



BEST PRACTICES or “OPERATIONAL MANUAL” TO REPRESENT YOUR COMPANY AS VETERAN-FRIENDLY

Does your business plan cover all your potential market segments? The veteran/military affinity market includes nearly 25 million potential Consumers as Veterans, Active Duty Personnel, and their families who spend over 1 Trillion dollars annually in the U.S. Economy.





What is powerful about the veteran market?

1. Over **22 million** (22,000,000) veterans reside in America with 20,000 leaving active duty every month.
2. **1.5 million** (1,500,000) men and women currently serve on Active Duty.
3. Veterans, Active Duty Personnel, and their families spend over a Trillion dollars (**\$1,000,000,000,000**) annually in the U.S. Economy.
4. **96%** of polled Americans have a highly favorable opinion of companies that show public support for current and former military personnel.
5. **82%** of surveyed Americans said they had patronized one business over another because it showed public support of the veterans and military.
6. **41%** of polled Americans say they would actually stop or reduce their spending with companies that do not support veterans.
7. These fellow Americans have supported (and, sometimes died) for our Freedoms.

Why consider a Niche Market?

Marketing strategies with “niche marketing plans” help a brand identify a special attribute of their product that will echo most with a certain group of people. Niche marketing is all about taking what’s special, different, unique and rare about what you’re offering, and marketing that to the group of people who are most likely to identify with you. Can you afford “not to” identify with a trillion dollar market?

What LOYALTY characteristics come into play with this market segment?

1. **91%** of polled Americans say they are more loyal to companies that offer special pricing for veterans.
2. **97%** of surveyed Americans indicated they are more likely to spend their dollars with military-supportive companies.
3. Veterans will do business with veterans because of trust. People in their human nature desire connection and are drawn to doing business within their community.



Details Matter for proper communication to honor this market segment

Think about the standards and protocols the military have every day/every moment. **These standards are often referred to using acronyms such as, "MIL-STD"** Military Standard, **"MIL-SPEC"** Military Specifications, They represent a set of very well thought out test specifications and procedures that are designed to achieve the high-quality and high-reliability objectives of the U.S. Department of Defense. With that type of training, the details matter.

Best practices for business communications should consider details such as:

- Improper depiction of service members through photography, video or mixed media campaigns (every branch of service is different);
- Calling veterans and service members by the wrong name: Soldier is not a generic term for all. Each branch has a different name: Soldiers, Marines, Airmen, Seaman, and Coasties, also known as "troops";
- Improper use of military jargon
- Proper wear of uniforms

TIP: Proper images are available at stock military media libraries such as: <http://militaryphoto.com>.

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." ~Maya Angelou

***Show Veterans & Military HONOR.
At every customer touch point.***



Best practices for discounts & offers:

- Keep it simple, but keep it clear. Is the offer for current military, veterans, family members?
- Post the offer where ALL customers can see it.
- Ask if they are a veteran during the business interaction!
- If you have a National Brand (ex: Ford, Jeep) extend the national offer and perhaps add an additional add-on your establishment offers. Again, make it clear!
- Make sure every member of your organization knows your veteran-friendly mission and details of what your company offers.

Did you know? 81 percent of military families prefer to buy a car from manufacturers offering a military discount.

Tips for promotional events:

- Offer a free element of your service or product
- Host a fundraiser for an organization that supports our veterans
- Make a day for veteran's and care for them only
- Instead of limiting events to a day, create a veteran/military focused week
- Make a donation of time, service or money
- Include K-9 veterans (goodwill to animals is always a win)
- Reach out to media to promote your event
- Create events on days that are not the national recognized day only

Don't embarrass yourself or your business reputation. Know the difference with Memorial Day vs. Veterans Day. Celebrated the last Monday in May, Memorial Day is the holiday set aside to pay tribute *to those who died* serving in the military. Veterans Day is the federal holiday that falls on November 11 and is designated as a day to *honor all who have served* in the military.



Best practices for communications:

- Be Sincere – Establish trustworthiness. Find out what service members, veterans, and their families need, what makes their lives easier and what your company can do to help. Create a feeling of true commitment to their well-being.
- Be Direct but Engaging – Test the images and languages you use to see how your particular audience responds.
- Know the Military Community – Know your audience and the various segments including, active duty service members, retirees, veterans, military spouses and family members, veterans.
- Know the proper military terminology to establish credibility
- This is a close-knit community. Word of mouth can work for your business. Encourage customers to write a review to share their experience. Ask them to mention the veteran-friendly aspects of your business.
- Target Veterans in key zip codes for your market radius

Intrinsic Value:

We know that there are some products and services whose value extends far beyond mere economic calculation. Businesses that create intrinsic value through meaning and purpose, that desire to serve a mission, are what can create economic value for the firm. This value can be incorporated into veteran-friendly marketing.

For example, Harley Davidson shares stories riders tell about the “feeling” they get when they ride one. That is the effective marketing and invisible value. Create that “honored” feeling for your veteran-friendly market.



As many business analysts will agree there is no excuse for a company to not have a presence ONLINE in today's business world. In a similar way, can your business afford to not have a VETERAN-FRIENDLY strategy?

Best practices for SEO:

- Content with targeted keyword phrases. (veteran-friendly motorcycle sales)
- Veterans trust Veterans. Distribute shareable social graphics through Veteran platforms, groups, and organizations to extend your marketing campaign in social media. (Properly tag images: veteran-friendly catering)
- Write compelling meta descriptions (veteran friendly Tampa web design)
- Title tags should be unique for every page
- Take a fresh look at your website quarterly with SEO in mind

Gratitude:

Last but not least, Say THANK YOU FOR SERVING OUR COUNTRY! True gratitude is always a winning business strategy.

- Take those few extra minutes when you see a veteran/military consumer and simply say, "Thank you for your service to our country."



A GreenZone Hero is :

An AMERICAN Company that honors the efforts and sacrifices of the men and women who have served honorably in the United States Armed Forces.

- Discounts
- Employment and Management Opportunities



- Support of veteran initiatives

GreenZone (GZH) Hero Best Practices:

- Prominently Display your “Battlestar” where patrons can see it
- Make sure all personnel know what being a GZH means
- Display the GZH logo on your website with a link back to GZH
- List your promotional offer or discount on GZH page and your website
- Share veteran/military stories, events, promos all year long
- Network with other GZH members (loyal following)
- Properly put an American Flag in your business establishment

Be part of the GreenZone Hero movement.



Greenzone HERO

AN ASSOCIATION OF VETERAN-FRIENDLY BUSINESSES