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What Are You Fishing With? Lure, Bait and Gear

By Catherine Franz

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A 10-step exercise for services professionals to evaluate clients...

Fly fishing — it doesn't work, does it? When I first watched someone fly-fishing, they released the line and fling it far out into the water. No sooner had the fly hit the water was it being reeled back in. Even today, I still don't understand how this method catches any fish. Yet it does. The results had an opportunity to occur because the line was pitched.

Fly fishing looks like so much more work compared to the worm, bobber, sitting on a camp chair, day dreaming, an occasional inconsequential conversation, sipping on a beer (okay root beer for family friendliness), relaxing and waiting for the bite. The energy is more comfortable yet the results less active — maybe, maybe not.

If you talk to a fly-fisherman, they claim there isn't anything better. And the same is uttered from a by-the-seat-of-the-pants fisherman as well (cute description huh?).

Doesn't this sound like one marketing pitted against the other.

What makes the two different? Technique? Yes. Water type — salt or fresh? Yes. Type of fish? Yes. Equipment? Yes. Supplies? Yes. Or is it the bait? Yes.

What Are You Fishing With? Lure, Bait and Gear

The right answer is "all of the above."

You can also throw in the temperature, weather, and time of day. Everything depends on the right combination in the right order. You don't want to toss out the fly before the line. Well, I guess you can. But you miz—as—well kiss it goodbye.

Or as my Grandmother used to say: Don't throw out the bath water before the bath.

Marketing is not any different than fishing. If you are

tossing out the wrong hook to the right fish, they are not going to bite. If you have the right fish and hook, and the wrong technique, maybe a prayer or two will work. The results might trickle now and then. Yet, not the results you need.

This is why marketing experts emphasize the importance of knowing your target market. If you don't know who you are trying to catch, you are forever going to be trying different lures, hooks and techniques. Eventually, wearing you down and keeping you chasing the next best thing to come along that just might work.

You can't catch flounder in fresh water or blue gill in salt.

Stop throwing out the fly without the line. Start knowing what bait they like to eat, what line spooks them, what is their timing for buying, and especially what type of fish.

Start with this exercise for service professionals:

Start the exercise by hand to get the "feel" of it. Then move the process into a spreadsheet to continue its growth and your clarity.

Step 1: Grab a blank sheet of paper. Turn the page sideways — landscape.

Step 2: You are going to making many vertical columns so write small.

On the left, create the first column. Record the name of

What Are You Fishing With? Lure, Bait and Gear

each one of your clients that you remember off the top of your head. Keep it simple and write just the name you remember. It could be just their first name, company name, or a nickname or label you privately gave them. Don't be kind be truthful.

Step 3: Second column, title it "M/F." You guessed it, "male or female." Now, proceed down the column and write the answer.

Step 4: Third column, title "M/S/D/U"=married, single, divorced, unknown. Continue down the column.

Step 5: Continue making columns for additional categories you know about your clients. Create a column for age or age group. Location, US, UK, Australia. If all the same, skip the column. Number of children. How long a client. Total revenue for the past year. Service type. How did they find

you?

Step 6: Add new distinctions and details over the next few days or week as you remember. Set aside the first five minutes of the day to add to the list or as you remember.

Step 7: If you find some information missing, contact the client or past client and ask.

Step 8: Look for similarities, for instance, 90% males, single, or divorced. Some of these patterns are going to be obvious and some aren't.

Step 9: Place a "*" or highlight your ideal client or clients.

Many times, and without knowing it, because you are just glad for the business, the fish pick you.

Step 10: If you couldn't find "the ideal client" then for some reason you aren't attracting them. There are some things you need to change, either inside yourself or out, probably both. Find the gap between the two? What do you need to do or be differently in order to attract the preferred type of clients?

Describe the type of ideal client you want. Place as much detail to them as possible, including revenue. What do they

What Are You Fishing With? Lure, Bait and Gear

want that you aren't expressing you have? What do they want that you don't have and need to change?

At some point during this process you will want to convert this to a spreadsheet for ease of use. Start when the information feels it needs too.

This isn't a requirement, you may want to stop as soon as you see that you aren't expressing what the client is willing to buy or some characteristics or type of service you don't provide that the client must have in order to do business with you. If this is the case, you can stop here and work on what needs to shift or change.

Feeling some reluctance in taking the time to do so? You will not be the first.

Jim, an insurance agent from Arizona, sent me an e-mail after his attendance on a teleclasses with this exercise.

"Darn, Catherine, you're good. The exercise ate at me all night. I gave in and did the exercise this morning, even

though last night I was convinced that I already knew all the answers. Today, I discovered major holes in my marketing. Just by closing one of these holes today sales increased. I look forward to continuing the exercise. Thank you for your patient e-mail and letting me move through my denial and seeing that thinking its all in my head and writing it down is two different things."

This exercise deserves repeating regularly. You can use the results of this exercise as a measurement when reviewing your yearly goals. Or comparing one year to another.

For first year businesses, I recommend completing this exercise once every three months. After the first year, shift to twice a year. After three, once a year. Or before and after a new service or product is introduced.

Fishing From Your Kayak? Here Is Some Gear You Might Need

By Niall Barco

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As a kayaker, you might not always want to run the white water. Sometimes, you want to take it easy and do some fishing.

If you plan to fish from your kayak, you will need some necessary gear and accessories. Kayak fishing gear is easy to shop for and fun to use! You will find a variety of gear to make your kayak fishing trip that much smoother and organized.

The access bar is the first accessory that you must buy. The bar attaches to either side of your kayak and is where you can hold your fishing rod and GPS system, if you own one.

Serious fishers also often invest in seats. You will probably find yourself sitting in your kayak for long stretches of time. Seats will come in handy during these times.

Bait tanks and anchors are two other fishing-gear requirements. When you find that hot fishing spot, you know you want to stay there, which will make your anchor come in handy! Bait tanks are excellent if you fish for minnows. Depending on the style of fishing you are practicing, you may or may not need these items.

Fishing gear is essential, especially because you are fishing from a small boat. The key to this is to make sure everything is as organized and compact as possible. This will help you feel that you have plenty of room and, therefore, much more comfortable. Gear for kayaks is designed with organization and practical use in mind.

You will find some awesome gadgets for your new kayak fishing adventure! Convert your kayak into a professional fishing boat with only a few accessories that can add fun to your fishing trip.

You will soon be able to combine two of my favorite pastimes – fishing and kayaking – and be having a great time.

You will be able to find such fishing gear at online kayak and fishing retailers.

You can find great deals, tips and news, information and reviews about

at

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