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Tune Into What Customers Really Want

By Patsi Krakoff, Psy. D.

Customer relationship marketing is powerful in theory, but troubled in practice. We need to take time to figure out how and why we are undermining our own best efforts.

Perhaps we're overlooking the fundamental elements of a good customer relationship program. With the means to connect with customers easily, maybe we're rushing to cash in on the potential rewards, while forgetting the essentials of all relationships: intimacy and trust.

Close examination reveals that relationships between companies and consumers are suffering. U.S. satisfaction rates are at an all-time low. Complaints, boycotts and growing unhappiness with big corporations are strong indicators that most CRM isn't working.

Ironically, the very steps marketers are taking to build relationships with customers are often responsible for destroying these connections. Companies may delight in learning more about their customers and providing services to please them, but customers are fed up. They're tired of irrelevant survey questions, overwhelming product choices, features they'll never use in phone plans and cars, and rebate-driven buyer reward programs.

The New Frontier: Mining the Internet

With the proliferation of online stores that complement traditional outlets, companies now have a tremendous source of information about consumers' preferences. Because a traditional store may not always have a product on its shelves, purchase results are not always a good measurement of desires. Online stores can track consumer demand patterns more precisely, as they offer extensive ranges of products to national and global customers.

The web is more than a sales channel; it is a powerful means of collecting data in real time. The Internet is truly the new frontier in connecting with the customer, offering a huge opportunity for companies to improve customer relationships.

The New Social Marketing: Buzz and Word of Mouth

Tune Into What Customers Really Want

Where does marketing enter the mix? Some experts claim the old days of "push" marketing are over, where a company shoved a one-way message to customers via print or TV. Corporations are asking themselves just how much return on investment there really is from a 30-second Super Bowl commercial.

Consumers are turning away from media and, instead, tuning into each other. Engagement and word of mouth marketing are the buzzwords of this new era. Customers are doing their market research online and listening to each other. Unfortunately, many marketers continue to look at engagement in a one-sided way.

Corporate blogs have become an excellent resource for CEOs and others to connect with customers in a personal manner. In spite of the possible pitfalls in opening two-way communication between the public and employees, there is much to be gained by being personable, accessible, authentic and

transparent.

Customers are already communicating with each other online about products and experiences with your company. If you can join the conversation in a real way, in real time, you'll have an advantage over those who remain silent and inaccessible behind corporate doors.

Now there is finally a way to discover what customers want, and a way to connect with them authentically. But there are risks involved in being honest and transparent. Will you and your company take the risk?

Patsi Krakoff, Psy. D. writes articles for business and executive coaches and consultants. She writes articles on leadership and executive development, blogging and Internet marketing. Subscribe to get her ezine Savvy eBiz Tips for the inside edge to grow your business online.

<http://www.savvyebiztips.com>

Guitar Tuning Tips

By Edward D Cupler

Most new guitar players and even some experienced ones have trouble staying and playing in tune. I'll try listing here some of the common mistakes and there solutions.

When putting new strings on your guitar you must always make sure you stretch them as you tune them to pitch. I always hold them down on the neck around the 24th fret with my left hand while pulling them away from the guitar body with my right hand. You don't have to use too much muscle, a few firm tugs should do the trick.

Whenever you tune a string down in pitch, be sure to use the string stretching technique described above. Remember ALWAYS TUNE UP! It's always better when tuning down, to get close to the note,

Tune Into What Customers Really Want

stretch the string and then tune up to the intended pitch.

You should purchase a quality tuner from a music store like

zZounds.com

. You don't need to spend

your life's saving. An inexpensive tuner should be fine to start out. Remember, this thing will be traveling to gigs and jam sessions with you. I would recommend a good Boss tuner or Korg tuner. Both brands have low cost tuners that will do the job just fine.

If your guitar has a tremolo bridge, always remember that each string that you tune will go down in pitch as you tune the next string. One solution to this is to over tune the strings. That is to say, you may need to tune your low E string to an F in order to have it be around an E note by the time you finish tuning the other strings. Over time you'll get a feel for how much you need to over tune each string and it will become second nature.

If you play in a band, it is a good idea to always tune to the same pitch. Standard pitch is 440 but some bands like to tune down to 430 or even 420 for the heavier sound or vocal reasons or both. My point is that if you're practicing at 430 then you have a gig and your band tunes to 440, everything will suddenly sound different, your singer might not be able hit all the notes he or she did at practice, your solos might even sound wrong. This is because everything is now a half step higher in pitch. Make things easy on yourself, pick a pitch and stick with it, at practice and gigs.

Free online guitar lessons presented by

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Guitar Tuning Tips
YOUR DRUM (Poem)

What Market Research Will Tell You
Guitar Strings – Part 1
Success Tips for the Sales Professional

Web Copywriting Tune-Up Kit
How to play a Guitar
Email Marketing in 2006
Super Six PHP Scripts
How To Create HOT Information Products



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