



A VIOLINIST AT THE METRO

Why positioning is better than prospecting

A true story

A man sat at a Metro station in Washington DC and started to play the violin. It was a cold January morning. He played six Bach pieces for about 45 minutes. During that time, since it was rush hour, it was calculated that thousands of people went through the station, most of them on their way to work.

Three minutes went by and a middle aged man noticed there was musician playing. He slowed his pace and stopped for a few seconds and then hurried up to meet his schedule.

A minute later, the violinist received his first dollar tip: a woman threw the money in the till and without stopping continued to walk.

A few minutes later, someone leaned against the wall to listen to him, but the man looked at his watch and started to walk again. Clearly he was late for work.

The one who paid the most attention was a 3 year old boy. His mother tagged him along, hurried but the kid stopped to look at the violinist. Finally the mother pushed hard and the child continued to walk turning his head all the time. This action was repeated by several other children. All the parents, without exception, forced them to move on.

In the 45 minutes the musician played, only 6 people stopped and stayed for a while. About 20 gave him money but continued to walk their normal pace. He collected \$32. When he finished playing and silence took over, no one noticed it. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition.

JOSHUA BELL

No one knew this but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the best musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written, with a violin worth 3.5 million dollars.

Two days before his playing in the subway, Joshua Bell sold out at a theatre in Boston where the cost of seats averaged \$100.

WASHINGTON POST EXPERIMENT

This is a real story. Joshua Bell playing incognito in the Metro station was organised by the Washington Post as part of a social experiment about perception, taste and priorities of people.

Glew Corporate Communication

Level 1 Romany House, 256 Fitzgerald St, Perth, WA, 6000
t 08 9228 1599 www.glew.com.au

POSITIONING V PROSPECTING

From an advertising and marketing perspective, when Joshua Bell was busking in the subway he was PROSPECTING. He sold out at a theatre in Boston at an average of \$100 a seat because he was POSITIONED.

People respected him because they had read about him... heard about him... or were already a big fan of his music. And they paid handsomely for the experience.

But when he turned up to play at the Metro station in Washington, nobody knew who he was.

He wasn't perceived as an expert. He was just another busker "doing his thing" and no one to take much notice of.

He was NOT positioned.

THE LESSON FOR ALL BUSINESSES

Most business owners make the mistake of not positioning themselves.

Rather than flagging down people who are interested in what they have to offer and then positioning themselves as the expert... they take the long hard road of prospecting, which in a marketing sense is comparable to busking.

The bottom line is it doesn't matter how good you are at what you do perception is reality. And if you don't position yourself as an expert, very few people are going to recognise you as one.

Positioning is important for every business. It doesn't matter if you are a retailer... a wholesaler... a manufacturer... a consultant... whether you sell products or services.... or operate an online or home based business, positioning is the key to getting an unfair advantage over your competition.

See the video and read the Washington Post story

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-yn/content/article/2007/04/04/AR2007040401721.html>

"The bottom line is it doesn't matter how good you are at what you do perception is reality."