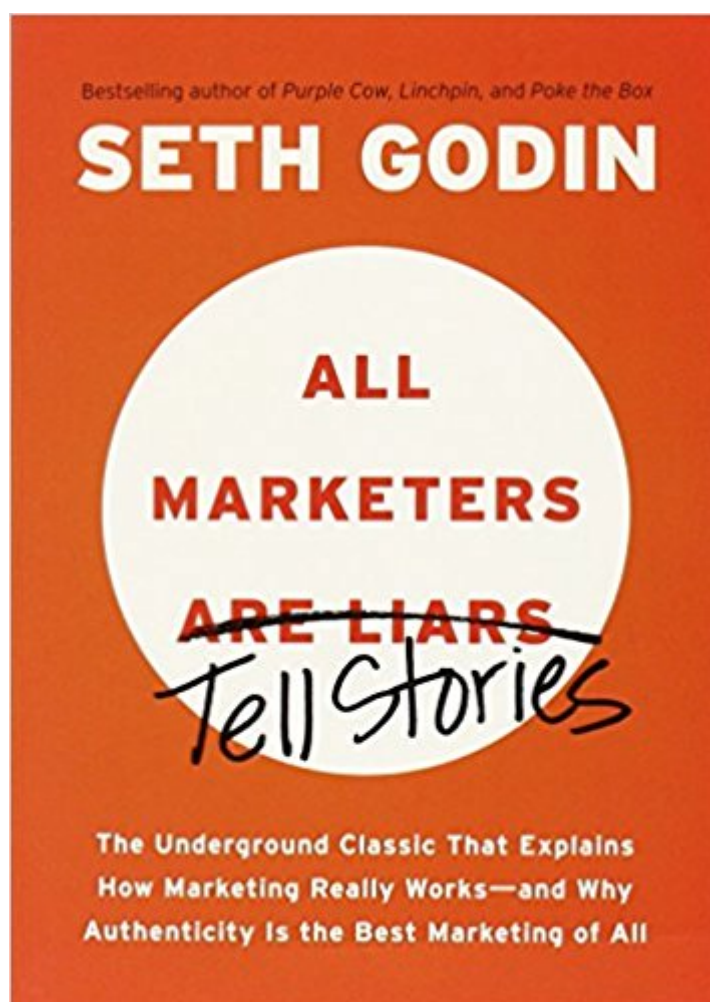


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All Marketers Are Liars: The Underground Classic That Explains How Marketing Really Works--and Why Authenticity Is The Best Marketing Of All





Synopsis

The indispensable classic on marketing by the bestselling author of *Tribes* and *Purple Cow*. Legendary business writer Seth Godin has three essential questions for every marketer: "What's your story?" "Will the people who need to hear this story believe it?" "Is it true?" All marketers tell stories. And if they do it right, we believe them. We believe that wine tastes better in a \$20 glass than a \$1 glass. We believe that an \$80,000 Porsche is vastly superior to a \$36,000 Volkswagen that's virtually the same car. We believe that \$225 sneakers make our feet feel better—and look cooler—than a \$25 brand. And believing it makes it true. As Seth Godin has taught hundreds of thousands of marketers and students around the world, great marketers don't talk about features or even benefits. Instead, they tell a story—a story we want to believe, whether it's factual or not. In a world where most people have an infinite number of choices and no time to make them, every organization is a marketer, and all marketing is about telling stories. Marketers succeed when they tell us a story that fits our worldview, a story that we intuitively embrace and then share with our friends. Think of the Dyson vacuum cleaner, or Fiji water, or the iPod. But beware: If your stories are inauthentic, you cross the line from fib to fraud. Marketers fail when they are selfish and scurrilous, when they abuse the tools of their trade and make the world worse. That's a lesson learned the hard way by telemarketers, cigarette companies, and sleazy politicians. But for the rest of us, it's time to embrace the power of the story. As Godin writes, "Stories make it easier to understand the world. Stories are the only way we know to spread an idea. Marketers didn't invent storytelling. They just perfected it."

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Portfolio; Reprint edition (April 24, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1591845335

ISBN-13: 978-1591845331

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.5 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 269 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #7,013 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #7 in Books > Business & Money > Marketing & Sales > Marketing > Research #15 in Books > Business & Money > Marketing & Sales > Advertising #52 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences >

Customer Reviews

Advertising's fundamental theorem-that perception trumps reality-informs this dubious marketing primer. Journalist and marketing guru Godin, author of *Purple Cow: Transform Your Business by Being Remarkable*, contends that, in an age when consumers are motivated by irrational wants instead of objective needs and "there is almost no connection between what is actually there and what we believe," presenting stolid factual information about a product is a losing strategy. Instead, marketers should tell "great stories" about their products that pander to consumers' self-regard and worldview. Examples include expensive wine glasses that purport to improve the taste of wine, despite scientific proof to the contrary; Baby Einstein videotapes that are "useless for babies but...satisfy a real desire for their parents

Praise for Seth Godin: "Godin...is uniquely respected for his understanding of the Internet, and his essays and opinions are widely read and quoted on and off." â "Forbes "It's easy to see why people pay to hear what he has to say." â "Time "If Seth Godin didn't exist we'd need to invent him." â "Alan Webber, founder, Fast Company "If your idea, or issue, or candidate, or product isn't catching on, you haven't been reading Seth Godin." â "Micah Sifry, cofounder, Personal Democracy Forum "Godin is endlessly curious, opinionated, and knowledgeable on a wide variety of subjects. He is a relentless marketerâ and also a clear-eyed visionary."â "Miami HeraldFrom the Hardcover edition.

I generally really like Seth Godin, so I must say that I've been disappointed with this book. In fact, I was reading it for work (yes, I have a boss who likes to assign reading), but I've stalled out half way through this book and will be forcing myself to finish it. I feel like the only message I'm getting is that every story is a lie -- not a lot of examples as to how a company's story, wherever it fell on the lie/truth scale, managed to change the minds of a mass of people. A few stories, to be sure, but primarily it's "every story is a lie" ad nauseum. I just felt preached to, and pounded over the head as if I wouldn't get the point otherwise. I just didn't like the approach at all. And, if every story is a lie, then his story must be a lie, so why should I read this?

'All Marketers are Liars' is a provocatively entertaining book about marketing and human nature. Seth Godin has once again applied his reliable formula for publishing success:1. Pick a traditional and well accepted marketing concept2. Write about it from a totally new perspective3. Make the

book easy to read and include a lot of examples⁴. Give the book an intriguing title⁵. Sell a lot of books

In 'Purple Cow' the basic concept was differentiation (nothing new in itself, after all, people had been talking about positioning and unique selling propositions for decades). In 'All Marketers are Liars' Seth's premise is based on these two well established marketing concepts:

a) It is harder to make something and then try to sell it, than it is to first find out what people want and then give it to them.

b) It is very difficult (and expensive) to try to change people's perception once it is already formed.

The new 'angle' being explored, though, is that most of the time those perceptions are based on emotions that go against objective facts. The recipe for successful marketing, says Godin, is to find a large enough group of people with a particular world view, and offer them a product that caters and reinforces that world view.

Judging by some reader reviews, some people seem to have taken offense to Seth's thesis, implying that it encourages dishonesty in marketing. I don't subscribe to that point of view. Giving people exactly what they want, even though objective facts suggest that they should want something else is not being dishonest.

To illustrate Seth's thesis I'll give you an example: suppose that you have two identical watches, one of them is made in Switzerland and the other one is made in China. If you ask people which one is better, I bet that nine out of ten will answer 'the Swiss watch'.

The objective of the Swiss watch maker is to sell watches. Are they supposed to go around telling everybody that the Chinese watch is as good as theirs? Of course not. The Swiss watch maker's advertising will most likely make extensive use of marketing signals that reinforce the world view of the nine people who picked the Swiss watch: their magazine ads will probably display pictures of their watch with a backdrop of a quaint Swiss village surrounded by the Alps and the Swiss cross prominently displayed somewhere on the page.

Now, if the Swiss watch maker decided to relocate their manufacturing plant to China and continued to use the same marketing signals in their advertising their customers would cry foul. If they also intentionally and openly lied about the country of origin of the watch they would be committing fraud. Seth Godin voices a strong opinion against these two scenarios, the first one because it would be "unauthentic" and the second one because it would be outright illegal and unethical.

'All Marketers are Liars' is a quick and entertaining read (you can probably breeze through it from cover to cover on your average plane ride) and it will leave you with a valuable takeaway on which to base your marketing strategy.

I have absolutely no background in Marketing, I never took a course or a class for that matter. However, I did read the TEN DAY MBA by Steven A. Silbiger which went into a lot of the theory and the practical practices of Marketing taught at MBA schools. The chapter in that book is what ignited

my interest in the subject and after searching through the internet this book was highly recommended, which is the reason why I purchased it. What I love about this book is that it describes how Markets (based on peoples) "world views" create variety based on there biases (We are the environment we interpret) that act as the foundation for Markets. It talks about how Marketers strive by embracing a markets "world view", "taste" and how to focus on creating authentic "frames" that reflect these lies a Market tell's itself. This book made me reflect a lot because not only does it teach you how to develop a brand for a particular Market, but it also teaches you a lot about life. How we market ourselves and how we "frame" our story to others ultimately defines how other's view us. It talks about how authenticity matters and how unauthentic marketers (a salesperson) just can't stand tall. You can be the best marketer (a salesperson) in the world but if you don't have the substance to sustain your story you fail. If your story is coherent with how markets (people) view you and your product you thrive. Everything matters in Marketing, the look, the feel, the slogan, the location of your brand but what ultimately matters is the story and if your market senses an unauthentic story, game over. Same goes at a personal level, with people that enter and exit your life.

My first book from Seth Godin. I have since bought others by him. It's so easy to understand, that you don't want to put it down. It will make you see products and commercials in a whole new light.

As usual, Seth Godin is amazing! If you are in marketing or management, *All Marketers Are Liars* will make you think about the story your company (or product) is telling, whether or not that story that will resonate with the right people (worldview) who will then buy your product, and whether or not the story you're telling is authentic (which it must be!). Throughout the book Godin provides many examples -- good and bad -- of the various stories told by businesses, from restaurants to car manufacturers to cosmetic companies. Marketing is storytelling. As a marketer, your job is to tell stories, and in this book Godin will guide you in doing that effectively. If you are in marketing, I highly recommend this book.

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