

The background of the page is a collage of various US dollar bills, including a \$100 bill, a \$20 bill, and a \$10 bill, all rendered in a light, semi-transparent green color. The bills are scattered across the page, with some overlapping others, creating a textured, financial-themed backdrop.

# How To Use The Economic Downturn To **GROW** Your Business

**In** economic times such as these, companies are looking to cut back on costs more than ever and the marketing budget is often the first to go. While this approach may initially seem like it will save the company money, in reality, it will end up leaving the company more vulnerable than ever. An economic slowdown is actually the time to amp up your marketing efforts, not necessarily by spending more, but by marketing in a smarter way.

Numerous studies have shown that companies who cut back on marketing during an economic downturn often see decreases in sales, while those companies that maintain their marketing efforts will see increases in sales. Downturns actually create more opportunities to accelerate growth faster than your competitors. This is because the companies that cut back on marketing are in fact opening the door for those companies who are marketing to swoop in and steal their clients.

Marketing should always be viewed as an investment, not an expense. The best approach to marketing in these times is to reevaluate how effective your marketing efforts have been in the past and to let the knowledge of what is happening economically lead your marketing campaigns. Some things to consider when reorganizing your marketing campaigns are:

How can you tweak your message to be more in alignment with these economic times? What are the new needs of your prospects? In times when people are more nervous about making purchases,

what can you do to show them that purchasing from you is a decision they will never regret? Prove your trustworthiness by providing references, testimonials and awards within your marketing pieces.

In what ways are your products and services valued and how can you communicate that message? Price is not the only thing prospects are interested in during these times. Justify the cost of your product or service by demonstrating the value and identifying your strengths. In unsure times, people want to know they are going to be taken care of. They want a product that is durable and they want to know you are reliable.

Who is your ideal client? The more you know about them, the better you can appeal to them. Learn as much as you can about your top clients and begin to look for more prospects just like them. Where are they located? How old are they? How large is their company? Why do they need your product or service? What drives their buying decisions?

What has worked in the past and what hasn't? What marketing methods have you not tried in the past that you can try now? Have you been tracking your marketing efforts? If not, now is certainly the time to start.

In what new ways can you market to your existing clients? What services can you promote that they are not utilizing? Keep in mind that other companies will be trying to win their business so you want to be sure to market to them and maintain your relationship with them as much as possible.



## Make Your Marketing Campaigns Even More Effective With VDP

If you really want to gain results from your marketing efforts, Variable Data Printing (VDP) is the way to go. That's because variable data printing allows you to utilize personalization to the max so that you are speaking to the exact target market that will most likely buy from you. Not only that, but it also allows you to speak to them as if you know exactly what they personally need.

By using a highly customized database that targets your ideal prospects, you can send them marketing pieces that have variable messages, images and special offers based on the needs of the individual prospect. For example, a car dealership can send a postcard that says, "Joe, we made this car for you," and they can include an image of a car that would be perfect for him based on his demographics and personal tastes. Then the postcard for Jane would differ from Joe's in both message and in the image of the car because Jane's tastes would be different. Additional methods can be used as well to further grab the attention of your prospects. For instance, special images can be used which integrate the prospect's name as part of the image, such as a person's name written in the clouds.

I'm sure you are beginning to see the benefits of VDP. The more you can personalize your marketing methods to your ideal client, the better your results will be. The bottom line is that it will drastically increase your return on investment, often resulting

in response rates that are four to six times higher than the more traditional direct mailing methods.

As an added bonus, using this technology also makes your marketing efforts easier to track because you can easily add a variable code onto the mailing piece that will tell you exactly what campaigns are working more effectively for you. That way, you can be even more effective in your next marketing campaign because you will know who responded to the previous campaign.

There are companies who will hold strong and even grow in these difficult economic times, and the way they will do that is by showing their clients and prospects that they can offer them what they need at this time. If you get creative with your ideas and do the marketing that is necessary, your company can see those results!

### **About the author:**

Faith Davis is the Director of Marketing at Astro-Dynamic Print & Graphic Services, a leading provider of commercial printing and related services. For more information, she can be reached at 215-441-4444 or [faith@astro-dynamic.com](mailto:faith@astro-dynamic.com).



**ASTRO-DYNAMIC**  
PRINT & GRAPHIC SERVICES

1020 THOMAS DRIVE • WARMINSTER, PA 18974  
215.441.4444 • [ASTRO-DYNAMIC.COM](http://ASTRO-DYNAMIC.COM)