

Forms: The next level in e-mail communication!

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By Raphael Pirker

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Everyone knows that communication is an essential part when you want to make profit online. It sometimes takes up to 10 follow-ups through e-mail to actually make a sale from your site, since the visitor has the choice between many similar products or services. I've seen people provide a link to their e-mail address and wait for the questions to roll in. Are you doing the same? Then consider changing that rapidly. Why? There are 8 reasons why you should switch to Forms right now:

1. The Forms are easier to fill out for your visitor
2. The visitor can ask his questions more targeted sine Forms limit the questions he can ask
3. You can answer the questions more quickly because the questions are more specific and structured
4. Forms allow you to track what questions are asked more often than others because Form-inquiries can be archived more easily in databases than plain e-mails
5. Thanks to Forms you can have different types of inquiries sent to different e-mail addresses all on one Form. This allows you to assign each question to a certain category and respond accordingly
6. Forms can build the Subscriber-base of your products-announcement newsletter. How? Have you ever seen those "Yes, I want to receive product updates" questions inside Forms?
7. Because Forms require the user to be specific, in some cases you can answer the questions, point to FAQs or simply notify that you'll be answering his request shortly using Autoresponders

8. Personalization accompanied with Automation. While there are many e-mail Autoresponder systems available on the market, which one allows you to address the visitor with his name? Or furthermore, which one gives you the opportunity to use any other information of the actual inquiry in the Autoresponder? Any simple Autoresponder that works together with a Form can do this and more!

You can see that Forms are a great way of growing your business and managing your time efficiently. But there's one thing worth considering when deciding whether to use Forms or not: In order for the Forms to be really efficient, you need them to be

processed through CGI. But no need to worry if you don't have a CGI bin! I will list a CGI script which you can install on your account (if you have CGI capabilities) and give you the link to the service created for people without CGI bin.

Matt Wright's FormMail [free]

A very powerful CGI script which has many customization features and loads of security measurements. It is easy to install, the documentation is very helpful and you have the ability to run an unlimited amount of Forms through a single script.

Link: <http://www.worldwidemart.com/scripts/formmail.shtml>

Whiz-Mail [free]

Allows you to do the same even when not having access to a CGI bin. How does this work? The service is remotely-hosted, so you can host it from virtually anywhere, no matter if you have CGI access or not. The Form remains on your site and after the submission, the user will return to your page. You can completely configure the way the service should act. You can add Autoresponders and implement subscription management into your Forms (as mentioned in reason #6)

Link: <http://www.whiz-mail.com>

Whether you use the Script which is hosted on your server or you make use of the remotely-hosted service, it is essential that you automate the task of customer-satisfaction to the greatest without losing a lot of personalization on your site. Personalization is a key factor to the success of your business – online and offline.

Raphael Pirker, WebMaster of Web Resources Visit his site at www.nr1webresource.com

Good Communication Promotes Positive Feedback On Ebay

By Stephen Pope

Good communication is the key to encouraging your auction buyers to leave you positive feedback. Such communication also helps avoid most negative feedback on eBay.

1. Good Communication Prevents Misunderstandings

Good communication helps to avoid misunderstandings. For example, if surface shipping takes six to eight weeks but the customer doesn't know this, he may expect almost immediate delivery. When such quick delivery doesn't materialize, he may feel that he has been cheated or that your service is slow and poor.

Thus, try to spell out delivery time frames and other details as much as possible. Is your refund policy clear? Is your product clearly and accurately described in your auction ad? Does your product's quality meet or exceed the expectations created by your auction ad?

2. Prompt E-mail Response

If, for whatever reason, your e-mail response is slow, the customer may assume that you aren't delivering on your promises. Prompt e-mail communication can help reassure the customer and gives evidence of good customer service.

3. Encourage Queries

Basically, state in your auctions: "If you have any questions about this auction, please e-mail me." If a person is expecting instant delivery of an e-book but instead you send him the information via the postal service, he might be disappointed. Nip all such problems in the bud by encouraging your prospective buyers to ask questions.

4. Ask for Positive Feedback

How can you encourage buyers to leave positive feedback for you? Simply state that you'll leave positive feedback for them after you've received theirs.

Since they are leaving the feedback first, they will hesitate to leave you negative feedback, knowing that you may respond in kind. If you leave positive feedback for the buyer first, they may never return the favour.

5. Reversing Negative Feedback

With good communication, you can often avoid receiving negative feedback. Try to do everything that is reasonable to make your customer happy.

However, what if you do receive negative feedback on one of your auctions? What can you do about

it?

Under certain, very limited circumstances (such as an extortion attempt), eBay might reverse negative feedback unjustly given to you. In most cases, however, eBay will not reverse negative feedback.

You can use eBay's "Mutual Feedback Withdrawal" procedure. This is where both the buyer and seller agree to withdraw negative feedback from each other. Thus, the negative feedback will be removed from both of your total scores (thus improving both feedback ratings).

The negative comments themselves won't be removed by eBay. However, your comments left in response to a negative feedback will also stay to tell your side of the story.

Yes, good communication can lead to more positive feedback from your auctions. Such communication can also help you to avoid and even reverse negative feedback. So, by all means, promote positive feedback on eBay through good communication.

J. Stephen Pope, President of Pope Consulting Inc., has been helping clients to earn maximum business profits for over twenty-five years. To learn more about Internet auctions and other profitable Work at Home Small Business Ideas, visit



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