

THIS IS MARKETING

You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn to See

SETH GODIN



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MARKETING



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For Leo, Anna, Mo, Sammy, Alex, Bernadette, and Shawn . . .
And for all the fresh voices that make our lives better

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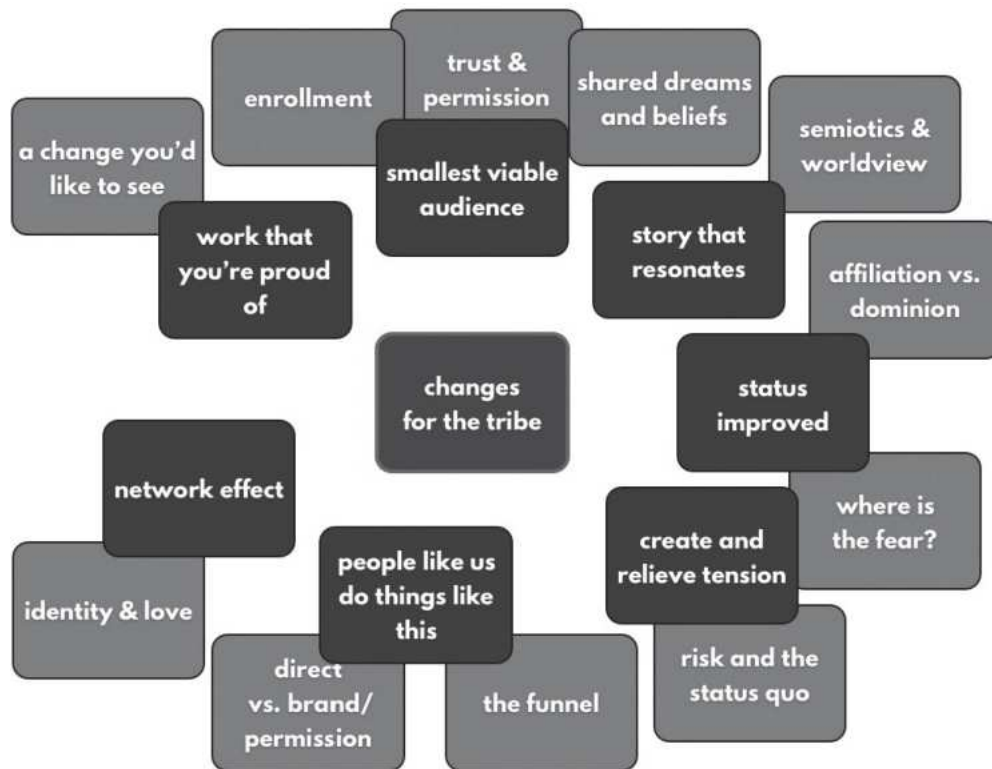
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



[a sketch to show you what's to come]

Marketing is all around us. From your very first memories to the moment before you opened this book, you've been inundated by marketing. You learned to read from the logos on the side of the road, and you spend your time and your money in response to what marketers have paid to put in front of you. Marketing, more than a lake or a forest, is the landscape of our modern lives.

Because marketing has been done to us for so long, we take it for granted. Like the fish who doesn't understand water, we fail to see what's actually happening, and don't notice how it's changing us.

It's time to do something else with marketing. To make things better. To cause a change you'd like to see in the world. To grow your project, sure, but mostly to serve the people you care about.

The answer to just about every question about work is really the question, "Who can you help?"

This is marketing

- Marketing seeks *more*. More market share, more customers, more work.
- Marketing is driven by better. Better service, better community, better outcomes.
- Marketing creates culture. Status, affiliation, and people like us.
- Most of all, marketing is change.
- Change the culture, change your world.
- Marketers make change happen.
- Each of us is a marketer, and each of us has the ability to make more change than we imagined. Our opportunity and our obligation is to do marketing that we're proud of.

How tall is your sunflower?

That's what most people seem to care about. How big a brand, how much market share, how many online followers. Too many marketers spend most of their time running a hype show, trying to get just a little bigger.

The thing is, tall sunflowers have deep and complex root systems. Without them, they'd never get very high.

This is a book about roots. About anchoring your work deeply in the dreams, desires, and communities of those you seek to serve. It's about changing people for the better, creating work you can be proud of. And it's about being a driver of the market, not simply being market-driven.

We can do work that matters for people who care. If you're like most of my readers, I don't think you'd have it any other way.

It's not going to market itself

The best ideas aren't instantly embraced. Even the ice cream sundae and the stoplight took years to catch on.

That's because the best ideas require significant change. They fly in the face of the status quo, and inertia is a powerful force.

Because there's a lot of noise and a lot of distrust. Change is risky.

And because we often want others to go first.

Your most generous and insightful work needs help finding the people it's meant to serve. And your most successful work will spread because you designed it to.

Marketing isn't just selling soap

When you give a TED Talk, you're marketing.

When you ask your boss for a raise, you're marketing.

When you raise money for the local playground, you're marketing.

And yes, when you're trying to grow your division at work, that's marketing too.

For a long time, during the days when marketing and advertising were the same thing, marketing was reserved for vice presidents with a budget.

And now it's for you.

The market decides

You've built something amazing. You have a living to make. Your boss wants more sales. That nonprofit you care about, an important one, needs to raise

money. Your candidate is polling poorly. You want the boss to approve your project . . .

Why isn't it working? If creating is the point, if writing and painting and building are so fun, why do we even care if we're found, recognized, published, broadcast, or otherwise commercialized?

Marketing is the act of making change happen. Making is insufficient. You haven't made an impact until you've changed someone.

Changed the boss's mind.

Changed the school system.

Changed demand for your product.

You can do this by creating and then relieving tension. By establishing cultural norms. By seeing status roles and helping to change them (or maintain them).

But first, you need to see it. Then you need to choose to work with human beings to help them find what they're looking for.

How to know if you have a marketing problem

You aren't busy enough.

Your ideas aren't spreading.

The community around you isn't what it could be.

The people you care about aren't achieving everything they hoped.

Your politician needs more votes, your work isn't fulfilling, your customers are frustrated . . .

If you see a way to make things better, you now have a marketing problem.

The answer to a movie

Filmmaker and showrunner Brian Koppelman uses the expression "the answer to a movie," as if a movie is a problem.

But, of course, it is. It's the problem of unlocking the viewer (or the producer, or the actor, or the director). To gain enrollment. To have them let you in. To get a chance to tell your story, and then, even better, to have that story make an impact.

Just as a movie is a problem, so is the story of your marketing. It has to resonate with the listener, to tell them something they've been waiting to hear, something they're open to believing. It has to invite them on a journey where a

change might happen. And then, if you've opened all those doors, it has to solve the problem, to deliver on the promise.

You have a marketing question, and it's possible that there's an answer.

But only if you look for it.

Marketing your work is a complaint on the way to better

They say that the best way to complain is to make things better.

It's difficult to do that if you can't spread the word, can't share those ideas, or can't get paid for the work you do.

The first step on the path to make things better is to make better things.

But better isn't only up to you. Better can't happen in a vacuum.

Better is the change we see when the market embraces what we're offering.

Better is what happens when the culture absorbs our work and improves. Better is when we make the dreams of those we serve come true.

Marketers make things better by making change happen.

Sharing your path to better is called marketing, and you can do it. We all can.

For more on the ideas in this book, please visit www.TheMarketingSeminar.com

» CHAPTER ONE «

Not Mass, Not Spam, Not Shameful . . .

Marketing has changed, but our understanding of what we're supposed to do next hasn't kept up. When in doubt, we selfishly shout. When in a corner, we play small ball, stealing from our competition instead of broadening the market. When pressed, we assume that everyone is just like us, but uninformed.

Mostly, we remember growing up in a mass market world, where TV and the Top 40 hits defined us. As marketers, we seek to repeat the old-fashioned tricks that don't work anymore.

The compass points toward trust

Every three hundred thousand years or so, the north pole and the south pole switch places. The magnetic fields of the Earth flip.

In our culture, it happens more often than that.

And in the world of culture change, it just happened. The true north, the method that works best, has flipped. Instead of selfish mass, effective marketing now relies on empathy and service.

In this book, we're working together to solve a set of related problems. How to spread your ideas. How to make the impact you seek. How to improve the culture.

There isn't an obvious road map. No simple step-by-step series of tactics. But what I can promise you is a compass: a true north. A recursive method that will get better the more you use it.

This book is based on a hundred-day seminar, one that involves not just lessons but peer-to-peer coaching around shared work. In TheMarketingSeminar.com we assemble thousands of marketers and challenge them to go deeper, to share their journey, to challenge each other to see what truly works.

As you read through, don't hesitate to backtrack, to redo an assumption, to question an existing practice—you can adjust, test, measure, and repeat.

Marketing is one of our greatest callings. It's the work of positive change. I'm thrilled that you're on this journey, and I hope you'll find the tools you need here.

Marketing is not a battle, and it's not a war, or even a contest

Marketing is the generous act of helping someone solve a problem. Their problem.

It's a chance to change the culture for the better.

Marketing involves very little in the way of shouting, hustling, or coercion.

It's a chance to serve, instead.

The internet is the first mass medium that wasn't invented to make marketers happy. Television was invented to hold TV ads, and radio was invented to give radio ads a place to live.

But the internet isn't built around interruption and mass. It's the largest medium, but it's also the smallest one. There's no mass, and you can't steal attention for a penny the way your grandparents' companies did. To be really clear: the internet feels like a vast, free media playground, a place where all your ideas deserve to be seen by just about everyone. In fact, it's a billion tiny whispers, an endless series of selfish conversations that rarely include you or the work you do.

The magic of ads is a trap that keeps us from building a useful story

For a long time, the most efficient way for a commercial enterprise to make large-scale change was simple: buy ads. Ads worked. Ads were a bargain. Ads paid for themselves. Besides, they were fun to make. You could buy a lot all at once. They made you (or your brand) a little famous. And they were reliable: money spent equaled sales made.

Is it any wonder that, pretty quickly, marketers decided that advertising was what they did? For most of my lifetime, marketing *was* advertising.

And then it wasn't true anymore.

Which means you'll need to become a marketer instead.

That means seeing what others see. Building tension. Aligning with tribes. Creating ideas that spread. It means doing the hard work of becoming driven by



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Shu tugmani
bosish orqali
sotib oling!**