

# 12 BUSINESS KILLERS

## Get Them Before They Get You

Tough business times, more often than not, occur when a business is blind-sided by one of these 12 hidden “business killers” that can quietly cripple. These 12 evils were identified in an article in the EDGE magazine, fourth quarter 2019, (credits to the writers noted below) and is excellent advice for any business, day-to-day, in good economic times and bad. We have added our comments keeping in mind hot tub and swim spa retailers specifically. Kill the killer, grow and be successful!

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### 1. PLATITUDES

“Highest quality!” “Best Service!” “Built with honesty and integrity!”

Platitudes are so rampant that no one sees or hears them anymore. Every ad says the same thing, so your prospect assumes all companies are the same and looks for the lowest price. If you’re fighting on price, you’ve got platitudes.

**Solution:** Bring in the facts. What can you say about your company that no one else can say about their company? Replace the empty platitudes with real information and evidence that separates you, and proves your claims.

### Comments

*How long in business? Where is your product made? What is your warranty? Customers love reviews—contact your customers and post them, add them to your marketing material.*

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### 2. FRAGMENTED, CHAOTIC MARKETING

If your Google ads, magazine ads, website and brochure were all created by different people, then you’ve got a hodge-podge of different messages.

**Solution:** Systemize your marketing. Good marketing develops the message first, and then incorporates it into all your marketing.

*Keep your message the same across the board. Allow prospects to recognize your logo, tag line, motto, style—repetition works! Identify what makes you stand out and drive it home.*

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### 3. NOT USING “HOT BUTTON” ADVERTISING

A hot button is the emotional “pain point” that gets your prospect’s attention

**Solution:** Talk about the real issues burning inside your prospect’s brain. Base your headlines on hot buttons and you’ll get much better reaction from the people you’re trying to reach.

*In good or bad economic times, be aware of what the consumer is thinking and hit that button on how your product is the solution. Currently during this COVID crisis, hot tubs and swim spas are the perfect solution to staying home, relaxing, family fun and fitness. The warm treated water is safe—we fit the need, advertise!*

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### 4. NOT USING A PROVEN MESSAGING FORMULA

Fortune 500 companies use “creativity and repetition” for “branding” and “name recognition”. This is a disaster for small business.

**Solution:** Use the direct-response “interrupt/engage/educate/offer” formula. Every video, email, webpage, advertisement or other marketing message should be designed to lead the prospect through four distinct phases of engagement. Skip any step, and you’re wasting your money.

*Most retailers are small business, their message needs to be consistent with the sales process in mind, knowing their name alone is not enough for the customer just to show up and purchase. Get their attention / interest them in your product / educate them / close with an offer. If you do not use the PDC Spas sales pitch, call us—we will teach you. It is proven successful as our product stands out from others.*

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### 5. FAILURE TO USE VIDEO PROPERLY

Videos combine voice, imagery and text, and are much more engaging than text alone. But most company videos are self-centered, telling everyone what a great company you are.

**Solution:** Turn the spotlight on your prospect. Your videos must be client-centric. That means they focus on the client and their needs, not you. A series of properly produced videos can accomplish virtually any marketing goal you have—from educating your customers to generating leads to promoting the perfect sales pitch.

*Customers respond to video quicker than print. Show them how your product fits them—“this could be you” - enjoying a hot tub, family fitness in a swim spa. If they can picture themselves, you have an interested prospect. This info should be the main component of your video, include only enough about your company they will come to you. Our site is packed with video. Use our free API, you can have this video presence on your website immediately.*

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### 6. NO AUTOMATED FOLLOW-UP

Homeowners do not wake up one morning and decide to buy a hot tub or swim spa. They take months if not years to research it and consider their options. Thus, for every homeowner who is ready to buy today, there are at least 100 more who are very interested, but not yet ready to buy. These people need regular follow-up. But your salespeople don’t have time for that.

**Solution:** Automate your follow-up process. An automated system will lighten the load of your sales team by sending a periodic “drip” of helpful content to all contacts until they’re ready to buy. This maintains your relationship with them, so that when they’re finally ready to buy, they’re much more likely to buy from you.

*Do you have a follow-up process? Are you using our Wishlist to track your prospects? If they have been in your store, they are viable prospects. Call them with offers, send emails to keep your name top of mind. Shame on you if you are not doing this! Getting that customer through your door cost you money—do not lose the sale!*

## 7. BURING OUT YOUR SALES TEAM

Today's consumers have easy access to vast amounts of information. They're bombarded with messages at every turn, and will hit the delete button out of self-defense, particularly if the messages are irrelevant, generic, or poorly-timed. Thus, salespeople can work harder than ever with fewer positive results—a recipe for burnout.

**Solution:** Automate your sales process. Automation should handle the repetitive, mundane tasks so that you and your sales team can focus on closing deals. Free your salespeople from non-revenue generating activities and repetitive manual tasks. Let them focus on working with prospects who are the most qualified, ready to buy.

## 8. WINGING IT

Humans are humans, which means your sales pitch is different every time it's used. Inconsistent or improperly-delivered messages will lead to misunderstandings and ultimately missed sales.

**Solution:** A scripted, professionally produced sales pitch. Professionally-produced videos will ensure that every prospect has all the information they need to make faster, more confident buying decisions. Now your salespeople can spend less time on details, and instead focus 100% on closing the sale.

## 9. INVISIBLE DATA

The success or failure of any marketing campaign is determined by accurate, measurable data. What's working? What's not? Why? Bottom line—You can't fix what you can't see.

**Solution:** You need an intelligence network. With real-time data at your fingertips, you can figure out what's wrong and fix it. Find an expert who can set up your intelligence network and provide real-time data to allow you to make fast and intelligent decisions.

## 10. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Your prospects have certain expectations when purchasing. If the road to understanding and purchasing your product has any speed-bumps or detours, those prospects are just a click away from moving on to another company.

**Solution:** "Streamlined convenience". Successful companies make it simple and painless for a prospect to become a customer. Your information should be online, mobile-friendly, interesting, compelling and 100% self-explanatory.

## 11. CONNECTING TOO LATE IN THE BUYER'S JOURNEY

The finish line is crowded with competition, all offering deals and discounts. This is the worst possible time to try to win over their hearts and minds.

**Solution:** Offer irresistible information to all future buyers. Offer something that helps them without requiring a meeting. Now you can persuade them in your favor, long before they get to the finish line.

## 12. TRYING TO DO EVERYTHING YOURSELF

Battling these business killers yourself is a huge, time-consuming job. And as your company grows, it only gets worse.

**Solution:** You need a hired gun. Hire outside experts as necessary so that you can focus on your core strengths.

*Take a hard look at your staff and determine who is the best suited for each of the jobs. Do not send your best sales person to stock shelves, leaving your summer student help to deal with a hot tub buyer. Again, to work the lead prospects, use a MailChimp, / Constant Contact program to send automated messages to your prospects. Again, use the Wishlist to get and keep that prospect contact info, turning it into a sale.*

*Learn our sales pitch! We have reasons why we manufacture, design each of our products. We stand out from your competitive brands. Be sure your sales personnel understands this. We offer on-site sales training and numerous hand-outs. Simply link to our site with videos and answers to all product questions using our free API. This makes closing the sale quicker and easier.*

*Use emails to your prospects or start a new campaign using a particular email address or domain to follow the click-thrus. This indicates how many /who responded to the message. For print ads, include a coupon they have to bring to the store or offer a sale only during certain days / hours. Track the response, focus on what works.*

*Today's customer goes to the internet first before they even drive to the store. You have already been compared in product and company before you see them. Make sure your web presence is up to date, easy to navigate, includes videos and easy contact us forms. Again, PDC Spas offers a free API for quick and simple use of our site info without your customer leaving your site.*

*Know your competition—their prices and their offers. Offer free delivery / free water testing / discount on future chemical sales, etc. Short delivery time, PDC Spas produces normally in two weeks, far sooner than most every other brand. Find the sweet spot and drive it home.*

*The truth is as much as you may think you can do it all, you can't. More times than not, it is cheaper in the long run to hire a pro to do it right the first time. Website development, ad design, etc. If you do not have a pro on staff, hire an outside firm. You and your staff can focus on what they already do best.*

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**These 12 company-crushing business killers can wreak havoc on your best-laid plans and intentions.  
The businesses who identify and defeat them will win.**