

Why Your Marketing Strategy Is Stuck and How to Get Unstuck with Sticky Note Planning

Yes, that sounds counterintuitive, but hear me out.

You absolutely CAN get your marketing strategy and marketing plan(s) unstuck and out of your head, your notes, your folders and into action. All with the help of some office supplies and little inspiration and time. But first, you have to admit to being stuck. Second, you have to commit to action – action breaks the glue holding you in place.

I think I know WHY you're maybe stuck. I've been there. I've heard the reasons.



www.intellicraftresearch.com

Why You're Stuck and NOT Planning -

I can hear you thinking ...

'but I can't plan it all out! I don't know what might work'

'I don't know what really worked before, I don't know which of the tricks brought people in'

'I'm not quite sure what my people really want from us right now.'

Or maybe you thought that at one time. We all have. The 'what ifs' can run rampant some nights.

I've heard too many folks say they can't get all their plans done because ...

- they don't have senior leadership buy-in from their boss, the director
- they don't have funding
- they can't update their website ... or they don't have control of their site ... or they can't change the design because it has to align with the overall university look or the city government or the county ... or ...
- they can't plan because they can't update their site because ... see above
- they don't know how marketing funnel could possibly apply to a library or a nonprofit
- they can't create marketing materials because they don't have a graphic designer
- or they can't create new materials and collateral because their design person is working on 'tweaking' the branding
- or ...
- or ...

Stop. Just stop right now. Take a deep breath. And shove all that off the desk right now.

Because you are stalling.

Yes, some of those reasons are legit and no, I don't want you to get fired for going over your director's or Board's head(s). But let's talk seriously for a minute because I've been here too ... we're stalling because we're scared.



Scared of getting your message and materials out there and having it 'wrong'; scared it won't work; scared you might offend someone; scared no one will notice anyway; scared of wasting time and money and precious resources until you have it just 'right'.

For example, I recently had a conversation with an info pro that was all too familiar.

She had taken some courses, read books and blogs to learn how to build a website, to do email marketing, work on social media marketing and all kinds of new marketing things. However, she was still frustrated. More people weren't signing up or attending events. She hadn't gotten more local press. She didn't know what was going wrong or what to do next.

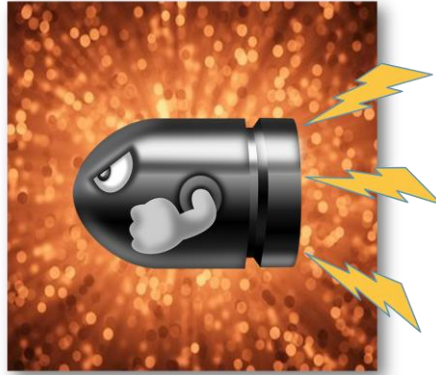


She wanted to know from me, the marketing expert, which exact steps to take next. What was she missing? She'd been doing everything right, but surely there was a secret trick she didn't know about?

Well ... here's something unexpected ... I'm not 100% sure what she should do next either!

In fact, I'm not 100% sure exactly what I should do next in my marketing. (OK I'm the marketing 'expert', so maybe 80% sure!)

Ok, the truth is ... there's no secret. No missing piece that gurus are hiding from my library and info pro friend. No magic bullet. Just a pretty common marketing myth. The myth is that there are gurus and experts who have everything 'figured out' and can tell you the 1 right way to do it, the 'magic bullet', or that we 'know exactly what to do next.'



www.intellicraftresearch.com

But the real, honest fact is that something that works really well one month to draw people in the door, to get things flying, might tank the next month. And often, we don't know precisely why. There are so many variables at work in marketing. Some we can, and should, measure and track so we know when to make a change. Data certainly helps eliminate a lot of the "I don't know" factors. But sometimes our experience plus our gut says a tactic (or a library program or event) should be a hit, and it totally flops and the thing we think will flop turns into a hit.

And we are left scratching our heads.

So what DO we do next?

Start at the beginning ... with strategy.

Does that sound too BIG and intimidating – "Strategy"?

Well ... just start ... DO it. **DO something.**

Get your message out there. Often. Repetitively. Try different ways, different places, different times.

And do it again.

And try again.

And keep trying.

You've heard of A/B testing, right? (if not, go check the definition and example in my [Library Marketing Terms Glossary](#)). A/B or split testing is all about making those guesses educated; doing it and testing it and then doing it again.



Yes, DOING can be part of your strategy - consider it on-the-ground market research.

But DOING still seems like a challenge – how do we know what to DO each day for our marketing?

That's where planning and strategy come in. If you have a good grasp of the 'big picture' and where you are headed (your goals), then it's easier to get the smaller picture into focus, and keep it that way. Your testing, checking and 'research' makes it easier to fine tune that focus.

I've been writing a lot more posts about [strategy](#), planning, [avoiding mistakes](#) and making the most of the resources you and your library have for creating strategic, stellar, [story-based marketing](#). There will be more. [So keep coming back](#).

But we have to accept this ...

It's never going to be 'just right'. Life will always get in the way and throw a curve. That's just as true in the library as in the rest of life!

And none of those "can't", "don't", "I don't know" reasons and excuses I talked about are as important as being like Nike and JUST DOING IT.

Taking swift, immediate, imperfect ACTION.

Most of those potential things I mentioned earlier, they can be 'fixed' later. After you get some data, some real life market research and results, and maybe more money.

But nothing will happen, and people will still not come through the doors, and kids will still not attend your latest, greatest event ... if you do NOT ACT NOW.

If you do a little planning and most just get acting, what's the worst that happens?

You have more data on what does or doesn't, might or might not, work. You can try something else. You learned something. You tried. And you still got your vital message out there.



So, that's maybe *WHY* you're planning is *STUCK*.

Now ... We're going to get it UNSTUCK ...

With something simple, easy to execute, even fun to do:

I'm talking about the Sticky Note Marketing Planning exercise. Yes, sticky notes for getting unstuck. Stick with me here!



I will have more posts and videos to go through the steps of a simple Sticky Note Marketing Planning session and give examples and pictures of how I used the same method to remake my own businesses' content planning this year. The same methods I've used with other organizations, that work with nonprofits and libraries too.

And if you still feel stuck ... give me a call, shoot me an email and we can work out some one-on-one Sticky Note planning for you and your library – live, in-person, or via webinars or online training sessions.

A graphic with a light gray background. On the left, the text 'IntelliCraftResearch.com', '@theinfohound1', and 'info@intellcraftresearch.com' is displayed in a brown font. On the right, there is a yellow sticky note with the words 'JUST DO IT!' written in blue, hand-drawn capital letters. The sticky note is slightly tilted and has a white shadow.

Now, go round up a rainbow of sticky notes and get your calendar. Time to get unstuck!