

LET'S SELL BETTER:

How Proactive Marketing Can Help You Reach Your Goals

Most farmers don't talk about "marketing" as their life's dream. What they do talk about are the big things:

- Taking care of the family
- Paying off the farm
- Educating the kids
- Retiring with dignity

These are real goals for real people - and they're worth fighting for.

So how do you get there?

Take Control: Become a Proactive Marketer

A proactive marketer doesn't sit back and hope for the best. They make a plan. They act on it. They take responsibility for outcomes, not just yields.

Proactive = planning and doing

Undecided = waiting and worrying

What Makes a Successful Marketer?

A national company conducted a survey of 175 grain elevators across the country and asked:

What traits do your most successful farmer-customers share?

Here's what they said:

- ✓ Sell ahead when prices are profitable
- ✓ Know their costs and set profit goals
- ✓ Stick to their plan - even when others don't
- ✓ Tune out the "market noise"
- ✓ Approach marketing with discipline year after year
- ✓ Most importantly...THEY ACT

Now compare that to what they said about the least successful marketers:

- X Sell when they need money
- X Don't know their break-even
- X High anxiety, spread it around
- X Always waiting for "something better"
- X Follow every market rumor

You see the pattern. One group leads. The other hesitates.

The Current System Is Costly

Too often, the default approach is:

1. Grow the crop
2. Hold it
3. Wait for...something?
4. Rack up storage costs
5. Add interest costs
6. Lose sleep

Is that really a winning strategy?

Beware the Noise

A reminder from General Colin Powell:

“Don’t be buffaloeed by experts and elites. They often possess more data than judgment.”

In other words - don’t let market chatter distract you from your plan. Stay focused.

The Proven Move: Sell Ahead

Want to know the one marketing action that separates the successful from the anxious?

Sell ahead when prices are profitable.

That simple discipline can turn a dream into a strategy. The “high” of the year is unpredictable - but profitability is measurable.

Start With What You Know

Pull out the numbers:

- Cost per acre
- Profit goal per acre
- Revenue needed
- Expected yield
- Government program payments (if any)
- Net price needed

Say the math tells you \$5.00 (DEC futures) is your goal. A top farmer would put in target orders for a good percentage of his expected yield at that price. No waiting. No handwringing. Just action.

What History Tells Us

Over a 10-year stretch, a target price of \$5.00 (DEC futures) for corn would have been hit in 8 out of 10 years. That’s not a gamble - that’s good odds.

What If You’re Facing High Input Costs and Low Prices?

It’s one of the toughest spots to be in - and unfortunately, a pretty common one.

When margins are tight and prices are low, it’s tempting to freeze up and hope something changes. But hope isn’t a plan.

This is where **target orders** really shine.

Entering a target order - even when prices feel disappointing - gives you a tool to be ready, not reactive. If the market moves in your favor, you’re positioned to act quickly and with purpose.

And when prices do rally? You’re not caught up in the euphoria or paralyzed by indecision. You already know your numbers. You’ve already thought through your break-even and profit goal. That higher price isn’t a *surprise* - it’s an *opportunity* to carry out your plan.

Think of it this way:

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A rally is not a reason to delay a marketing decision.

It’s your cue to execute what you already planned for.

In uncertain times, your best move is to stay disciplined and focused - because that’s how you stay profitable.

Final Thoughts: Focus and Act

Marketing doesn’t have to be a mystery. You just need:

- Realistic goals
- A plan that fits your operation
- The courage to act on it

You already know how to grow the crop. Now let’s make sure you sell it better.

Would you like help running the numbers for your farm or setting up a marketing plan that fits your goals?

Let’s talk.