all for free with the content that you create.

And in return, when you have something to sell, or when they want to actually check you out, or they decide that they need your services, they will find a way to find you. It's not that difficult, whether it's checking out your bios, it could be in your YouTube descriptions, it could be on your website, they might Google you, right? They might be checking out your social media pages looking for links.

The point is, if someone wants to buy from you badly enough, right, and they want to engage your services, as long as you are fairly active in terms of your visibility, they will be able to find you. And so I think, whilst it's really great to be able to say run lots of ads, drive people through your funnel, the key here is that this sort of stuff is unsustainable.



So for you to be able to sustainably grow leads like our clients are, then you need to actually, deep down, actually think about, how do you actually build a great brand that people know, like and trust?

So those are the seven lessons. If you found this helpful, and you actually want to learn more about generating more leads and revenue for your business, we've got an ultimate 2022 content marketing playbook.

Beyond that, if anyone else is interested and they want to follow along, we just launched our YouTube channel, you just need to type in my name, Kan Huang, on YouTube, and you should be able to find me. We just started posting, and our most recent video is a video called Three Methods to Help You Generate Endless Content Ideas for More Leads.

So if you haven't already, head on over there, check it out if you're interested, and I will see you on the next episode.

**James:** Well, I hope you enjoyed that. Thank you so much Kan for sharing with us your seven lessons learned doing marketing for 50+ businesses. This is episode 908 of SuperFastBusiness.com. Of course we've put the full transcription where you see or listen to this podcast at SuperFastBusiness.com, episode 908.

And if you want to get in touch with Kan, he does have a special report that he's put together that shares with you some other tips on how you can do your marketing plan, your master marketing plan. Send him an email, [kan@socialwave.com.au](mailto:kan@socialwave.com.au), and let him know that you listened to this podcast episode, and that you're interested in learning more about his marketing playbook. Okay?



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