



Most people, even some marketing people, think of marketing wrong. What do they think it is? Let's start with an instructive tale to set the stage and identify the problems we need to solve.



This is Bob Jones Academy, a birth-through-12th grade Christian school.

BJA ENROLLMENT



Ooh, I think this is bad.
Let's do something about it.

A few years ago, we saw enrollment declines. Now, BJA is in a unique situation where there are associated with BJU and got the opportunity to have BJU's marketing team work on the project. This should be amazing! So we made some attempts to correct that.

bja[®]
Bob Jones Academy

We rolled out a rebrand, complete with a new logo.

bja Bob Jones Academy
Dedicated. Focused. Proven.

And a new tagline! (Though it sounds a bit like the nightly news...)

Education with a Biblical Worldview

Even a new *slogan!* We were serious about this rebrand!

BJA ENROLLMENT



Uh oh. It takes more than a logo to turn around an enrollment decline. So the next year we took a much more serious approach to the problem.



A newer, bigger, better *fancier* logo!



And a new mascot and athletic identity!



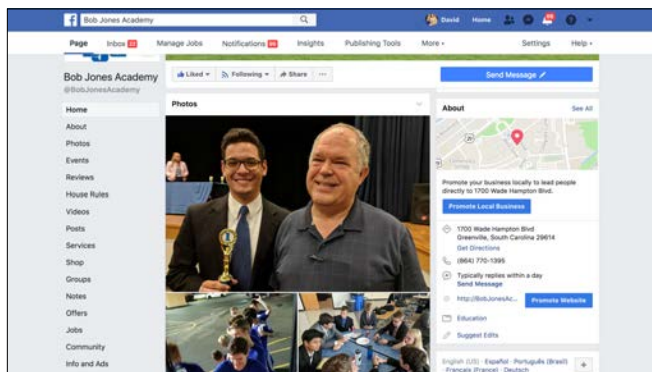
Which we painted huge on the gym walls. School spirit is going to go through the roof!



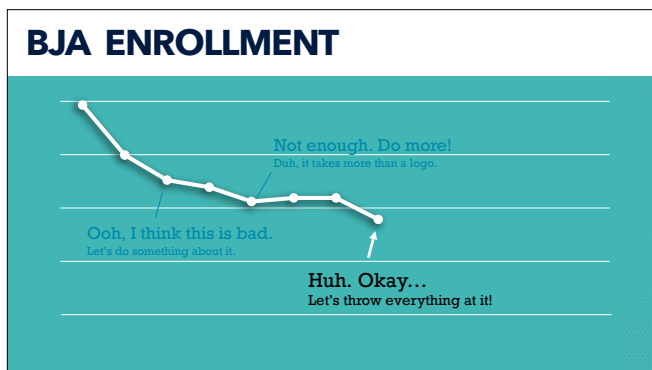
And we even got a fur suit for our mascot.



More substantively, we built a great new website. Our professional photographers took amazing shots of our attractive students.



And we built social media empires to promote the Academy. So what happened?



Enrollment kept going down. We got really serious.



We built the world's most impressive Open House.



It included banners with the tagline, banners devoted to explaining different aspects of the BJU experience, pictures of students enjoying life at BJU, banners proclaiming what we were good at, a banner with the tagline. We brought in couches! Throughout the day student groups performed.



The university Culinary Arts program provided gourmet cookies and cupcakes. There was a student art show. And the coup de grâce, we had BJUpres authors there so parents could talk to their textbook authors directly!



And we made posters and flyers and direct mail ads.



And radio ads, and print ads, and even a substantial billboard campaign.



We even put up money for referral incentives: if current parents brought prospects, we would apply \$80 to their school bill. Well, until one enterprising mother wrote to every woman in the county and offered \$40 for anyone who would come to Open House and say she had sent them. She just divided the money... and made a killing!

BJA ENROLLMENT



Even this didn't work. Enrollment continued to decline.



RULE #1

don't do stuff that doesn't work

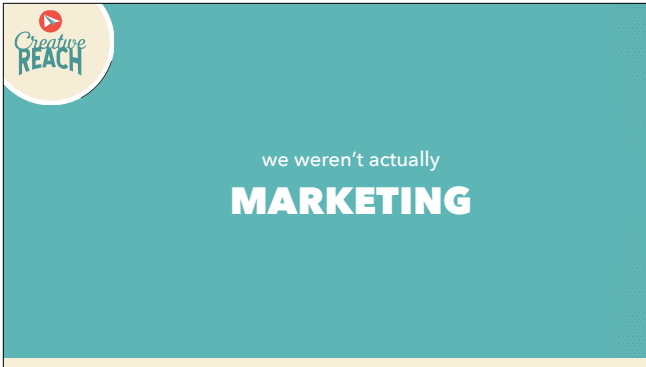
And we were breaking Rule #1: don't do stuff that doesn't work. We were wasting time and money.

BJA ENROLLMENT



+175
new students

For the 2018-19 school year, we did no major marketing. But BJA enrollment this year jumped up by 175 new students! What happened? What caused the sudden, sharp turnaround? Stay tuned... :D I'll tell you later.



We weren't actually marketing.



Remember from the first session, marketing is building valuable relationships.



Here's an example. I took my family to a Mexican restaurant. The food came out and was unbearably, inedibly salty. We asked for help from the waitress, but she did nothing. We talked to the manager. For 10 minutes he argued with us that the food *wasn't* salty; that we just weren't used to Mexican food; that the foods we ordered used lots of cheese, and cheese is salty, so that made our food taste salty. In the end, we paid full price for all three meals and left them uneaten on the table. I will never go back. And no amount of advertising or "marketing" will get me to go back. Because that restaurant lost my slice of their market in that one engagement between me and a manager. The relationship was broken. They don't have an advertising problem, they have a *service* problem.



As I studied the challenges we've faced at BJA and BJU, I realized that education is a *service industry*. And marketing a service is very different from marketing a product. This is about *serving people*.



To thrive in serving people, we must thrive across five dimensions:

- Reliability: Can be the littlest things... does the youth group get back from the trip when they said they would?
- Responsiveness: Willing to help parents and teens, answering the emails quickly.
- Assurance: knowledgeable and courteous attitudes inspire trust and confidence. SECURITY.
- Empathy: caring, individual attention. The ability to make a guest or a teen or a parent feel important, unique, and special.
- Tangibles: appearance of facilities, equipment, personnel, written materials. Because service are intangible, people look for physical cues as indications of quality.



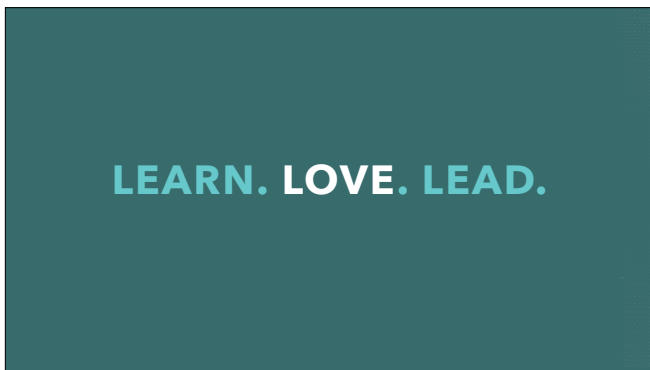
The very very best customer service in the world is delivered by Disney. In fact, they have an executive training program; thousands of executives from numerous countries all over the world go to Disney World each year to learn how to do customer service, directly from the masters. We could certainly learn from them. But instead, I want to take a different approach. Let's look at serving people through the lens of Scripture, instead.



As I thought about this, I realized that it really comes down to the two great commandments. First, we are to love God with all our hearts and minds and souls. Second, we are to love others. BJA calls itself a “Christian school,” but is it? What makes us “Christian?”



The story of a BJU Public Safety officer who created a very bad customer experience.





A real social media post. I don't wanna visit this church!



That second commandment, to love others. It means we treat them with patience. Always. With kindness. It means we aren't rude to them. It means we don't treat them in the ways that will benefit us, but rather them. To love like Christ means we aren't irritable. We don't give up on them, no matter how much a problem they are in the classroom or on an outing or in our inbox.



If we are going to call ourselves Christian, then our interactions with kids and parents and each other need to be characterized by love. And by absolute joyfulness in every interaction. And peaceful, peace-keeping and peace-making efforts. We must be long-suffering with the most annoying parent. Kindness should permeate our churches. All of these things, goodness and faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. These are the things that must be the personality and reputation of our church and of every one of our people.

BJA ENROLLMENT



+175
new students

For two years we did no “regular marketing.” But BJA enrollment then jumped up by 175 new students! What happened? What caused the sudden, sharp turnaround?

BJA ENROLLMENT



RELATIONSHIPS



PROCESSES



PEOPLE

Relationships. They trained their faculty in better parent engagement, and those faculty set up all kinds of new parent communication channels.

Then, policy adjustments: they did surveys and focus groups with parents and students, identified areas of frustration, and fixed them. This meant little things like smoothing out the “Mount Everest” speed bumps in the road, and bigger things like providing options for different styles of shirt in the school uniform — because not every student looked good in the default polo. As it turned out, few parents were asking them to compromise on biblical standards; mostly, they just wanted to reduce the little daily frustrations.

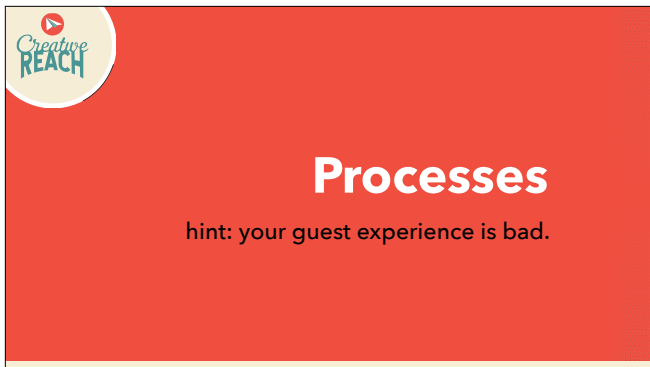
Finally, they developed their teachers in the areas of talent, energy, engagement, mission impact, culture & strategies impact, and position impact. In some difficult cases, this meant they had to replace teachers that weren’t right. They made sure they had teachers that had bought in to the mission of the school, were skilled at their subject and responsibilities, and connected well with students, families, and other faculty/staff.



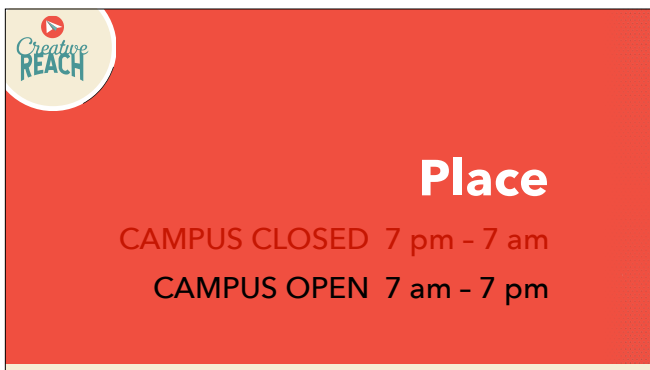
Seven P’s

1. Product
2. Price
3. Place
4. Physical evidence
5. Processes
6. People
7. Promotion

Remember our 7 P’s? We’ve especially been talking about People and Processes, but take one second to think about the physical interactions. Like those speed bumps.



Churches are full of process and we're good at some but we're bad at others. The process for dropping of a child at the nursery. For getting baptized. For signing up for weekly info emails. There are dozens of processes, and we need to make them better.



Is your place inviting? Does it attract the community? Does it communicate that you don't want them, like the BJU signs that said "CAMPUS CLOSED"?



How about your directional signage? Is it made from the perspective of a person who's never been there before? What are the questions they are asking; what do they want to know? Is there so much they have to stop and stare to find what they need? Do you make them park and walk to the office door just to find out there that you closed at 3:00? See, it all comes back to *loving and serving people*.



Place

WAYFINDING



They put the church office hours right out by the road so you don't have to drive all the way back around the school buildings to the office in back just to find out they're closed.



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Wayfinding

- Use humans
- Only for new guests
- Before the decision
- No clutter
- Cluster & categorize

A human brain can contain and communicate the equivalent of thousands of signs. There will be places where you shouldn't put a sign, but a person.

Your directional signage is only for new guests. The only things that need to be listed are the things guests are looking for.

Post the sign in a spot where the guest sees it before they have to make the decision of which way to go. If they need to turn left, don't make them go all the way to the intersection and then look left and right to see which way to go.

Clutter will hide the information they need, so get rid of everything extraneous — sign design elements, wall art, etc.

When possible, cluster and categorize information to keep directional signage clean. For example, and one end of the building you might be able to get away with "children's wing that way," and when they get closer to the children's wing the signage starts to list our individual room destinations.

And you will read this last

You will read this first

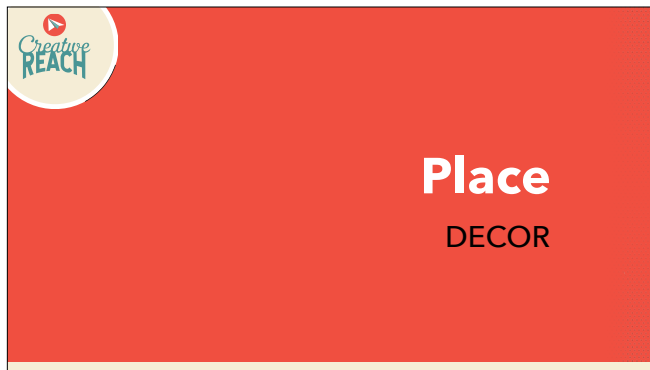
And then you will read this

Then this one

And then there's **hierarchy**. If you hide your directional signs small and out of the way, guests won't see them. You have prioritize the guest experience and give them the hierarchical priority so they find what they are looking for.



And make it easy! Like looking down a long hall with lots of rooms on both sides... "I think it's the fourth door on the left, er, maybe the fifth...." Get the wall "flag" signs for twenty bucks that let you see what each room is.



"Visual Grace." Give the eye a chance to rest. The Christian life should be different than the constantly frantic wildness of the world; even the Sabbath was a day of rest.



A 5-star restaurant in Paris. What are your expectations? Expectations regarding service? the food? the bathrooms?



McDonalds. What are your expectations? Expectations regarding service? the food? the bathrooms - with a handwritten "out of order" sign taped to the toilet?

What will happen if you have a heart attack at McDonalds? Who knows. But that 5-star restaurant trains their staff on what to do in an emergency, how to recognize symptoms of various health conditions, what to do about each of them; gets them registered in CPR; and they have a doctor on call.

When a guest steps in your lobby, you send them all kinds of messages. They instantly create all kinds of assumptions and expectations about you. Manage that carefully.



But we simply don't have the money to redo our building! It's not about the money, it's about the thoughtful heart of service.



Here's a room from the most expensive house on earth, sold in 2017 for nearly half a billion dollars. But I wouldn't feel comfortable just sitting down for a conversation!



The lady that always made sure the forks and spoons and napkins were at the far end of the potluck buffet. Have you had that experience of grabbing the plasticware first, then trying to figure out how juggle it with the plate of food while serving yourself? Just a little act of thoughtfulness — she was loving and serving other people when she did that. That kind of thinking needs to permeate everything you do. Pretend to be a guest or visitor, and walk through the experience they have — doing your best to see through their eyes. Where do I go? What do I do?



This is the Samsung TV: sometimes, for the sake of relationships, you have to go farther.

