



STRATEGY MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Assume They Won't Beat A Path To Your Door.

Common Mistake #6.

Not planning or budgeting to get the message out. Absence of a message (or communications) plan usually derives from the 'if you build it they will come' syndrome, or confusing selling with marketing. In a crowded and competitive market place it's vital you create a plan to communicate with customers, channel influencers, regulators, trade or industry media and investors. A first step is deciding on your company's image, and having materials, including a website, logo and graphics which appropriately reflect this. The second is deciding what your message(s) is. Next, choose the media to carry your message – the Internet, on-line or conventional advertising, forums and speeches, professional journals, trade or public relations, for example. Then get professional help with integrating the messages and executing the strategy. Some start-ups we've seen have considered some of these steps less important and haven't adequately planned or budgeted for all (or part) of them until they realized it was too late to do them properly.

Example: A charismatic and popular founder of a client company who had ready access to the press failed to optimize this advantage on behalf of his new product because he managed his own press relations. A more structured and disciplined approach to leveraging his credibility, using public relations counsel, would have been more efficient with his time, more productive in the marketplace and would quickly have liquidated the cost of the professional counsel. The message or communications plan should be part of the start-up's overall business plan, usually contained within the marketing plan and it should be implemented at the beginning.