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**Five Easy Way to Collect Testimonials**

**By Mike Burstein**

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Besides the word free, there is probably no stronger tool to influence new customers to use your business product or service than testimonials from past customers.

As long as you provide an outstanding product or service, most customers are delighted to provide you with their endorsement. Unfortunately, most businesses don't implement an actual procedure to systematically get testimonials.

The natural reluctance to ask for testimonials can easily be overcome by setting up a regimen that consistently asks your customers for their endorsement. You will be amazed at the comments you receive and surprised by some of the criticism. Use this feedback wisely to improve your business.

The following suggestions can be implemented with little expense or effort but will pay you huge dividends:

1. Unsolicited testimonials are always the best. Sometimes you will WOW! your customer and they will tell how thrilled they are. If you ask permission to use their comments on your promotions or website, the answer will be a resounding yes.
2. A report card on your product or service is easy to use. Include a postpaid card with all sales or service receipts. Ask questions about the customer's satisfaction with your service, include a free form comment section and include a check box giving you permission to use their testimonial.
3. On all receipts, include a URL to your website where your customer can fill out an online report card. Once again, ask for permission to use their comments and be sure to have a free form comment box.
4. If one of your customers happens to be a celebrity, their endorsement will pay huge returns. Many celebrities are willing to help a small business owner without expecting any compensation. A free tune-up once a year or an occasional dinner or some specimen lawn plantings, etc., would be a small price to pay to reciprocate for their generosity.

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5. Find an expert in your field and offer them your product or service for free. You'll end up with an honest appraisal of your business product or service and quite possibly a testimonial from an "expert".

Set up your own system to collect testimonials and use the powerful messages that you receive from them to grow your business.

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Mike Burstein has been writing for the SOHO and Small Business market for over 10 years. He has helped countless small business owners solve start up problems, create best practices, automate their

offices, get free publicity and dramatically increase traffic and sales.

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### **How To Use The Testimonial Wizard Software**

#### **By Timothy Robinson**

Do you need an easy way to collect testimonials from customers who have agreed to provide one? The Testimonial Wizard software is the easiest to set up and use. It's a good choice for the marketer or small business person who wants an automated way to manage small surveys.

What can I do with it? 1) Collect testimonials from customers who have agreed to it; 2) conduct small products surveys effectively and cheaply; 3) conduct opinion polls with prospects and customers.

This software comes with easy installation instructions, but doesn't offer much on how to use it. So here are the steps and some tips.

Steps:

1. Login. Enter the admin username and password created during installation.
2. Click Add Survey.

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3. Fill in the text boxes. The Help section on the right of the screen is a very good guide. In Survey Name, I type in the product name plus "Success Stories", i.e., "Widget Success Stories".
4. Click Submit. Now you're back at the Main screen.
5. Click the name of the survey you want to add questions to.
6. Click Add Question.
7. Type your question into the first text box.
8. Select the type of form gadget you want to use to collect the answer. The choices are text, textarea (allows multiple lines of text), Option List (creates a drop down menu), Check box, Radio button, and Hidden.
9. Enter values for Width, Height and Caption. The Help section on the right of the screen should be consulted for the roll these values play. The explanation it provides is quite clear.
10. Enter a value for Default, or leave blank. This is an optional field. You use it if you want for example, "http://" in a question that asks for a URL.

### Tips:

Be specific with the question's that you ask. For example:

\* What do you feel is Widget's best feature? \* How has that feature benefited you? \* Have you tried other competing products? \* Is there anything we could do to improve Widget?

Familiarize yourself with Testimonial Wizard by downloading the free guides.

Tim Robinson is the developer and chief geek at



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