

HOW TO EASILY PROFIT FROM KEEPING IN CONSTANT TOUCH WITH YOUR VALUABLE CUSTOMERS

Are your customers loyal to you ? Here's how to insure they will return again & again & tell others about you!

How would you feel if you could build a one to one relationship with each and every customer to the point where they then become an advocate for your business?

Actually, if you have a list of your customers, you're already on the way to building one to one relationships.....
Here's How.

As a small business owner, former retailer and marketing coach, I'm amazed how many small business owners fail to take advantage of their most important asset, their customer list. Most of the small business owners I meet are constantly searching for ways to expand their customer base when its been proven time and time again that you can make more money from your present clients than constantly looking for new business. So, I devised some secrets to begin the process of retaining good customers and generating greater profits from them.

Secret #1: GET TO KNOW YOUR CUSTOMERS

Small Businesses today are finding that in order to survive super discount competitors and huge conglomerate advertising blitzes they must go back to the relationship building of the good old days. In cities and towns of yesteryear, the shopkeeper knew his customers by name and the type of merchandise they needed and made certain he had it in stock. This kind of relationship coupled with personalized customer service and a genuine empathy with customers, is what keeps them coming back to you instead of your competitors.

Secret #2: GATHER CUSTOMER INFORMATION

A database of customers is the most valuable asset your business has. Yet only 10% of the retailers in the United States keep a current list of their customers! Statistics show that businesses spend five times as much for new customers than they do on their present customers, yet a regular customer is worth 10 times the cost of acquiring a new customer! Today, however, a mailing list is not enough. To build relationships with customers that engender loyalty, you must gather information, which is valuable to you. For example, age (ages of relatives), size of home, color and style preferences, date of last purchase, amount of purchase, brand preferences, important dates (birthdays, anniversaries).

Figures out... ask customers what they really want. You will probably find that you can profit the most from a customer who buys high-ticket items repetitively, rather than a one-time shopper. You can also profit from cross selling or up-selling major purchases. Consider the Lifetime Value of the customer. If your customer, over a 5 year period bought a necklace, ring, diamond and chain, how much money would that be worth to you? Then imagine, if that person recommended you to all her friends for example, for all their jewelry needs. It begins to add up, doesn't it? So it makes sense to capture the name and transactional data of that customer who has the potential to generate thousands of dollars more to your bottom line!

Secret #3: SERVE THE CUSTOMER

Waiting on customers courteously is just the beginning of good customer service. First, find out what the customer expects from you. Make sure your salespeople praise every customer, show an interest and establish rapport. Get in the habit of corresponding with your customers. Send them notes, cards, articles and clippings that interest them. Send them thank you notes and cards telling them about private specials and trunk showings. Mail out a newsletter explaining what's new in your company.

Follow through after the sale. Ask yourself, " What will this marketing action do to help bring the customer back again."

Remember what Mr. Feargal Quinn says in his book, *Crowning the Customer*, "What gets measured, gets action. What isn't measured, gets ignored."

Secret #4: REWARD THE CUSTOMER

Michael L'Boeuf, Ph.D., author of *How to Win Customers and Keep them for Life* says his "Greatest Business Secret in the World" is: THE REWARDED CUSTOMER BUYS, MULTIPLIES AND COMES BACK."

A study by the Rockefeller Foundation found that a whopping 68% of customers stop buying from you because of an attitude of indifference toward the customer by the owner, manager or employee. In other words, if you ignore customers, 7 out of 10 will not shop with you again, for NO SPECIAL REASON!

By segmenting customers into groups, you can treat customers individually, based on their buying habits and the information you've gathered. New customers need to know that you value them as a NEW customer and that you actually care if they shop with you again. Send them a thank you note after their first purchase.

Take a jewelry store for example. Since jewelry store customers are infrequent and cyclical you want to offer rewards to past customers between the times they might shop with you again. For example, if you have a list of young women age 17 and over, you might send a newsletter about planning a wedding. Or offer free accessories if they recommend a friend for a jewelry consultation. Start a Preferred Customer Club where the customer signs up to keep in touch with you from their first purchase through marriage and adulthood. You stay in touch by advising them at each stage, while showing your latest fashions, accessories and specials... just because they are a "preferred customer."

Secret #5: USE WHAT YOU KNOW TO GET NEW CUSTOMERS

Once you've built a list of customers, their preferences, demographics and transactional data, you'll be able to use this important information to find new customers with similar characteristics. Start a Referral program by rewarding customers who refer their friends and relatives. Obtain a list of new movers to your area with similar age and income parameters to your present customers. Use testimonials from satisfied customers to attract new customers by mail. Obtain a mailing list of targeted prospects that match your customer profile.

The information you need to become more successful is right in your own backyard, your customer records. Dig in and harvest an acre of diamonds.

Allan Katz is The Loyalty Coach, a direct response strategist and copywriter helping small businesses boost their profits using loyalty marketing and proven direct response techniques. Mr. Katz is the author of 3 books. (1) [*"The Complete Guide to Retail Loyalty Marketing*](#), a 140 page guide on how to easily attract more good customers and keep them coming back again and again, upon which this article is based. (2) *"The How to & Marketing Resource Guide,"* a software manual on how to set up Restaurant Frequent Buyer Programs. (3) [*The Ultimate Marketing System for Dry Cleaners*](#).

He is a frequent speaker and is available to speak at industry conventions or meetings on topics related to direct marketing and loyalty.

Sign up today for the [FREE Marketing Mini-Course](#) entitled *7 Direct Marketing Secrets Guaranteed To Powerfully Boost Your Sales*. This course exposes the secrets top direct marketers use to generate constant streams of customers and the tools you'll need to keep them coming back again and again.