

Eight Minutes, Not Eight Hours



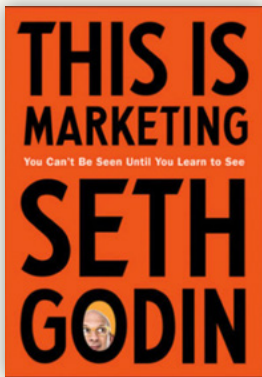
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This Is Marketing

You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn to See

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In the business of making change happen, Seth Godin writes to marketers who are “already good at what they do,” but need assistance in how they are seen and valued by consumers. In his book, [This Is Marketing: You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn to See](#), Godin humanizes the old-school aggressive and industrialized approach to marketing and says that great marketing acknowledges the human condition and is grounded in patience, empathy, and respect.

Godin's approach requires marketers to shift their view of the consumer and see them as those we seek to serve, instead of those who need to buy our stuff. Great marketers don't use consumers to solve their company's problems. They use marketing to solve other people's problems. Godin's “learning to see” strategy emphasizes identifying the smallest viable market, drawing on the right signs and signals, building trust and permission, and spotting opportunities to create and release tension. By following these steps, great marketers begin to make genuine connections and take their consumers to the places they want to go.

KEY QUOTE

“If you want to make change, begin by making culture. Begin by organizing a tightly-knit group. Begin by getting people in sync. Culture beats strategy – so much that culture **is** strategy.” — **Seth Godin**

Key Concepts

Chapter 1: Not Mass, Not Spam, Not Shameful. Marketing has changed. It is not about the hustle and pressure, but about telling the story people need to hear and crafting a “long, viable path” (p. 9).

Chapter 2: A Marketer Learns to See. “Marketers make change happen: for the smallest viable market, and by delivering anticipated, personal, and relevant messages that people actually want to get” (p. 12).

Chapter 3: Marketing Changes People Through Stories, Connections, and Experience.
Don’t be marketing-driven, be market-driven.

Chapter 4: The Smallest Viable Market. Seeing a need, selling to a very specific group, and earning and fostering trust with that group fosters accountability and a formula for success that builds and spreads.

Chapter 5: In Search of Better. Market a product that connects with people and that reliably meets an unmet want or need of a consumer. “You’re not running around grabbing every conceivable lock to try out your key. Instead, you’re finding people (the lock), and since you are curious about their dreams and desires, you will create a key just for them.” (p. 51).

Chapter 6: Beyond Commodities. “Knowing that this is the story your customer tells himself is insufficient. You still have to act on it, open the door to the possibility, and organize the entire experience around that story” (p. 68). Make your work personal by saying, “Here, I made this” (p. 76).

Chapter 7: The Canvas of Dreams and Desires. “Nobody needs your product” (p. 81). Always work to be irresistible.

Chapter 8: More of the Who, by Seeking the Smallest Viable Market. Hype doesn’t sell long term. A committed, loyal customer base proves you are selling what customers really want.


Chapter 9: People Like Us Do Things Like This. The desire to fit in and the perception of status bring the momentum for most people to seek change.

Chapter 10: Trust and Tension Create Forward Motion. Tension that a change must be made persuades people that their old choices were a mistake.


Chapter 11: Status, Dominance, and Affiliation. Status is either measured by dominance (being at the top) or affiliation (being in the right circle) and your customer, not you, decides which worldview they subscribe to.

Chapter 12: A Better Business Plan. A good plan “takes that universal need and makes it specific – describing who and what it’s for. It outlines the tension you seek to create, the status roles you are engaging with, and the story you’re bringing that will make change happen” (p. 144).

Chapter 13: Semiotics, Symbols, and Vernacular. Symbols and logos acknowledge the culture you seek to reach and change and send up a flare – a “Post-it reminder of that promise” you made to your customer (p. 155).



Market a product that connects with people and that reliably meets an unmet want or need of a consumer. “You’re not running around grabbing every conceivable lock to try out your key. Instead, you’re finding people (the lock), and since you are curious about their dreams and desires, you will create a key just for them.”



Chapter 14: Treat People Differently. Seek out and delight the few “whales” (versus “minnows”) who prove to be responsible for your profit. “You’ll serve many people. You’ll profit from a few” (p. 163).

Chapter 15: Reaching the Right People. A strategy is long-term, but tactics can change as you find they are not helping you reach your strategy. Advertising is not earned. It is paid for. Be “the one they want to find when they go looking” (p. 178).

Chapter 16: Price Is a Story. The “price is more than a signal. It’s also the engine for our project’s growth, because price determines what we stand for, who we’re designing for, and the story we tell” (p. 180).

Chapter 17: Permission and Remarkability in a Virtuous Cycle. “Permission marketing recognizes the new power of the best consumers to avoid marketing. It realizes that treating people with respect is the best way to earn their attention” (p. 190).

Chapter 18: Trust is as Scarce as Attention. We live in a time when “more people are connected and fewer are trusted” (p. 199). Trust is earned by action.

Chapter 19: The Funnel. Maximize who you draw in and keep engaging before you ask them for money. Grab the smaller group of early adopters and give them a reason “why” they should build a bridge to bring your idea to the masses.


Chapter 20: Organizing and Leading a Tribe.

A tribe has shared interests and the opportunity of the marketer is to connect with the interests of the tribe.


Chapter 21: Some Case Studies Using Method. Several case studies are outlined which show the use of status and affiliation as powerful tools to find and keep customers.

Chapter 22: Marketing Works and Now It’s Your Turn. “Perfect closes the door. Better opens the door. Good enough leads to engagement. When we offer [help] we are being generous” (p. 244, 245).

Chapter 23: Marketing to the Most Important Person. Marketing has an impact, so seek to do worthy things and bring value.



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GREAT MARKETING: A NEW APPROACH

Marketing that everyone has done is not the kind of marketing you want to do. “The shortcuts using money to buy attention to sell average stuff to average people are an artifact of another time, not the one we live in now” (p. 11). Successful, modern marketing relies on understanding the customer’s worldview and desires so that a connection can be made. Great marketing is focused on being missed when you’re gone and bringing more to the table than people expect. “It seeks volunteers, not victims” (p. 5).

Start in the right place. “It’s easier to make products and services for the customers you seek to serve than it is to find customers for your products and services” (p. 6).

Great marketing is humane, rooted in people and stories. “Marketing is the generous act of helping others become who they seek to become. It involves creating honest stories – stories that resonate and spread. Marketers offer solutions, opportunities for humans to solve their problems and move forward” (p. 6).

On Change

"You cannot change everyone," but you can change someone. Asking, "Who's it for?" can "focus your actions" and keep the naysayers at bay (p. 13).

Change is best made when it has definable intent which is communicated to all involved.

Identifying Focus: The Smallest Viable Market

"The relentless pursuit of mass will make you boring because mass means average, it means the center of the curve, it requires you to offend no one and satisfy everyone. It will lead to compromises and generalizations. Begin instead with the smallest viable market" (p. 31).

Shape your idea, your life, and your organization around the minimum. "What's the smallest market you can survive on?" "Once you've identified the scale, then find a corner of the market that can't wait for your attention. Go to their extremes" (p. 33).

The purpose of finding the smallest viable audience is to find people who will both understand and "fall in love with where you hope to take them." This love leads to traction and engagement (p. 35).

"We know that every best-selling book on Amazon has at least a few one-star reviews. It's impossible to create work that both matters and pleases everyone" (p. 38).

Your work will matter. This is because people are "waiting for the edge you will stake out, the one they can imagine but don't expect." Modern marketing strategy claims that simply meeting specifications is no longer sufficient. People are "waiting for the connection you will offer. The ability to see and be seen" (p. 61).

"Effective marketers don't begin with a solution, with the thing that makes them more clever than anyone else. Instead, we begin with a group we seek to serve, a problem they seek to solve, and a change they seek to make" (p. 65).

Drawing on Signs and Signals

"If you ask [people], you probably won't find what you're looking for." Marketers can successfully do their job by watching people, figuring out what they dream of, and then creating a transaction that can deliver that feeling (p. 78).

It's also important to examine assertions. This includes assertions about what your audience – the people you seek to serve – want and need. Such assertions include "what's on their minds when they wake up, what they talk about when no one is eavesdropping, and what they remember at the end of the day" (p. 80).



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On Emotional Labor

Being professional requires the work of emotional labor grounded in empathy – “the empathy to imagine what someone else would want, what they might believe, what story would resonate with them. Emotional labor is the work you do to provide service” (p. 76).

“When a human being extends emotional labor to take responsibility – ‘Here, I made this’ – then the door is open to connection and growth. The most effective organizations don’t always have a famous leader or a signature on every email. But they act like they do. The goal isn’t to personalize the work. It’s to make it personal” (p. 76).

Building Trust and Permission

“A trusted marketer earns enrollment.” This person not only makes promises but keeps them, resulting in continued trust. Stories can be told uninterrupted because with trust comes consumer attention. A cycle emerges – stories earn enrollment, leading to continued promises kept and hence greater trust (p. 200).

The best way to earn someone’s trust is through action. “We remember what you did long after we forget what you said” (p. 201).

Coined by Godin, the concept of “permission marketing” gives the best consumers the power to ignore marketing. The concept suggests that “treating people with respect is the best way to earn their attention.” Permission marketers know that “when someone chooses to pay attention, they actually are paying you with something valuable” (p. 190). Attention becomes an important asset.


“Once you earn permission, you can educate. You have enrollment. You can take your time and tell a story. You can engage with people. Don’t just talk at them. Communicate the information they want” (p. 192).

Creating and Releasing Tension

“When you market to someone who doesn’t have a pattern yet, you don’t have to persuade them that their old choices were mistakes. If you’re going to market a pattern interrupt [making a change, trying something new or different], it will require you to provide the kind of tension that can only be released by being willing to change an ingrained pattern” (p. 115).

Marketers “who cause change cause tension,” but tension is not the same as fear. “If you feel like you’re coercing people, manipulating them, or causing them to be afraid, you’re probably doing it wrong.” Tension is created intentionally, “because you care about those you seek to serve” (p. 118).

Fear may exist in this process, but “tension is the promise that we can get through that fear to the other side” (p. 118). When marketers send the right signals of patience, empathy, and respect, their trust and tension complement each other. This is how people and their ideas begin to move forward.



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"If you care enough about the changes you want to make, you will care enough to respectfully and strategically create tension on behalf of that change" (p. 119). This, at times, may result in failure. What matters more than the failed result is how you react and respond in those moments.

Seeing Your Audience: Status, Dominance, and Affiliation

It's important to consider your consumer's "external status (how they are seen by their community) and their internal status (who they see when they look in the mirror)." More importantly, you must work through how your consumer plans to "maintain or seek to change that status" (p. 131).

Affiliation and dominance are different ways to measure status. Affiliation is a horizontal experience of who knows you. Dominance is a vertical experience of who has more power (p. 139).

When you understand the difference between dominance and affiliation and then work to find out what narrative resonates most with your consumer, you unlock your consumer's worldview and can therefore shape your messaging.

Organizing and Engaging Your Tribe

The more connected your tribe, the more powerful your potential. "Individuals who get in early [early adopters] have an incentive to bring others along, and so they do" (p. 218).

All tribes don't have leaders; however, they are commonly populated with "people who share interests, goals, and language." Your goal as a marketer should be to "connect the members of the tribe. They're lonely and disconnected. They fear being unseen, and you, as the agent of change, can make that connection happen" (p. 235).

"The best marketers are farmers, not hunters. Plant, tend, plow, fertilize, weed, repeat" (p. 237).


"When we offer [help], we're being generous. When we ask for it, we're trusting someone else to see us and care about us. On the other hand, when someone refuses to offer help or ask for it, everyone is closed, on defense, afraid of the other." "If there's no connection, we can't make things better" (p. 245).

Once you organize and engage your tribe, it's vital to understand that the tribe doesn't belong to you. Chances are, the tribe would survive if you went away. Godin states that "the goal is for them to miss you if you did" (p. 230).


The Power of Now, Not Later: A Three-Step Narrative for Action

Godin borrows Harvard professor Marshall Ganz's simple concept of a three-step narrative for action: the story of self, the story of us, and the story of now (pp. 231-232). Godin explains:

The story of self gives marketers a platform on which to speak. This is the "chance to explain that you are people like us," that you do things like this. When you talk about your experience, how you transitioned from the person you were to the person you are, you are generous with your tribe and your consumers. This action leads to tangible change people can hear, see, and understand (p. 231).



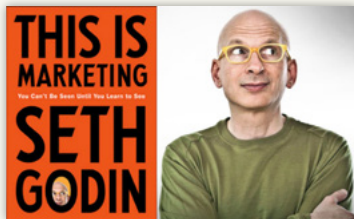
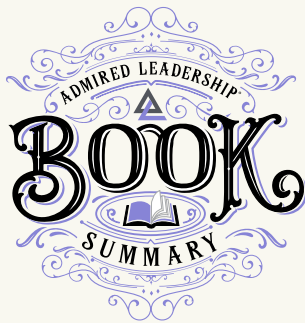
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The story of us is what Godin refers to as the “kernel of a tribe.” It answers the questions, “Why are we alike?” and “Why should we care?” The story of us encourages empathy and explains why stories of self are relevant. It explains “how we will benefit when we’re a part of people like us” (p. 231).

The story of now provides a crucial turn in the narrative. Here, the tribe uses positive peer pressure and balanced tension to move forward as a team. It supports the idea that together, you and your tribe can make something better. The caveat is that if you hesitate or become disjointed from others, it won’t work. “The urgency of now requires that we do it together, without delay, without remorse, without giving in to our fear” (p. 232).

Godin, S. (2018). **This is Marketing: You Can’t Be Seen Until You Learn to See.** New York: Penguin Random House.



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