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The 7 Steps To Successfully Responding To Product Knockoffs

By Robert L Moment

It's every small business owners nightmare: you find and market the perfect product or service only to wake up one morning and find that someone else is producing cheap knock offs of the same thing.

So how do you deal with it? By following our seven steps...

1. Offer a better product

It sounds simple, but offering a better product is both the easiest and most effective way to respond to product knock offs. There is always a market for products which improve on the ones that have come before them: make sure you're consistently looking for ways to improve your product, and you'll remain one step ahead of the knock off sellers.

2. Create a marketing edge

A great deal of good business comes down to great marketing. This is another area in which it's easy to gain an advantage over product knock offs. The people who sell knock offs aren't interested in building a brand, creating a buzz or researching their market. In fact, they want to spend as little time and money as they possibly can on selling more units of their product knock off. By investing in your marketing, you can gain an important edge.

3. Make quality a priority

You'll never be able to stop knock offs completely. What you must remember, however, is that knock offs have one big disadvantage over your product: their quality.

Most knock offs are cheap, mass-produced copies of quality goods. That's why they're sold for so little. By offering a product which is truly high quality, you'll appeal to those buyers who aspire to owning the real thing, and make it much more difficult for anyone to copy you.

4. Getting a patent does not prevent competition

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A patent will help you deal with knock offs to a certain extent. What it won't do is eliminate the competition. You'll never completely eliminate the competition. All you can do is rise above them by making sure your product, service and marketing is the best it can possibly be.

5. Target smaller or niche markets where you can have the edge

While you may want to conquer the world with your business, it's often far more effective to conquer a small part of it by targeting a niche which you can excel in. By concentrating on a niche market you can get to know your clients and their needs inside out, and make sure your product or service is tailor made to fit that niche. Leave the rest of the world to the knock off sellers.

6. Adapt to market changes and trends

In business, you have to adapt or die. By allowing your business to trudge along, doing the same thing in the same way you leave yourself wide open to competitors who are willing to be innovative and to move with the times.

7. Provide exceptional customer service

Businesses which produce knock off products often aren't interested in customer service. People like to do business with other people they can trust: that may not apply to sellers of knock-off products, but it should apply to you. If it does, you have nothing to fear from product knock offs.

Summary

While it's impossible to completely eliminate product knock offs completely, it is possible to respond to them in such a way that your own sales don't suffer. This article provides seven steps to help you make sure that your products and service are able to stand up to the competition.

Robert Moment is an innovative business strategist and author of , "It Only Takes a Moment to Score" and upcoming book "Invisible Profits: The Power of Exceptional Customer Service" published in Fall 2006. Visit

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The Latest Trends In Handbags

By Cathy Peterson

Your handbag is more than a place to stash your lipstick, wallet, and cell phone. It is a personal

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statement and a fashion accessory. Women change handbags to fit the season and the latest style. So what are the trendiest handbags today? Read on to find out.

Vera Bradley handbags are a hot commodity. Instead of the more traditional leather, these handbags are one of three fabrics. The main line is quilted cotton and they come in a wide array of patterns, sizes, and styles. They are also washable, which can be a big plus for those whose handbags have seen better days. On the flip side, cotton is not as durable as leather either, so your bag may not last as long and in a rainstorm, the purses will soak through. There is also a line of silk bags, and microfiber as well.

Dooney and Burke is a perennial handbag favorite. They have a wide array of styles and materials, including both leather and fabric styles. This is one brand that has a lot of knockoffs, so be sure you are buying from a reputable merchant. Dooney and Burke has bright, brash styles that will appeal to the younger set, like Tattoo and Splash Denim, as well as their more classic styles in brown and black leather, muted microfiber tones, and nubuck.

Gucci handbags are another favorite target for knockoffs, and the real thing is expensive, but fans will tell you they are worth it. Their 2006/2007 Fall/Winter line marked their 85th anniversary and was dominated by several solid white bags and bags with a large Gucci logo in green and red. Their Spring/Summer line for this year includes various styles of bag featuring a fabric patterned with topiaries, and one decorated with pictures of horse bits, as well as a couple of animal prints.

One of the hottest names in handbags right now is Fendi. If you can't shell out the nearly \$10,000 for their White Mink Spy Bag, or the somewhat more reasonable \$3000 for the squirrel version, there are some that are more affordable, closer to \$250 or \$300. While that may still seem steep for most of us, if you're a true handbag enthusiast, it's a bargain. In addition to the fur options, they also have leather, denim, and even crocheted styles.

Whatever your personality, style, and outfit, there is a handbag to match it.

Cathy Peterson writes about Handbags Coupons,

<http://www.luggagebagsetc.com>

and

<http://www.OnlinePromotionCodes.com>



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