

Integrated Marketing Strategy

Coaching Questions

“How many times does my prospect hear my message until they buy?”

Topic Introduction

It is well-known that a customer will almost never buy a product or service from a business that they have never heard about. In fact, it usually takes anywhere from 3 to 28 communication touchpoints before a customer will buy. Can you communicate that many times with the same communication tool?

Discussion Questions

- Are they on your email list for your email newsletter?
- Are they on your call back list or email back list?
- Have you spoken or written to them at least 3 times?
- Are they following you through social media? How many types?
- Do they walk past your store or advertising?

Key Learning

It takes a combination of tools with the same message to get your point across.

“How many times does my existing customer hear from me?”

Topic Introduction

Prospects require integrated and ongoing communication to consider working with you. But existing customers need communication to stay with you.

Discussion Questions

- Do they get reports?
- Do they get newsletters or emails? Do they follow you using social media?
- Is there an orientation or onboarding process for your customers?
- Do they get invitations to events?
- Do you send Thank You cards or Birthday cards?
- Do they get invoices?

Key Learning

There are more opportunities and instances where you could be or are communicating with your customers. Reassess your message. Could those communications be more impactful?

“Am I missing out on opportunities?”

Topic Introduction

Invoicing often involves a plain piece of paper being sent to your customer. Is that the way it has to be? What about colour or pictures or a logo? Could you increase sales activity by offering a promotion or discount on the invoice? There are lots of opportunities out there to make your communication more impactful.

Discussion Questions

- Are there ways to communicate unexpectedly?
- Are there ways to get repeat business?
- Are there ways to get more business from the customers I have?
- Are there ways to get referrals?
- Are there ways to build loyalty?

Key Learning

People will only talk about you if your service was bad or if you did something unexpected. It is up to you to make sure that you do something positively unexpected.

Examples

Real Life Example: How many times does my prospect hear my message until they buy?

Coca-Cola is one of the most recognized brands on the planet. They promote their brand using almost every type of communication available to them.

- On their trucks, vending machines, and employees
- Through billboards, transit advertising, and television
- All online media including social media, websites, and advertising
- Ingredient branding through their cups at all restaurant chains
- Cross promotions through television channels and other organizations
- Through Coca-Cola venues, refreshment zones, and stores
- Sponsorship of events, venues, and teams

The key is that all of these avenues need to have the same messaging and look-and-feel to help consumers remember and trust the brand. It is the integrated strategy that makes the brand strategy effective.

Real Life Example: How many times does my existing customer hear from me?

An ecommerce company decided to start their own weekly customer information webinars and monthly newsletters. As an online company, creating residual income and repeat business was critical.

Prior to creating these two new communication channels, their retention rates were at 30%. By communicating more to their existing clients, their retention rates more than doubled to 70%.

Real Life Example: Am I missing out on opportunities?

A gift basket business was looking for new and creative ways to communicate with their customers. The challenge was that the person who received the gift basket wasn't the person paying for it. The receiver was always impressed with the gift basket and received the communication from the business; the buyer only received the invoice.

The gift basket business owner had to reconsider how to better communicate to its customer base. A few ideas were thought of:

- Changing the colour of the paper for the invoice and adding a colourful picture
- Sending a gift basket of appreciation to customers who ordered over 10 gift baskets in a year
- Sending a thank you card to the buyer every time they purchased a gift basket
- Creating a newsletter with the 'gift baskets of the month' or 'gift basket ideas'. This would be a growing catalogue.

Mini Case Study

Paul, a restaurant owner, was considering new ways to communicate with their clientele.

PAUL: "I have a lot of repeat customers, but they come by only every 3 to 4 weeks. I've tried customer feedback surveys to find out what to do better, but not even those were filled out."

COACH: "Let's think about all of the different ways that you communicate with your customers today. Can you list them?"

PAUL: "We have a restaurant sign, our menus have our branding, we have painted the restaurant in our colours, and we have our waiters trained extensively."

COACH: "Learning from other restaurants is a good practice. Do you have anything on your place mats? Or pop ups on your tables? Do you have an A frame sign on the sidewalk to attract walking traffic? How does your hostess greet people? Do you have your menu available online and outside your door?"

PAUL: "The sign and menu outside is a great idea! We definitely miss out on some walking traffic. Maybe we could have a happy hour and even put a waitress outside during that time to tell people about it."

COACH: "Anything else that sticks out that other restaurants have done?"

PAUL: "The bill. Some of coupons on them for future visits. Maybe we could do that but make them expire within 2 weeks. That would help with getting customers in the door more frequently."