

**wilderness**  
AGENCY

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# 5 ways to implement handshake marketing

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[WildernessAgency.com](http://WildernessAgency.com)



# What's in a handshake?

It can be difficult to tell your story through marketing, when you have spent so long relying on the power of a handshake. There's something to be said for a strong handshake, but how is your company leveraging that reputation to tell your story on a larger scale through sales-driven digital marketing?

You may have built your business on the power of a handshake, but, as you grow, scale and adapt, you may be wondering if that handshake is enough to keep it going. Your handshake deals didn't work because of the power of your grip, the position of your name tag or the eye contact you hold until the end.

A handshake works because of the emotional investment your clients have made with you based on the story you put out in the world. It's the trust you've built and the buy-in you create by telling a story you may have practiced over and over.

Your marketing should be performing the same tasks. In fact, it should be a magnification of the same story you and your sales team tell on a daily basis. And, if it is done right, your marketing can start to lift some of the burden and exponentially multiply what was previously gained by hitting the road, knocking on doors and, yes, shaking hands and making deals. If you do it right.



**Make a good first impression.**



**Be authentic.**



**Build a strong brand.**



**Have fun.**



**Get a grip.**



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# Make a good first impression.

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A first  
impression  
cannot be  
overstated.

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# 77%

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of B2B buyers  
said they only s  
peak to a salesperson  
once they have  
performed independent  
research online

- [CEBGLOBAL.COM](https://cebglobal.com)

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# 36%

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of buyers said they  
don't contact a sales  
representative until they  
have put together a short  
list of preferred vendors

- [DEMANDGENREPORT.COM](https://demandgenreport.com)

A first impression cannot be overstated, and, in today's digital age, you could already be making a poor one by not showing up to the meeting. Your website and your digital presence are often the first salesmen your potential clients talk to, especially if they can't reach you right away.

“ A firm, hearty  
handshake gives  
a good first  
impression, and  
you'll never be  
forgiven if you  
don't live up to it.

- P. J. O'ROURKE



A vertical photograph on the left side of the page shows a person standing on the edge of a dark, rocky cliff. The person is silhouetted against a bright, hazy sky. Below the cliff, a vast mountain range stretches out, with layers of hills and valleys covered in dense green and brown foliage. The lighting suggests a sunrise or sunset, with a warm glow on the horizon. The right side of the page is a solid dark teal color with white and orange text.

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**61%**

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**of visitors to B2B websites  
bounce after one action  
without taking any  
additional action**  
- **BRAFTON.COM**

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**91%**

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**of people read  
online reviews**  
- **INC.COM**

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**84%**

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**trust online reviews  
as much as a personal  
recommendation**  
- **INC.COM**

Prospects will decide within a few seconds how they feel about your business based on what information and impression they get from your website--and anywhere else they might look for you online.

Managing your reputation online--and making sure you have a presence when your customers are looking for one--is extremely important in making that first impression. Taking some easy steps to shore up your marketing will help to draw in more prospects, even when you aren't looking.



## Action Items:

- 1** Make sure your website is up to date and can be used effectively from any device.
- 2** Update your branding to ensure your logo and your messaging matches your current identity.
- 3** Ask your current customers to review your site or give you testimonials.



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**Be**  
**authentic.**

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Your  
customers  
make the  
same kind of  
judgments  
about you  
based on your  
marketing.

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# 63%

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**of customers buy  
from authentic brands**  
- Bonfire Marketing

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# 91%

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**of customers prefer honest  
marketing. Honesty about  
products and services  
ranks higher in importance  
than product utility.**  
- Bonfire Marketing

You've probably already figured out that, if you come off like a slick fast-talking salesman, people are less likely to trust you. Today, people are willing to shake your hand because they like you, they can relate to you, and they trust that going into business with you will benefit them in the long run.

Similarly, your customers make the same kind of judgments about you based on your marketing. Your website, emails, flyers and signage should all be treated with the same discretion and analysis as your sales team. If you wouldn't hire a salesman to say it, don't put it on your website.

Essentially, your marketing should capture the same voice and personality as those who sell your products and services regularly. Approachable. Dependable. Trustworthy.

**If you sugarcoat everything,  
you'll give your customers  
a toothache.**

“ **The handshake  
of the host  
affects the taste  
of the roast.**

- BENJAMIN FRANKLIN







# Action Items:

- 1** Create a strong value proposition and carry it through all your marketing and sales. Tell customers why doing business with you will ultimately benefit them.
- 2** Make the customer the hero. Don't focus on how great you are at what you do, focus on what power or ability it will give the customer to do their job better.
- 3** Share your why. Telling your customers why you are passionate about your company will give them insight into why they should trust you.



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# Build a strong brand.

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Your brand  
is the entire  
experience,  
and it all  
needs to be  
telling the  
same story.

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You can't rely on a good first impression--or the power of authenticity if you don't have the brand to back it up.

Your brand is more than your logo. A brand is a person's gut feeling about your product, service, or organization. Brands are defined by individuals, not companies or markets. It's a gut feeling because people are emotional, intuitive beings and make decisions based upon those feelings. So, it's not what you say it is, it's what they say it is.

Your customers define your brand from the first view of your logo or visit to your website. From the first interaction with your sales team to the person, or the robot, who picks up the phone.

**“ If a man's handshake is no good, all the {legal} paper in the world won't make it good.**

**- RICHARD J. DALEY**





# Action Items:

- 1** Put forth a cohesive story through your logo, website, collateral and experience.
- 2** Evaluate the messaging your team relays about your brand.
- 3** Make sure your brand matches the story behind it.



**Look like  
you're  
having fun.**

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Your  
customers  
want to feel  
like you  
genuinely  
enjoy  
serving them.

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If you don't look like you love what you do, you can't expect your customers to fall in love with it either. Your customers want to feel like you genuinely enjoy serving them. It's easy to convey this when your team loves what they do, and you find ways to capture and convey that story.

Studies show that your company can be more productive when your team loves what they do. The University of Warwick did a study that showed happiness leads to a 12% spike in productivity, and, while that obviously impacts your bottom line, it also makes it easy to share stories that prove your company loves to perform the work you sell.

**When people see that you love what you do, they want to give you more opportunity to do it.**



# HAPPY EMPLOYEES ARE

# 12%

**more productive.**

**Productive employees  
fulfill customer  
expectations**



**Customers see you love  
doing work for them**



**They tell  
their friends**



**You grow your  
bottom line**



**You make your  
employees happier.**

# Action Items:

- 1 Share stories that show how much fun you have working.
- 2 Find ways to capture the passion of your team.
- 3 Show off work you are proud of.

“ To build your self image, you need to join the smile, firm handshake and compliment club.

- ZIG ZIGLAR





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**Get a  
grip.**

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People buy  
with emotion  
and backfill  
with logic.

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When you start to layer these strategies together, you can easily see none of them can rely on their own.

When you have a strong brand, an authentic story and genuinely love what you do, you can make a solid first impression and create a powerhouse marketing plan that is the firm handshake you've been looking for--on a larger scale.

And when you realize that it's not just the hand that matters but everything it's connected to, it makes it easier to extend a grip that is confident, trustworthy, and sells your business in a way that makes it easy to turn on leads and grow your bottom line.

The key to handshake marketing is approaching your marketing plan with the same honesty and enthusiasm that you show by extending that hand. You'll make a solid first impression, and you'll win the business through sales-driven marketing.

**“ I have a good, hearty laugh and an energetic handshake, and those are trump cards.**

**- ALBERT CAMUS**

# Action Items:

- 1** Get out there and start telling your story.
- 2** Lead with emotion. Create buy-in by forming connections.
- 3** Backfill with logic. Show why and how you can meet and exceed expectations.



# Handshake Marketing Action Checklist

- Update your website to be functional and useful on any device.
- Refine your brand to make your image and messaging match the company you are.
- Ask for reviews and testimonials.
- Create a strong value proposition.
- Make the customer the hero.
- Share your why.
- Show a cohesive story through your logo, website, collateral and experience.
- Evaluate the messaging your team relays about your brand.
- Make sure your brand matches the story behind it.
- Share stories that show how much fun you have working.
- Find ways to capture the passion of your team.
- Show off work you are proud of.
- Get out there and start telling your story.
- Lead with emotion.
- Backfill with logic.



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