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Attention! There's a new, up and coming trend in the online marketplace – Daddy Blogging. Startups have an opportunity to reach out to key influencers in this growing market of 'stay-at-home dads'.

Recent decades have seen women enter the workforce in greater numbers and their male counterparts staying at home to take care of the children.

Without getting into a gender debate, let's see this from a business, sales and marketing perspective.

According to small business expert Rhondalynn Korolak and author of best-selling book, *Sales Seduction*, this new shift in household dynamics has given rise to the online 'daddy-blogger'.

With stay-at-home dad becoming the new frontier for brands struggling to maintain market share, global companies are responding strategically by developing new advertisements geared towards male shoppers.

For example, Amazon and Target are changing the way they 'dad-vertise' children's toys, small appliances and cleaning products; and for the first time, toy makers Mattel have introduced a Barbie construction set and brands like Huggies,



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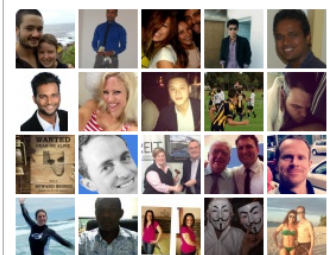
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Go-Gurt, Swiffer and Cheerios all depict hands-on fathers taking care of their children.

"While some research supports a distinct feminisation of the workplace in the past few decades, with more emphasis on communication, emotional intelligence and empathy, we are seeing the opposite at home—a marked masculinisation of domestic chores, purchases and routines. As a result big brands are now changing the way they sell household products in order to stay on top," says Korolak.

So can startups take advantage of this trend?

"If the trend is relevant to their product or service, start ups are uniquely positioned (because of their size and flexibility) to specifically cater to this new, up and coming market," says Korolak.

She adds that startups can easily reach out to key influencers in this market through social media and blogs – the key advantage being, low-cost.

But all businesses – whether old or new, big or small – need to be up to date with customer trends and respond accordingly. The effectiveness of an advertising message determines how many prospective customers remember, grasp and act upon that message.

"You cannot have a truly effective message (one that maximises the number of customers you convert per dollar spent) if you don't understand the latest customer trends and what keeps your customers up at night," says Korolak.

If the market is changing, then businesses cannot continue to deliver the same old messages that were designed years ago to appeal to a different audience.

"It's about relevancy and impact, not the channel" says Korolak.

Korolak's top tips for startups on standing out in a competitive marketplace:

1) Crank up the contrast in your message.

Instead of trying to sell people on what you do, you need to clearly outline the cost of them doing nothing or choosing one of your competitors.

When the contrast between where they are now and where they want to be is high enough, people decide and buy. It's that simple.

If people are not buying, it is likely there is not enough contrast.

2) Find and identify your niche.

You need to find and identify your specific niche, and take advantage of what you do better than competitors and own that space.

You cannot afford to be all things to all people, compete on price or have three or four different claims to fame.

Speak to your customers and prospects if you want to find out what you need to do or say to trigger decisions faster and get more people to say 'yes' to your product or service.

The only way to do it is to do the hard work upfront. Either you do it upfront to really understand your customer (so you can craft a message that speaks to him) or he has to do the hard work to try to figure out if what you are saying in your email, website or ad is going to solve his pain or not. If you make your customer do the hard work, chances are you will lose the sale.



Rhondalynn Korolak, author of best-seller *Sales Seduction*

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More tips are available in Rhondalynn Korolak's best-seller, *Sales Seduction*.


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 Tasnuva Bindi

Tasnuva is a journalist in Sydney and proud mother of five cats. She has a keen interest in business, politics, social justice and animal welfare. Off-hours she loves to paint, write music, read courtroom drama novels, and tweet. You can follow her on Twitter @TasnuvaB

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