

Focus and strengthen your marketing message.

Spending money to make money is not a difficult concept for business people to accept. However, increasing a marketing budget when business slows is a much harder concept to grasp. When the entire market slows, the first budget that often gets cut or completely eliminated is marketing. This is the worst thing to do, for two reasons.

First, a business's exposure to potential customers will decrease with a cut in marketing, generating even less business. The second, and most important reason not to slash your marketing expenses is because your competitors are probably cutting theirs. If many of your competitors cut back on marketing and you increase yours, guess whose business will continue to grow despite the economy.

An economic downturn forces a company to evaluate the most efficient target audiences and the most effective marketing tools. Be smart and consistent. Look for ways to send a stronger and more focused message to hit your target markets effectively and gain the narrowing market share. Polishing your image and focusing your [brand message](#) makes good business sense now and will establish your footing as the market improves.