

How small businesses are improving their marketing health.

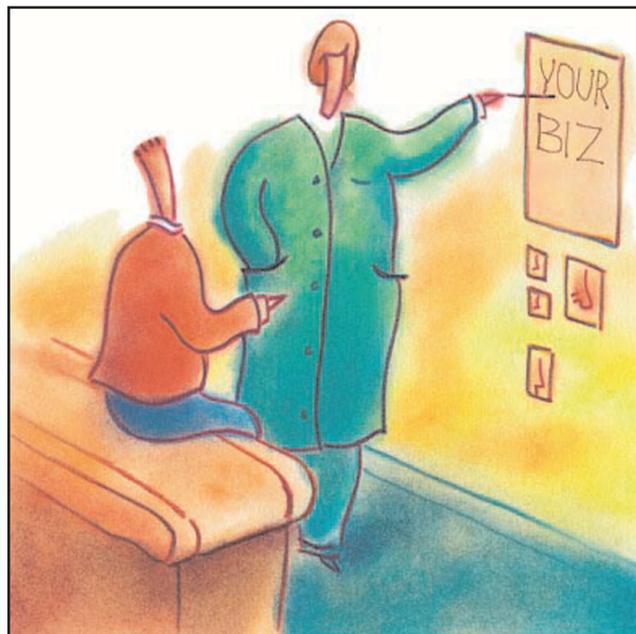
Sweaty palms, headaches, shortness of breath – they’re not just symptoms of poor health. They’re also the reactions business owners have to marketing their business. No wonder why many seek Therapy... *Marketing Therapy*,™ that is – the brain-child of marketing veteran John Follis.

As a business owner for 25 years himself, Follis is well acquainted with the challenges of marketing one’s own business: “*Even if you’re an expert – and most business owners aren’t – it’s impossible to have the objectivity necessary to make the best marketing decisions*” says Follis.

The Genesis of a New Business Model.

Follis spun off from Follis/DeVito/Verdi, an award-winning Madison Avenue agency he co-founded in 1990. For the next decade Follis Inc, did a combination of effective traditional and guerrilla advertising for a variety of clients. Then, in 2003, he found himself in an awkward situation that ultimately became the catalyst for Marketing Therapy. “*I’m Aileen, I need your help, but I really don’t have a marketing budget.*” Those were the first words Follis heard when he received the out-of-the-blue call. The anxious caller was struggling with her small business and, like most

entrepreneurs, was good at what she did, but not good at marketing it. Curious to know how she’d found him, Follis asked her. “*Heard you speak, I saw your site, and I was also*



referred to you.” She then added: “*I know you can help me ...please.*” Follis, came up with a short-term consulting plan. But, it wasn’t until after the first meeting that the idea hit him. “*I felt like half marketing expert, half therapist.*” As Follis reflects on that “ah-ha” moment, he realizes it was the very combination that small business owners needed but weren’t getting.

Challenges for Small Businesses.

Marketing is a challenge for any busi-

ness. But, due to limited funds it’s especially tough for smaller businesses. For that reason smaller businesses can’t afford many mistakes. One mistake that Follis sees many businesses owners making is that they turn to the wrong places for help:

“Small businesses owners are vulnerable because it’s a very confusing landscape and often they’ll turn to friends or anyone they think knows more than they do. They’ll assume that their PR friend or website designer is a marketing expert. It’s understandable. Unfortunately though, those advisors often end up hurting the business owner more than helping them.”

The other mistake that Follis sees is the “I-can-do-it-all-myself” attitude. Again understandable, especially with self-driven entrepreneurs. “*I never discourage anyone from trying to do things themselves*” says Follis, “*but, the successful entrepreneurs realize they can’t be great at everything. Even Steve Jobs knew that and got outside marketing help early on.*”

Anyone Running a Business Needs Therapy.

Follis claims that there’s never been a better time to be running a business: “*Never before have there been as many tools and tactics to connect a business or product with potential customers.*” Yet, it’s still true that most businesses never make it to their third birthday. So, while it’s not be crazy to be in business, it’s probably insane to do it without getting the best help.

For more info on Marketing Therapy, visit: www.follisinc.com/therapy or contact 203-569-7515