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Frequency Marketing Will Boost Sales

By Gauher Chaudhry

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How often do you keep in touch with your past customers to announce a new product or service? Have you developed a relationship with your customers since their initial purchase? Do you consistently reward customers for their repeat business?

Frequency marketing is simply identifying high value customers and building a solid relationship with them. It is also a very effective way of branding your product or service. It is a proven fact the developing relationships with your customers will increase sales and reduce expenses.

Reduce expenses?

Yes, acquiring new customers always costs more money than selling to your existing customers. Most companies do not realize the power of their in-house mailing lists.

Frequency marketing has been around long before the Internet. A prime example of frequency marketing are the many "frequent-flyer" programs. Many airlines offer free air miles if you travel on their planes. This is their method of building brand loyalty.

Should you implement frequency marketing in your marketing efforts?

Frequency marketing is a long-term strategy that requires commitment. Unlike promotions that may last only weeks, frequency marketing programs could last for several years. If

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you cannot make this type of commitment, then it will be tough to develop a successful frequency marketing strategy.

The rewards that you offer should be of value. Here are a few more examples of frequency marketing:

Credit Card Contests – Some credit card companies are offering you a chance to win prizes. Everytime you use your credit card, you are entered into the contest.

Stamp or Points – Companies will give you stamps or points that can be redeemed for brand merchandise. (e.g. Pepsi Points)

Contest and Games; Companies provide games or contests which require the player to make repeat purchases. (e.g. McDonalds Monopoly)

You do not necessarily have to offer a tangible reward. Studies indicate that rewards such as special treatment or recognition provide a stronger bonding impact.

Be genuine about your rewards. How many times have you received a "preferred member" plastic card with a toll-free number on the back? Where is the value?

Don't promise the world. If you cannot deliver on your promise, you could seriously damage you reputation and credibility.

When conversing with your customers, you should do it genuinely and not generically. Sending a letter that starts off with "Dear Valued Reader," will not be as effective as "Dear Jim,". Remember you are trying to develop a relationship. Frequency marketing communication is one-to-one, not one-to-a million.

The most important aspect of a successful frequency marketing program is to add "real" value to your customers. You have to look at your product or service and decide whether it warrants a repeat purchase. If you do not offer a high quality product or service, your frequency marketing strategy will fail miserably.

Frequency marketing is not for all businesses. They usually apply to business that have a high need for repeat business. You should also be in a business where it is hard to distinguish between you and your competitors to effectively use

a frequency marketing strategy. If you have a monopoly in your business, it does not make sense to implement a frequency marketing strategy. Everyone has to purchase from you no matter what.

The downside to frequency marketing is that once all your competitors realize how successful it is, they will jump on the same bandwagon. Pretty soon, the whole strategy becomes meaningless if everyone else is doing it. That is why a frequency marketing strategy needs to be well thought out and constantly reapplied or revamped.

Frequency marketing is still in its infancy on the Internet. There are many programs evolving at this moment. There will be a lot of companies implementing this long-term strategy into their marketing efforts. Will yours be the next?

Reach vs. Frequency: Is it better to reach 25 People Four Times or 100 People Once

By Julie Chance

Reach and frequency are terms generally used when planning advertising campaigns. However, the concept of reach and frequency applies to any promotional activity you undertake: direct mail, direct selling, and even networking.

Reach is the number of people you touch with your marketing message or the number of people that are exposed to your message. Frequency is the number of times you touch each person with your message. In a world of unlimited resources you would obviously maximize both reach and frequency. However, since most of us live in the world of limited resources we must often make decisions to sacrifice reach for frequency or vice versa.

For example, an air conditioning repair service who has decided to do a direct mail piece has to decide whether to mail the entire Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex once or to mail a quarter of the Metroplex four times. An attorney who receives many of her clients through networking may have to decide whether to attend one weekly networking meeting or four different monthly meetings.

When faced with decisions of reach vs. frequency remember this rule of thumb:

Reach without Frequency = Wasted Money

Marketing is the process of building a business relationship with potential customers. Have you ever established a lifelong friendship with someone you had contact with only once? Probably not. Generally friendships (and all relationships for that matter) grow as a result of frequent contact over time. Even when the potential to form a great friendship is there at the first encounter, it is unlikely it will grow without nurturing.

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Seth Godin in his book *Permission Marketing* uses an analogy of seeds and water to demonstrate the importance of assuring adequate frequency in your promotional campaigns. If you were given 100 seeds with enough water to water each seed once would you plant all 100 seeds and water each one once or would you be more successful if you planted 25 seeds and used all of the water on those 25 seeds?

While intuitively and even conceptually we understand the importance of frequency to successful promotional and sales campaigns, somehow when it comes to actually implementing the campaign, we opt to sacrifice frequency for reach. And then we complain about the ineffectiveness of our promotional efforts. Undoubtedly one of the biggest wastes of marketing dollars is promotional activities that are implemented without adequate frequency.

When faced with the decision of mailing one direct mail piece to 10,000 people or mailing to 2,500 people four times think about the fate of those 100 seeds you can water only once. Unless you have water rights and can obtain additional water, opt for less reach and more frequency.

Julie Chance is president of Strategies–by–DESIGN, a Dallas based firm that helps small businesses and service professionals Map A Path to Success by providing consulting, training and skills based coaching in the area of marketing strategy development. For more information or to sign up for our free marketing tips e–newsletter go to

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