

# The Duct Tape Marketing Hourglass™

Written by John Jantsch  
America's Most Practical Small Business Marketing Expert



# The Duct Tape Marketing Hourglass™

Written by John Jantsch  
America's Most Practical Small Business Marketing Expert



## The Simplest Way To Explain the Marketing Process

Many marketers have been taught the concept of the marketing funnel. The idea being that you bring leads into the top of the large opening in a funnel and push the ones that become customers through the small end. The problem I've always had with that is all the focus is on the chase.

I happen to think that real payoff in marketing comes from expanding and focusing your thinking on how to turn a lead into a real advocate for your business.

Long ago I started using the concept of The Marketing Hourglass<sup>sm</sup> as a key component to the Duct Tape Marketing System. The top half indeed resembles the funnel concept, but the expanding bottom half, to my way of thinking, adds the necessary focus on the total customer experience that ultimately leads to referrals and marketing momentum.

When you overlay my definition of marketing – “getting someone who has a need to know, like, and trust you” with the intentional act of turning know, like and trust into try, buy, repeat and refer, you get the entire logical path for moving someone from initial awareness to advocate.

At a recent workshop an attendee came up to me and said about this diagram, “I’m an engineer by trade and this marketing stuff never made sense to me, now it finally does.” – I guess that’s the ultimate test.

The goal for me in writing this white paper is to help you recognize and understand how your customers go through the marketing hourglass in order to make your marketing more effective.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Jantsch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

John Jantsch, founder of Duct Tape Marketing

# The Duct Tape Marketing Hourglass™

Written by John Jantsch  
America's Most Practical Small Business Marketing Expert



<b>Before the Hourglass</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Phase 1: Know</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Phase 2: Like</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Phase 3: Trust</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Phase 4: Try</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Phase 5: Buy</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Phase 6: Repeat</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Phase 7: Refer</b>	<b>21</b>

# The Duct Tape Marketing Hourglass™

Written by John Jantsch  
America's Most Practical Small Business Marketing Expert



## 7 Phases of the Hourglass



### Know

Your ads, articles, and referred leads



### Like

Your web site, reception, and email newsletter



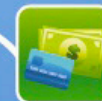
### Trust

Your content, social media participation, white papers, and sales presentations



### Try

Seminar, evaluations, audit, and nurturing activities



### Buy

Fulfillment, new customer orientation, delivery, and transaction processes



### Repeat

Post customer survey, cross sell presentations, and quarterly events



### Refer

Results reviews, partner introductions, peer 2 peer webinars, and community building



# Before the Hourglass

"Far too many business owners try to go directly from the ad to the sale and wonder why it's so hard." -- John Jantsch

# Before the Hourglass

Look at your current practices. How can this model come to life in your business?

If you're just getting started, you may find it quite easy to adopt this new way of thinking. Businesses that are deeply rooted in highly wired or highly engaged practices, however, often find it difficult to change how they look at their customer relationships and marketing tactics.

I've developed the Marketing Hourglass as a tool to demonstrate the way a prospect becomes a customer, and that customer becomes a referral source. Following the phases breaks the transition for a converged business into some practical steps.

There are seven stages of referral development and corresponding touch points along the customer life cycle. The key is to systematically develop touchpoints, processes and product/service offerings for each of the 7 phases of the hourglass.

Let's break down what you are currently doing to get your customers to know, like, trust, try, buy, repeat and refer.

# Before the Hourglass

Far too many business owners try to go directly from the ad to the sale and wonder why it's so hard. By creating ways to gently move someone to trust, and perhaps even creating low cost offerings as trials, the ultimate progression to buy gets so much easier. In order to start your thinking about the hourglass concept and gaps you may have, ponder these questions:

What is your starter offering?

What is your free or trial offering?

What is your core offering?

What is your members-only offering?

What are your add-ons to increase value?

What is your “make it easy to switch” offering?

What are your strategic partner pairings?



# Phase 1 KNOW

"It's essential that you have narrowly defined what an ideal customer looks like for your business." -- John Jantsch



# Know

This is the initial introduction to your company, and while it is commonly conveyed through your advertising messages, it is also the point at which a referred lead discovers you.

The cliché “You only get one chance to make a good impression” applies here. The best way to start the relationship is to communicate a clear brand or point of differentiation that is designed to attract your ideal customer and your ideal referral sources.

It’s essential that you have narrowly defined what an ideal customer looks like for your business. That way you can speak as directly as possible to that customer in all of your communications.

As you get started you may find it helpful to create a touch point map to identify every potential customer (touch point) and a corresponding marketing tactic related to that contact. In many cases you will be identifying tactics and touch points that may not exist yet, so this map can become an important guide for future marketing development. (For an example of a customer touch point map, go to [www.referralenginebook.com](http://www.referralenginebook.com).)

As you create your map and each contact point, keep the important concepts of content, context, connection, and community—and ultimately convergence—firmly in mind.

Look very closely at the messages contained in your advertising, media kits, and marketing materials.

# know

*Take a look at Old Spice Deodorant, a product from Procter & Gamble. As a men's care product it would make sense to target men as the ideal customers, however, research suggested otherwise. It was mostly women were doing the actual purchasing of their product so they shifted their marketing campaign to target women. By introducing Isaiah Mustafa as 'the man your man could smell like' Old Spice caught the attention of their current buyers and sales increased. By knowing who their ideal customer was, Old Spice could speak more directly.*



# Phase 2 LIKE

"Without a defined process for getting to know more about your company without any commitment...prospects tend to hold back from becoming customers." -- John Jantsch

# Like

Once a lead is aware of your company, they can and should be led to dig a little deeper, to see what's behind the ads. This is often the point when your Web presence or physical presence (store, offices, marketing materials, etc.) set the tone for a deeper connection.

Without a defined process for getting to know more about your company without any commitment, without the opportunity to lurk and learn a little before pulling out a credit card, prospects tend to hold back from becoming customers.

Take a walk around your office:

- Does it send the right message?

- What about your logo, store design, uniforms, trucks: Do they invite prospects to move forward?

- What message does your Web site send?

- What happens when a prospect in this phase Googles you?

- Are you sending educational messages and contacts via tools such as an online newsletter?

# like

*The small business team at Intuit tracks trends for the industry and reconfigures them into infographics that are both accessible and interesting. By taking facts and figures and reproducing them into a more preferred visual medium, Intuit causes their customers to really pay attention and dig deeper.*



# Phase 3 TRUST

"Repetition builds trust; trust builds the brand." -- John Jantsch

# Trust

When a prospect is ready to learn more (this may be by agreeing to a face-to-face meeting or signing up to receive your biweekly newsletter), you are approaching the trust hurdle. This is, for some, the trickiest spot.

When a lead is referred to your business, you borrow some trust from the referral source, but you can easily lose that trust if your initial attempts to engage the prospect don't connect. You can't simply assume that because Uncle Bob referred a friend, that friend is ready to buy from you.

Your marketing materials and sales presentations must be designed to communicate your core message of differentiation with complete clarity. During the trust-building phase your prospect may need to be nurtured for a time.

What kinds of educational opportunities, such as free reports, "how-to" checklists, and information-rich seminars can you offer?

Everyone in the company who comes into contact with a customer or a prospect is performing a trust-building or -eroding practice. Can everyone on the organization deliver your core message in a confident and consistent manner?

# trust

*Hubspot develops internet marketing software but their blog helps them develop trust. By producing educational content on better business blogging, regardless of what platform you use, they build credibility. Their tips and tricks work on all services so people liked them before they even tried them. It's proof that Hubspot understands blogging beyond their own service, making them a whole lot easier to buy into.*





# Phase 4 TRY

“...create a way for your customers to sample your business and in turn give your business the opportunity to sample the customer.” -- John Jantsch

# Try

One of the best ways to ensure that every customer relationship evolves into a referral relationship is to create a way for your customers to sample your business and in turn give your business the opportunity to sample the customer. The purest path to referral momentum is one that leads every prospect to determine, beyond the shadow of a doubt, whether your company has the answer or, and this is equally important, whether it does not—an educated yes or no is the answer we are after.

If the only path a prospect can take is directly from sales pitch to buy, then a third option creeps into the mix—indifference. Indifference is what leads to customers who come and go for price, make unreasonable demands, and push you outside of your core value proposition. Fail to serve a customer like this—and you will—and they will certainly tell ten friends not to hire you.

The use of trial offers, seminars, evaluations, guarantees, and any type of activity that provides a prospect with the ability to sample your products and services effectively before making what may be a costly purchase can make a customer much more comfortable and allow you to demonstrate how you work.

Providing lower-priced products and services to support and supplement your core service is a great way to reach markets that may not be ready to buy or simply don't have enough experience with your company to determine if they should go with you. This is often a significant problem when you compete with better-known organizations. By offering the low-risk trial you can gain the upper hand.

# try

*I once worked with an architect who created a \$499 feasibility audit that builders and property owners could employ to get a quick opinion of the potential zoning issues, regulatory snags, and rough per-foot building costs before they invested in a full-fledged set of plans or proposals. The money that customers paid was barely enough to cover the architect's time, but it gave them a real advantage if a project was to move forward—so who do you think started making the short list for projects they performed the audit service on?*



# Phase 5 BUY

"No matter what you think is good or bad, if it's not what the customer expected, it can raise a red flag." -- John Jantsch

# Buy

Finally, we get to sell the primary products and services. Yes, it's essential that you have a product or service that people like, deliver as promised, and gets people talking. But from a referral standpoint, it's the process of becoming a customer that needs the work. How you orient your customer once they say yes is a referral marketing touch point. How you fulfill the order, how you deliver the order, how you communicate throughout the process, how you communicate after the project, and how you ask to be paid for the work are all elements that determine whether you are referral-worthy or not in the eyes of your customer.

In this stage, expectations are everything. No matter what you think is good or bad, if it's not what the customer expected, it can raise a red flag. For example, you might be rather haphazard about getting your bills out and think, "Well, the customer won't mind if I don't bill them as promptly as promised." To the customer this can signal sloppiness on your part (not to mention disaster from a cash-flow standpoint).

Do you have an orientation process? A kit of information that explains everything and identifies everyone the new customer needs to know in case of problems or in order to move forward? Is there a clean process by which a project is handed from the sales team to the service team? (Even if that's the same person, it's a process that's important.)

# buy

*Zappos, the online retailer, is often commended for its customer service--with reason. By referring to themselves as a service company that happens to sell shoes they put their customers first. They've made the buying process virtually painless for their customers a couple different ways: free shipping both ways, a 24/7 service hotline, 365-day return policy, they even refer customers to competitors websites. Zappos pays such keen attention to the process of becoming a customer that when it comes time to purchase it just feels natural.*



# Phase 6 REPEAT

"...make certain that your customers are getting the most value possible from your products and services." -- John Jantsch

# Repeat

If you do a good job with the previous stage, you are halfway toward tapping the repeat phase for all the power it's worth. The key factor in creating repeat sales, expanded product sales, and long-term loyalty is to make certain that your customers are getting the most value possible from your products and services.

When someone buys your product or service, commit to teaching them the proper way to get the most from it. You can teach them over time how to do this. You can teach them how to move up to the next level of your product or service. You can teach them the secret hacks, the under-the-hood tips, and you can even expose them to the best practices of your other customers.

Far too often we sell a product or service and just assume our customers are getting the results they desired or were promised. By creating a systematic set of “how-to” materials, we can help them be more successful, use more of the features, and ultimately experience greater value.

And that's what generates referrals. Finally, it's essential that your customer-fulfillment process also contain a step that forces you to ascertain and review with your customer the value they received from your product or project. This is a great way to fix gaps in service with specific customers and gain invaluable research on how to get better at every stage.

Do you have a results review process? Do you have routine continuing education to point out advanced features or cross-sell other products and services?



# repeat

*As the 5th generation of iPhones nears, how does Apple continue to sell this product? With available software updates to older generations customers lose very little in terms of user experience. Apple gets repeat buyers, however, through their commitment to teaching. By focusing on how to make each new generation of the iPhone more accessible to users than the last they enhance their product tenfold. By creating a systematic set of “how-to” tutorials and offering in-store classes, Apple makes sure their customers are getting everything they can out of their product.*



# Phase 7 REFER

"...your customers become such total advocates for your business that they operate as a form of uncompensated sales staff." -- John Jantsch

# Refer

The last stage of the customer referral life cycle is for your customers to become such total advocates for your business that they operate as a form of uncompensated sales staff. You know you have built a Referral Engine when this type of action becomes common within your customer base. The ultimate goal is to lead every customer to this place. Even if referrals are flowing freely into your lead system now, there are ways to stimulate and facilitate even greater amounts of referrals.

At this stage you should focus on making it very easy for your advocates to participate in your business, come together as a community, and tap your entire network. For example, you can create peer-to-peer discussion panels that allow some of your greatest customer fans to discuss solutions and challenges with prospects. Or you can create customer advisory and referral boards that allow them to participate in the formation of your marketing campaigns and business strategies. Hold events that focus on networking and referral opportunities. Develop educational seminars and systematically introduce your strategic partner network to your customers.

# refer

*Dropbox, the web-based file sharing program, implemented a successful referral program back in 2009 benefitting both old and new customers. Current users were given more Dropbox space when they shared a referral link with new customers who, upon signing up, also recieved more space than a standard sign up. This program was so successful that it permanently increased sign ups by 60%. Dopbox's current users had become a powerful tool for recruiting new users and even got something out of it.*

# The Duct Tape Marketing Hourglass™

Written by John Jantsch  
America's Most Practical Small Business Marketing Expert

Now that you have a better idea of The Duct Tape Marketing Hourglass™, I suggest you sit down and map out your marketing system. Take a moment to understand what touch points fall into each phase and which phases you are missing or could use improvement.

Take it phase by phase: know, like, trust, try, buy, repeat, refer.

When you overlay my definition of marketing – “getting someone who has a need to know, like, and trust you” with the intentional act of turning know, like and trust into try, buy, repeat, and refer you get the entire logical path for moving someone from initial awareness to advocate.

The key is to systematically develop touchpoints, processes and product/service offerings for each of the 7 phases of the hourglass.





## The Duct Tape Marketing Hourglass

Written by John Jantsch  
America's Most Practical Small Business Marketing Expert



### About the Author

John Jantsch is a marketing consultant, award-winning social media publisher and author of two best-selling books, **Duct Tape Marketing** and **The Referral Engine**.

He is the creator of the Duct Tape Marketing System and Duct Tape Marketing Consultant Network that trains and licenses small business marketing consultants around the world.

His blog was chosen as a Forbes favorite for marketing and small business, and his podcast, a top ten marketing show on iTunes was called a "must listen" by Fast Company magazine.

He is the featured marketing contributor for American Express OPENForum and is a popular presenter of workshop and webinars such as American Express, Intuit, Verizon, HP and Citrix.

His practical take on small business is often cited as a resource in publications such as *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, and *CNNMoney*.

### What Others Are Saying About John Jantsch

*John Jantsch is the Peter Drucker of small business marketing tactics.*

--Seth Godin, author of *Linchpin*

*John Jantsch has a real knack for boiling marketing for the small business down to simple but highly practical action steps. His presentations are inspirational, motivational and always full of real-world information.*

--Ken Yancey, CEO SCORE

*Kansas City based marketing consultant and entrepreneur John Jantsch has created a large following among small business owners with his Duct Tape Marketing website, where he dispenses tips, strategies and tactics to help entrepreneurs expand their business.*

--Business Week

# The Duct Tape Marketing Hourglass™

Written by John Jantsch  
America's Most Practical Small Business Marketing Expert

## Hire a Duct Tape Marketing Consultant

Hire a marketing consultant to help you complete the ultimate marketing plan. You'll receive one-on-one attention from a marketing pro that can help you craft a powerful marketing plan, hold you accountable for completing each step, and then show you how to implement the plan to grow your business.

FIND YOUR CONSULTANT INFORMATION BELOW

## Become a Duct Tape Marketing Consultant

Thanks for taking a look at the Duct Tape Marketing System. If you find yourself wondering what it might take to become a [Duct Tape Marketing Consultant](#), please read the Duct Tape Marketing Consultant 5 reasons why. We think it makes sense for an independent marketing consultant to consider a network like ours versus going at it alone.

If you read anything that strikes a chord in terms of your goals and experience, please take 15 minutes and view our [Overview Movie](#). Then, take the next step in the process of getting to know us.

consultant info:



**RANDY VAUGHN**  
of The Marketing Twins

Dallas-Fort Worth's only  
Duct Tape Marketing Consultant

Specializing in consulting with  
Christian business owners,  
non-profit organizations and  
private Christian schools

[www.MarketingTwins.com](http://www.MarketingTwins.com)

