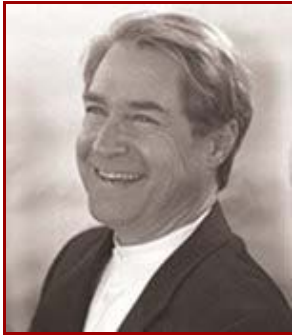




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Finding Gold

Credibility Marketing (Part One)

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This article is taken from the program I delivered at the IMCA Consultants Conference on March 3, 2004. If you ever wanted to make a name for yourself and show yourself as different and better - this is how you do it.

Most marketing programs in the financial services industry are duplications of each other. They talk about products or services. Why in the world would you want to promote something virtually everyone else promotes. How could that help you? Would you like to do something different and better with your marketing? Let's look at how to do it.

Level I. Credibility Marketing

Credibility Brochure. These show you as a friendly, approachable professional. They show your character and they tell a story illustrating how you got your character. It's easy to tell people what you value, but when you tell them the story of how you learned those values, you increase your credibility.

For example, an advisor in Minnesota told me that he learned his values while visiting his grandmother and elderly relatives during summers. An advisor in New York told me that his values were beat into his head at his school by the kindly Dominican nuns.

Your job would be to tell that story, then tie it to your actions. Show how you put your values into effect today. When you show the direct correlation, you gain credibility. When you divert your focus, you risk losing credibility. Here is an example:



The sample above was created for two advisors near Dallas. See how friendly they

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Credibility Marketing (Part One) ▶

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The Credibility Factor: Don't Blame The Marketing! ▶

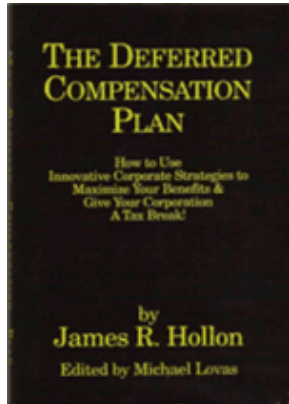
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appear. Each tells a story that brings meaning to why he loves helping people. Their values are translated into action that paints an attractive picture to their target market. This approach to marketing works so much better than a traditional brochure.

Credibility Book. If you are a true expert in your specialty, this could be the perfect project for you. These show you as someone with uncommon expertise. Like a Credibility Brochure, they show you as a friendly, approachable professional. However, because they show the depth of your expertise, they add even more credibility. Here are two examples.



[How to Avoid Seminar Sabotage \(Part One\) ▶](#)

[Seminars: Why they're terrible and what to do about it \(Part Six\) ▶](#)

[How to Distinguish Yourself in a Crowded Market \(Step One\) ▶](#)

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[Seminars: Why they're terrible and what to do about it \(Part Five\) ▶](#)

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Each of those two books is targeted to a specific type of person who has a specific type of need. The people who read one of those books will probably tell her friends about it. The author of the book is perceived as the go-to expert in that field. And for good reason. How many of your colleagues has published a book? Imagine two people stand before you. One gives you his business card, and the other gives you a copy of his book (autographed, of course). Which one has the greater credibility?

Now that you have a new idea floating in your mind, let's look at how we got here and see the significance to you.

Ever see this model?



[Macro Strategic Planning Model]

That's the schematic for "Macro Strategic Planning," which was developed by our good friend and close alliance, Bruce Wright. I share it with you here because it shows the line dividing what clients want, from what they typically get.

Few, if any, clients wake in the morning and think, "Oh boy! Today is the day I'm going to find me the best tax-advantaged investment strategies!" But, that's how advisors typically think, right? So, ease into the mind set of your best clients. They want help with those things above the line in the model. (I call that the "line of distinction.")

What they want is help putting perspective to the important areas of their lives. What they normally get is investment porridge. What they want is help funding their dreams or making sure their grandchildren grow up with character and principles. What they get is an estate plan. That's not what they want, so why would you aim your marketing there?

With a little imagination, the Macro Strategic Planning model also serves as a "Hierarchy of Marketing" model. To distinguish yourself in your chosen market, just aim higher. To show yourself as someone to seek out and trust, just aim higher.

**Magnetic Book
Credibility Book
Elevator Statement
Credibility Brochure**

=====

**Company Brochure
Newsletter
Direct Mail**

[Hierarchy of Marketing Model]

Let's look at the Hierarchy of Marketing elements and see how to make it work for you:

Below the line. This is what you do not want. The vast majority of marketing in our industry is comprised of the same three projects: direct mail, newsletters and company brochures. Ironically, market research continues to show that A-level clients don't respond to those things.

Below the line is a no-win environment where the greatest competition is located. All the product marketing, every company brochure, nearly every newsletter, every insurance carrier, every broker dealer, every FMO, every RIA, every P&C firm - they all conduct marketing at this level. This is also where you'll find everyone who competes on price. Therefore, when you attempt to compete at this level, you get lumped in with all the transactional-based businesses in America. Is that where you want to focus your energies?

If you feel ready to start operating at a higher level, all you have to do is go back to the Hierarchy of Marketing Model above and look "above the line." That's where you can show yourself to be distinctively better. That's where you can begin to become magnetic to your chosen target market.

Beware. Going "above the line" is not a quick-fix. In other words, it's not enough just to say you operate at a higher level, that you're different and better. You actually have to prove that you are. For example, you can't help a client with visioning if you have not done visioning work for yourself. If you say you're an expert in your area, you had better be able to prove it.

Next month, I'll show you how to take the concept of Credibility Marketing and go even farther.

MICHAEL LOVAS is the co-founder of AboutPeople in Dallas, Texas. He is the author of four books, three columns, and a thousand articles on Professional Credibility and Psychological Communication in the financial industry. He regularly speaks at conferences on Magnetic Marketing and The Emotional Connection for Financial Presentations.

Michael has earned two prestigious certifications: Licensed Master Practitioner of Neuro-linguistic Programming and Clinical Hypnotherapist. He uses those skills to coach advisors in how to improve their business relationships.

AboutPeople is the recognized go-to resource for providing Magnetic Marketing and Credibility Marketing programs in the financial industry.

AboutPeople Books: *Face Values
The Emotional Connection
The 5 Levels of Rapport
Distinguish Yourself Workbook
Beyond Wave Marketing*

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