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14 Ways To Boost Customer Response In A Tough Economy

By David Coyne

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Things are rough today for online businesses. The economy is struggling to get back on track. Spam is clogging up the inboxes of everyone, making email marketing less effective. And anti-spam software seems delighted to target legitimate email as junk.

Today, you must step up your tactics to keep your customers buying and away from the competition next door on the cyberspace highway.

Study your competitor's marketing and advertising. Sign up to their email list. Can you offer more than they can? Does your competitor have a weakness that you can exploit? Use it as your main selling point.

Previous customers are 5 to 10 times more responsive to your marketing than people who have never done business with you. It's definitely worthwhile to put in some extra time to keep customers happy.

Here's a few ideas that can help.

Become a "solution-provider" instead of a merchant. Send out a short, personalized email to customers who haven't bought anything for awhile and ask how they're enjoying the last product they bought. Offer to answer any questions or help out if they're having a problem. The more you become a friend rather than just another business, the more likely they'll buy from you again.

Cross-sell. Make sure customers know about your other products. Give a discount for your best customers to purchase your other items.

Send an email to customers only and tell them about your "Customer Appreciation Sale." Create a coupon or special order code that gives a product discount, gift or rebate.

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Use offline marketing methods to supplement your online sales tactics. Create simple postcards on your computer. Postcards are cheaper to mail than first class letters. (For more info on how to use postcards for marketing, get my article on the subject. Send a blank email to offline_postcards@sendfree.com)

Include a product list flyer when you mail any products to customers.

Occasionally send out a short, non-sales email. Maybe you came across an excellent website, free resource or tool that you wanted them to know about.

Offer an course by email and subtly highlight some of your products as solutions to your customers' problems.

Create a customer only membership site or bulletin board to post questions and answers.

Send a follow up message after a purchase to reassure your customer they've made the right decision and to overcome any "buyers remorse."

Create an affiliate program. Offer customers a higher percentage of the profits than non-customers who sign up. (For more info on starting an affiliate program, visit <http://www.affiliateshop.com>.)

Ask one of your customers for a product testimonial and send it to customers who haven't bought that particular product.

Create a special report or e-book available for free but only to customers.

Develop a customer survey and offer a prize or discount to those who complete it.

Offer reprint rights to a product you sell, perhaps an e-book or special report. (For info on reprint rights, visit

David Coyne is president of DC Infobiz, an information publishing company. Get FREE e-books you can sell to customers. Visit his website at

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Guerrilla Marketing? Never!

By Robert Wardrick

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When is Enough marketing Enough?

Never! Never! Never!

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When your competition decrease marketing, that's the signal to increase yours.

First; Don't try to re-invent the wheel, watch what your competitors are doing and what they're not doing.

Re-think your market niche, (read "What's Your Niche" by Elena Fawcner <http://ahbbo.com/niche.htm>) it's free and worth its weight in gold.

Second; Review your customer list (you do keep a list..right?) Previous customers can be your best prospects today.

– When did they buy from you (after your newsletter went out? a solo mailing?)

– What motivated them to buy from you? (An ad headline? Free shipping? a Discount Special?)

With the uncertainties of today's economy, guerrilla marketing is what motivates consumer "choice before purchase" i.e.the choice of your products and services over your competitors.

Remember, every business large or small is chasing the same Dollar.

A lesson from past history; during the great depression of the 1930s many small enterprises held on by their bootstraps. Remember that old cliché "when the going gets tough, the tough get going?"

Persistent marketing help build consumer awareness and confidence.

When the economy started to recover, who do you think consumers shopped with?

Research reports state; "many business failures are

NOT due to insufficient financing, but rather the lack of marketing strategies and tactics."

There is a wide profit margin between "going out OF business" and "going out FOR business."

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