

Who to Who Sales Toolkit

Marketing and Relationships



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The role of Marketing is to create awareness and comprehension.

Marketing is the analysis and strategies that 1) create value for customers, 2) successfully differentiate and position companies in the marketplace, and 3) profitably present companies, their products and their services.

Relationships are at the heart of selling. Strong relationships enable trust, and from a foundation of trust customers are inclined to buy.

Marketing is an integral component for building relationships. When marketing is done well, more relationship opportunities can develop. When marketing is done well, current relationships are better informed and have a more fully developed understanding of capabilities, expertise, and value. Good marketing and strong relationships are interdependent.

This interdependence is evidenced in the buying process, which has four successive steps.

- Awareness - I know who you are
- Comprehension - I not only know who you are, I know what you do
- Conviction - I know what you do, and I think you do it well
- Order - You do what you do well enough for me to give you my money

Marketing is most effective in building awareness and comprehension. It is a broader communications activity, informing on a wide scale who you are and what you do.

Relationship building is most effective in enabling conviction and generating orders. It is a 1:1 activity where customers become convinced about you and are willing to give you their money for products and services.

When developing your message think carefully about the essence of you and what you offer the world. Since relationships are very personal connections, then your marketing should communicate who you are. Have your message reflect your values, your perspective on others, and your focus on relationships. Develop your message; practice it; try it out with trusted allies. Hone your message. Your aim is to develop relationships, so you want to engage the listener. Cold or tactical messages produce clinical responses. Warm and personal messages produce opportunities to connect.

Tell Your Stories

Ask your customers to tell you their stories about their experience with you and your firm and the results of that relationship. What are the outcomes of their work with you? What issue were they solving? What benefits did they receive? What was the best part about working with you? What hurdles did you work to overcome?



Write these stories; record them; video them.

Share your stories through case studies, testimonials, YouTube videos, and videos on your website. By the way, videos are great for improving search engine optimization results because the search engines consider video to be new and robust content (and Google owns YouTube).

Thought Leadership

Positioning you and your firm as thought leaders in your industry is effective for displaying your expertise. Tools that build thought leadership:

- Articles
- White Papers
- Speaking
- Blogs
- Informative Newsletters (not publicity newsletters)
- Events (your events, not sponsoring someone else's event)

You don't need to be a media star.

Being a thought leader and communicating the stories of your success is a focused effort; it is not a broad media exercise. Again, remember The Sales Megaphone. You are telling specific groups of customers and prospects about yourself and what you do.

Social media is the great enabler in this effort. A simple e-newsletter with a customer story gets the message out to the people you want to reach. LinkedIn updates and Facebook postings keep you in front of your customers and prospects with information that is important to them.

One caveat – don't overtly sell. Being a thought leader is not about convincing someone that you are right. Being a thought leader is about demonstrating expertise and fresh thinking so someone can gain new ideas, and possibly conclude that you are right for them.

Focused Events (formerly known as Networking)

In today's business climate there is an increasing emphasis on networking. Connect with people; network; attend events. Be active. However, when it comes to building business and driving sales we don't get paid on activity. We get paid on results.

**Stop
Networking.**

**Build
Relationships.**

The challenge with networking is that its return on effort is limited. It is a matter of luck to meet a potentially good relationship. Pick any geographic locale and you will probably find at least one networking event taking place most every night of the week. Everyone is showing up somewhere, most

don't know each other, and the desired outcome is hopefully a fruitful connection. *"Who can I meet that helps me get what I want?"* When we think about it, the big winners in networking are the people that put on the events. They get the registration fees. They get the mailing list.

It's a poor use of your time to rely on serendipity and luck. Most people, when asked if networking works say, *"no."* If you want results, you need do something different. No speed networking. No association or chamber cattle calls. No elevator pitches: *"This is who I am; what can you do for me?"*

Instead, go to events in a focused and smart way: Figure out the events where your existing and desired relationships congregate. Attend those events. If you work with CEO's of smaller businesses, go to Inc. Magazine conferences. If you work with Chief Marketing Officers, go to American Marketing Association conferences. Do your research beforehand. If possible get the list of attendees. Set up appointments to meet them at the event, or have an event organizer introduce you. Plan your connections and you won't need to rely on luck.

Some Concluding Thoughts on Marketing

Marketing is about your expertise. Customers and prospects need to be aware and grasp your expertise so they can make the link between your expertise and their challenges. Remember, too, that expertise is one of the variables in The Trust Formula. Your marketing helps solidify your expertise, which facilitates building trust.

Marketing is not necessarily about spending money. Many marketing tactics are free to low cost. Generosity of thought is one of the most powerful tactics you can use, and it costs no money.

Marketing is about time. You should dedicate time to it because it is an essential part of the process of building strong and trusting relationships.