

## A Game of Thrones Approach to Marketing Your Business

In case you haven't been following along, there is an HBO series, "Game of Thrones," that is wildly popular. It includes many story lines with kings, queens, fighting, love, dragons, and more. But, what does all that have to do with marketing?



As author, George R.R. Martin wrote, "Different roads sometimes lead to the same castle."

Let's begin.

**The Throne.** Once you've landed your firm at the top of the heap, someone wants to come along and knock it off. That's the name of the game of competition. Maybe you display awards on your walls. Maybe you gloat at award ceremonies. Maybe you even share your kudos with others on social media. Keep in mind, there is always someone looking to win the awards, be on the throne, and usurp your standing. As character Robert Baratheon said, "I swear to you sitting on a throne is a thousand times harder than winning one." What are you doing to [maintain your coveted spot](#)?

**Size doesn't matter.** As we saw in the show, Arya Stark and Tyrion Lannister are both small in stature, but powerful in many ways. Your firm may be small, but that doesn't mean it cannot have an impact on others. In fact, because your firm is small, you're more agile and able to move quickly and quietly in many cases – taking others by surprise. Being [quick and first to market might](#) be one of your best assets. Arya once said, "Quiet as shadows, as light as feathers." That's your ace in the hole.

**Dragons.** Dragons are Daenerys' unique selling proposition. Like other rulers, she has an army, devoted followers, trusted advisors, strength, and a good plan. However, she is the only one with dragons. Each of the other would-be rulers knows she has them and fears their wrath. She's quoted as saying, "The brave men did not kill dragons. The brave men rode them." What is your [unique selling proposition](#) and what is your plan to ride it to the end?

**Adversaries** are rampant throughout the show. They are also something you experience in business. If you don't know your competition, you should. Know them. Follow them. Watch them. Knowing your competitor's advantages and disadvantages could be the one thing that makes or breaks your market position. Petyr Baelish's quote rings true, "Always keep your foes confused. If they don't know who you are or what you want, they can't know what you plan to do next." How are you [monitoring your competition](#)?

**Advisors**, though they change throughout the show, are crucial to some would-be rulers' success. Take Tyrion's quote, "Most men would rather deny a hard truth than face it." This could easily be applied when a brand is going through a tough time. Face the issue - address it head on, rather than stifling it in hopes it will go away. Create a [crisis communication plan](#) just in case you have to face a hard truth. What's your plan?

**Alliances** are good for business and they make for great story lines in the show. Consider this from Jon Snow, "I don't want them to kneel for me. I want them to fight with me, when the time comes." Who can [you partner with](#) to win new business, to create community support, to generate awareness for your brand? Align yourself with companies and people who will help you to reach your goals, and then reciprocate.

**Loyalty** can be an asset or a fault, and is almost a flaw in the show's characters Jon Snow and Sandor Clegane a.k.a. The Hound. Take this quote from the latter, "A hound will die for you, but never lie to you. And, he'll look you straight in the face." In business, the loyal are your [brand ambassadors](#). How do you reward them for being such?

**Plan.** "And once we get the princess, then what?" Bronn asks Jaime Lannister. "I like to improvise," Lannister responds. "That explains the golden hand." Bronn finishes. Planning is key in your business, without it you might lose your right hand. What trends are you taking advantage of? Do you have a content calendar with monthly themes geared toward bringing in new visitors and leads? Do [you have a strategy to build the business](#) over a period of years and are you monitoring its progress? If not, maybe now is a good time to consider it.

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Now that you have the strategy, what steps will you take to rule your kingdom?