

Jan Weir Creative Studio

Creative Marketing



Dog Training and Marketing

Knowing Your Nature

My world includes a lovely German Shepard that follows me everywhere I go. Daphne was an abused dog when I found her in a shelter 10 years ago – she'd been there a year, completely neglected, scared of her shadow. We brought her home, loved her and trained her well so she would have confidence in any situation. It worked.

Because of Daphne, I walk along the river everyday. We encounter lots of dogs who think it is their duty to jump on me – muddy feet and all. As I'm attempting to brush the mud from my jeans, their owners always say to me, "Oh, I'm so sorry. I can't seem to break her of that."

Over breakfast one morning my best friend asked me how to break her mom's dog of jumping on them. I told her, "You have to knee the dog really hard the minute he jumps on you. Your knee will usually catch him in the chest. This'll hurt him and often knock the wind out of him. But really, you only have to do this three, maybe four times and the dog is cured forever."

Because my dog is so well behaved, I get this question a lot. Nine times out of ten, the person asking the question knows her "nature" and will say, "Oh, I don't think I could do that!" And it's probably true. But it's also why their dog will always irritate friends by jumping on them.

So to carry this "it's just her nature" point further, people generally know who they are and, under normal situations, they know what they will and won't do.

I teach marketing and passion-to-profit-center classes at the local community college and I see people's nature in action while teaching my classes. Just like the dog-owner who knows she will never be able to knee her dog, a person usually knows what she is capable of when trying to promote her career or business. This is the reason I've had a successful marketing business for 25 years. People may try to get out of their comfort zone and attempt to personally market their work/product/service, but in the end, their nature takes over.

If you are uncomfortable putting yourself out there to promote business, the best thing to do is hire a marketing person like me to do the work for you. Build the cost into your budget. Increase the price of your commodity enough so you can pay someone to market you well. It really pays off.

And no, I won't train your dog to stop jumping on people. It's not in my nature – my husband took over that part of Daph's training.

In This Issue

Dog Training and Marketing
Knowing Your Nature

Demonstrating Your Expertise
Show Your Customers

Demonstrating Your Expertise

In the past week, I've talked with three friends about their businesses. Each of these people owns a retail/service business. Each was hit pretty hard by the downturn last year. As I asked them how they are attempting to counteract the downturn, I get the sense they don't know what to do; cut back on expenses, cut back on labor, be careful with inventory, take on more employee hours?

Hmmm, all really good ideas. But here's one they didn't mention. What if they demonstrated their expertise? One friend owns a tulip farm. What if she personally taught a class on planting and caring for tulips? What if she did a feng shui workshop using fresh cut flowers and plantings outside the front door? What if my friend who owns a clothing store offered a workshop on what clothes work best for which body type? What if my friend who is a speaker offered a workshop for others who want to learn public speaking?

What if, what if, what if. I'm always scheming after I chat with friends or clients about their business.

Sharing your expertise with your customers is one of the best way to increase business. So think about it. Using your expertise, what could you do today to improve business? Could you offer a workshop, a class, personal assistance, know how? Give it some thought, and then try it. Your customers will certainly be receptive to what you have to offer especially if they already purchase your products or service. Remember, it's cheaper to get repeat sales than it is to find new customers. So start with your customer base and offer them something that will benefit them. It will improve business.