

Mavrick's Mission To Mow Down Marketing Mediocrity. **By Mavrick**

Finding Your Edge

MAVRICK'S 3 EDGE QUESTIONS

What do customers want or need?

What could or should our solution include?

Which of our products' assets do customers value and why?



In the Winter issue of *Textile Insight* we defined the concept of the EDGE as it relates to your brand's products, and also went the extra mile to compare the EDGE to marketing. Now we move on to the sometimes more difficult task of finding your EDGE.

Finding the EDGE is often challenging because we tend to focus our attention on competition, pricing or marketing – factors that get in the way of identifying your EDGE.

Virtually everything we sell is a commodity.

Whether a spin on existing products or a product reintroduction, virtually everything we sell is a commodity. That's a reality.

Rarely, and I mean RARELY, do we have the opportunity to sell the “greatest thing since sliced bread.” That honor goes to Otto Frederick Rohwedder from Davenport, Iowa, who in 1928 commercialized the most benchmarked product EDGE's of all time: the bread-slicer machine. But I digress.

Don't be too introspective. Instead focus on the consumer.

The first step in distinguishing your EDGE is optimism. You can think your product is the greatest thing since sliced bread, but be realistic. For instance, resist asking the question, “what is our product good at?” and don't be too introspective. Instead,

key in on the consumer. I suggest starting with three straightforward questions:

Mavrick's 3 EDGE Questions

1. What do our customers want or need?
2. What could or should our solution include?
3. Which of our products' assets do customers value and why?

In the 60s and 70s outdoor recreation consumers had a love/hate relationship with waterproof fabrics. These products kept the rain from soaking the wearer, but the “I'm sweating like a P-I-G” tradeoff frustrated consumers. Answering questions #1 (I don't want to sweat) and #2 (waterproof AND breathable) were simple. However, answering question #3 proved challenging.

In a different industry during that same time, a material called PTFE – also known as DuPont Teflon – was being used as an effective insulation for electronic wires. It turns out, however, that stretching PTFE creates a thin, porous membrane with pores small enough to allow air to pass through but too small for water droplets to penetrate. In other words, a waterproof /breathable fabric. Now, that's an EDGE!

By answering all three questions the husband/wife team responsible for the innovation commercialized Gore-Tex, and their EDGE determined what is now a

globally recognized brand name and successful international business.

Ask yourself Mavrick's 3 EDGE Questions and your product may change the world.

While attending the Winter Outdoor Retailer show held in Salt Lake City in January, I came across Wool+Aid, a brand that specializes in bandages made of medical-grade Merino wool. The product is naturally hypoallergenic, antimicrobial, quick drying, comfortable, moisture wicking and flexible. But Wool+Aid's EDGE lies in the unexpected answer to the #3 EDGE question: Wool+Aid bandages are biodegradable, giving Wool+Aid an EDGE with environmentally conscious consumers. ■

To recap:

- The EDGE is about the consumer.
- Think outside the box, outside your comfort zone.
- If your EDGE solves the consumer's problem...you have a winner!

Next up in the series: What To Do With Your EDGE.



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