



Sales Strategies That Win Customers!

Top Sales Strategies That Win Customers And Make Sales!

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Planning A Marketing Strategy

It's often said: "A failure to plan is a plan to fail." This is very true when you have no marketing strategy and are relying on sales to come as they may. If you are doing an Internet business, you may even be focusing too much on generating traffic, thinking the numbers will automatically equal sales down the line. However, you might make no attempt to understand your visitors or plan a marketing strategy for them. Without this marketing strategy put in place, you are really not guiding your visitors into a relationship with you, you are hoping they will take the initiative to buy your products or services based on their own reasons, many which you might not even surmise. Then, you have no understanding of why your customers are buying or what might be a good offering for repeat buys. This is very much like working in the dark and you should make it a point to develop and test some marketing strategies so as to increase sales.

The Psychology Of Why People Buy

When marketers do market research they are often interested in their sales demographics. This tells them a lot about who their customers are and what offers might appeal to them more. If you are targeting teenagers, the same arguments and appeals you use with middle-age people most likely will not work, if not have the opposite effect of turning them off completely. It's very important to understand why each of the strategies works so that you can begin to customize it for your specific market demographic.

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Different people buy for different reasons. Some groups of people may want to be viewed as “smart and savvy” and others would prefer to be seen as “trend-setters.” Image and identity are some of the main reasons people network socially and also why they choose to buy certain products versus others. Even though there are some general strategies in marketing that apply to most offers, some of these offers will work better for some demographics than for others. That's why each strategy will detail the psychology of why that particular offer might appeal to someone and then you can decide if that fits in your demographic.

In general, the limited time factor is one thing that has proven effective with any offer that you choose to implement. This is why eBay auctions are so successful; they rely on the limited time offer to help boost the products appeal to a general audience. The psychology behind a limited time offer is based on the fear of loss that most people have. They don't want to feel as if they've missed out on something or they want to feel smart and special for being one of the few to get a limited time offer. In auctions, it's also about being competitive and better than another bidder.

The psychology of why people buy is also affected by the economic climate. When people feel rich, they tend to spend a little more and pamper themselves. When credit is tight and they feel poor, as in our present economic climate, they may need a little extra push to justify the purchase. In that case, a general technique of discount prices and special sales can be very effective, especially if you can compare it to other offers that cost much more than your own.

These are a few general reasons that make for a good understanding of marketing psychology, but for each of the seven offers we will describe, there is a particular reason they might appeal to your demographic, which will be analyzed with each offer.

How To Use The Sales Techniques

If you have no idea how to use a particular marketing strategy with your products and services, don't worry! We will go over in detail how to implement the marketing strategy in a way that is easy to understand and

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follow along. Step-by-step directions will lead you down the path of potentially bigger sales in no time flat.

Don't be afraid to make a mistake with any of these sales techniques. It's all part of the learning process. At worst, the offer may not work as you expected, and you will obtain valuable information on what works and what doesn't work for your particular customer base or audience. We can even show you how to limit your risks when you are using offers that may be somewhat wide-open. You do want to stick by your word when you make an offer, to build customer trust. A carefully crafted offer can not only bring in first sales, but can lay the foundation work for building a strong relationship with the buyer to reap customer loyalty later.

Customizing Our Techniques To Your Offerings

Although we can't cover every way a sales technique can be implemented, nor all of the products and services out there, by giving you a few concrete examples of how to apply the technique, you should be able to turn around and figure out ways to use it with your own market offerings. For example, we might tell you how to use The Gift Box strategy with book sales, but you don't sell books. The idea will still be the same but your gift box would be appropriate to include something that ties in with your market, not the book sales market. If you were selling infoproducts, then electronic equipment could end up being your gift box. If you were selling bookmarks, the book could be your gift box. It's all a matter of what you are trying to promote and what you want to associate your product with, using a specific sales technique.

Don't forget to consider your demographics when you are trying to customize the offering too. If you know your main customer base is from Australia, then you want to steer some of your offers to this demographic by appealing to their nationality. That can mean adding things into your offers that tie into their favorite national sporting events, hobbies, or even wild life. Remember that most people will buy a product that they identify with and this is part of your good marketing practice to make your offering irresistible.

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The Free Gift Offer

This strategy gets its name from the fact that you are wrapping your product in some sort of free gift that comes with your offering. It's a sort of take a bonus offer, except that the free gift typically encloses or makes the entire package extremely attractive. Rather than justifying the purchase on the product, some people might justify it based on the “gift box” it comes wrapped within. The more expensive the gift box that your product comes in the more your product is seen as valuable and worthwhile.

Just like a diamond rings comes with an appropriate felt gift box that highlights and amplifies the attractiveness of the product, so should the gift box you choose highlight and amplify the attractiveness of your offering. It isn't just a case of finding something interesting that people want and than combining it with your offering. The gift box should seem like it is a natural container for your product and thus be very subtle to the mind in how it is being influenced.

If you combine something that seems to have nothing to do with your product, but that is a popular product, it will be obvious what you are doing and the strategy will not be as subjective as you want it to be. You want people to justify buying your product, not justify buying the gift box. If they still want one of those gift boxes, they probably have already spent time arguing over themselves over why they should get one. If they now are given a reason to buy your product, and along with it comes a nice gift box, then they don't need to justify the luxury item, they just have to justify your offering.

Strategy

This strategy will not even appear to be a sales promotion, it can be that subtle. Although, associating your product with some other tempting toy is a way to help boost your image too. It does have a universal appeal, although you can carefully target the gift box for your particular demographic. Say, you

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are targeting business professionals for a series of courses that you wrote on marketing. What would appeal to them to have the most? You could offer your courses in nice briefcases or even pieces of splashy luggage. Of course, you are selling the course work, but they will notice the gift box it comes in and it will influence their decision to buy.

If your demographic is teenagers, maybe you'd rather wrap your offering in some electronic gizmo that appeals to their interests, like an Ipod they can show off to their friends. You do want to market your wares so you make a profit on the sale, including the cost of obtaining the gift box that it is wrapped in.

This marketing strategy is particularly effective if you are selling infoproducts. Infoproducts are virtual products that can be downloaded into electronics or online. If you've ever seen how little some of the infoproducts cost, you probably wonder how they make a significant profit. It costs them nothing to create copies of infoproducts and it costs nothing to deliver them. However, that also decreases the amount of profit they can get because people won't see them as being that valuable. Now, take the same infoproduct and market it by downloading it to an Ipod or a fancy USB flash drive, and the perceived worth shoots up, and so does the price you can charge for the same product.

It can take a little creativity to figure out what your gift box might end up being. You want something that will appeal to your demographics and also be associated with added value. If possible, you want this gift box to be so nice that the buyer turns around and brags to their friend's how they got it “for free” when they bought your offer. This is a way to generate referrals from a clever marketing strategy.

There's no limit to how splashy or big your gift box can be. If you want to offer your infoproducts on a laptop, for instance, that can be done too. You will have to find a demographic of people who want the free laptop and will buy your infoproducts because of that. And, you will have to find a wholesaler willing to sell you laptops at a discount too.

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You will also need to take account delivery of these gift boxes. So, the bigger the gift box, the more you might reserve this strategy for face-to-face sales opportunities. Otherwise, you will have to figure out how to get your gift boxes, with your product, to your customer and hope it doesn't break along the way.

Psychology

In a tight economy, it can be tough to justify going out to splurge on the latest luxury, no matter how bad you want it. Giving a customer a reason to buy your offering by putting it in a “hot” gift box makes the offer almost irresistible. This can work too if they are the type of person who may be able to justify spending money on things that improve their chances in the market (like a businessman) or improve their performance in school (like a college student), but has difficulty justifying a frivolous purchase, no matter how bad they want it. As always, you aren't waiting for the customer to find objections to buying your product, you want to give them a reason to close on the sale.

People also give more credibility and value to items that are associated with the latest hot sellers. If everyone on their block is talking about the newest cell phone and you find a way to wrap your offering in it, you are that much farther ahead in associating your name with an already successful product. If it is a reusable product, you will find that they have trouble letting it go and want to show it off to everyone.

This can work in your favor because in order to return your offering, they have to return the gift box that it came in too. So, say you offered a business owner some software to help with their home business and you put it in a great leather briefcase. In order to return the software, they have to return the entire package and the buyer may be unwilling to do that. This means fewer returns for you and better product association in the long run.

Implementation

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The steps to implement your desired gift box can vary depending on the offering and the gift box that is being associated with your offering. However, an example of implementing a gift box of a USB flash drive for infoproducts might use the following steps.

- Locate a wholesale supplier of USB flash drives with more space than you need for your infoproducts.
- Market your offering by highlighting the gift box association. For instance, this infoproduct comes with its own free, reusable, USB flash drive.
- Be sure to describe the gift box in all its glory and sell the benefits of it as well as your offerings.
- Decide whether you will do the loading into the gift box, or if you are willing to pay someone else to do it for you and drop ship it (that is an option).
- If you choose to install on your own, you will need to understand the technical issues of downloading software to a USB flash drive.
- Anticipate how the person will retrieve your offerings from the gift box by setting up some autorun programs that will automatically pull up your product directory when they plug the USB flash drive in.
- Quality test your offering if it is electronic to make sure that the package is in perfect working order before you ship.
- Package your offering so that it you secure it from potential damage during shipping.
- Insure the value of the package, when necessary.

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- Be sure your customer understands the limits of your support or guarantees for your offering in the gift box, so they don't come back to you when their laptop gets infected with a virus or similar.

Customization

A gift box can be easily customized to show your company's logo, if not on the outside, certainly on the inside. For instance, in the case of the USB flash drive, you might be able to get your company name or website URL stamped on the outside as a customization that reminds your customer how they got that nice USB flash drive they use so often.

Another way to customize a gift box offering is to let the buyer decide how they want it customized. This ties into the appeal of establishing their own identity and showing it off to others. So, maybe you can offer different colors or an assortment of different options for your gift box. If you have a drop shipper willing to offer multiple items and work with your accounts this way, it shouldn't be too much additional trouble for you.

However, if you are the type that wants to do everything themselves, then you want to be aware that the more options you provide the more work you will have to do to keep track of inventory, understand how to properly load your offering into multiple gift boxes, and different shipping requirements too. So, be careful when you are offering multiple ways to package the gift, unless you know that you have a third party drop shipper who can handle all of that for you.

Remember that the more in demand a gift box is, the more you can charge for your product or offering. Like the Ipod example shows, if they are selling like hot cakes, chances are your offering will sell quickly too because it is associated with a good product.

Lastly, keep in mind that some packaging is detrimental to the value of your product. For instance, we are seeing a loss of sales in packaged bottled waters.

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Water, of course, is the real product, but the plastic bottles made it convenient and trendy for a while. Until, the slow-down in the economy, people liked to be seen drinking bottled water. Now, there is more awareness that the plastic bottles these waters come in end up in landfills. Since the demographic for bottled water was typically health-minded yuppies, the packaging now becomes a real obstacle to buying bottled water. The reason is that the gift box is now associated with environmental waste and destruction. So, you will see these people moving away from bottled waters and to either portable, reusable, filtered canisters or choosing different options all together.

Here we see how the demographic can influence the value of the packaging too. Ecologically-sensitive people will not opt to buy something they know will contribute to pollution and waste in the environment. You have to know your demographics and be one step ahead of them so that you can provide your offering in an attractive gift box that fits the image of who they are.

Next time you are out shopping, see if you can identify some of the variants of this gift box offer. Mary Kaye is now catering to the ecologically-minded demographic by offering to recycle old Mary Kaye compacts. When you turn your old compact in, they are going to provide you with a new one that uses inserts. This not only puts a pleasant free gift in the palm of your hand, but it brands her make-up line as being environmentally-sensitive. It doesn't hurt either that the refills that will go into the new compacts will be Mary Kaye products. While Mary Kaye sells cosmetics, the packaging is now being aligned with a specific demographic of people who are supporting eco-friendly products.

3

I'll Scratch Your Back...

You've heard the saying: "I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine!" It's common sense to want to get a fair trade with your customers, but what about your competitors? Do you really want to be caught scratching the back of some of your competitors? Some people would suggest that's just not good business, but that's not true. You don't have to always seek to undermine and

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under-price all of your competitors to make a sale. You can choose to cooperate with them to make it a win-win proposition for both you. You just have to figure out which competitors will want to expand their sales as much as you do.

Strategy

This strategy takes a bit of chutzpah. You are going to want to approach one of your main competitors and offer to promote their product for them, if they allow you to tie it in with yours. You won't be selling their product for them to your customers, you will want to offer it as a free bonus and sell your own! You can then split the proceeds as a way to give your competitor some benefit for cooperating.

Now, why would a competitor offer to give you one of their products for free to offer to your clients, even if they might get half the revenues from your sales? Well, they're obviously hoping to expose your customers to their products. They may be willing to give you a sales promotional product that you can tie into your offers in the hopes that this will increase their sales too – from your customer base.

Now, wait a minute, you're probably thinking. Why would you want your competitor poaching your clients? Well, the truth is that your clients are probably already aware of your major competitors. It's very doubtful in this time frame of savvy consumerism that they haven't scoped out the other people who provide the same product or services you do. So, you aren't really telling your customers something they don't know. They may have already bought things from your competitors as well as you.

Now, you can also expand this strategy by offering to give your competitor free products or services from your lineup of products that they can promote with their own offerings, in exchange for a portion of the profits, or you can each choose to keep the profits of your own efforts, if you know that you will have reciprocal offers.

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Another reason why this type of strategy works is because you don't actually have to offer discounts to provide a draw to your product. In fact, you can even charge the same or more to get the free bonus, along with your product. So, if you are hesitant to start trying to attract customers by price wars with your competitors, this can provide an alternative to competition: cooperation.

Psychology

There is important consumer psychology at work here, but also it can spread to your competitor too. It can also have a dramatic effect on your own wealth consciousness. You can expect this type of business dynamic to start opening avenues that you may never have considered before, and it can really help to bring in the abundance mindset to you as well as everyone involved.

After all, if you are the type of person who believes there is not enough customers to go around, you believe in lack instead of abundance. If you believe that because your competitor got some business, then you can't also do business with the same customer, you are engaging a limitation mindset. So, the first person that this strategy will probably influence is you, and in a good way.

One of the biggest ways it will influence you is by helping you to widen your perception of who your customers are and how to effectively work with a variety of people, even some that may think they are your business enemies. By networking more, you find that new ideas are stirred and don't be surprised if your former competitor comes knocking at your door with an offer that you can't refuse.

At first, your competitors will obviously take you up on this strategy to steal your customers. But, once they start to see that you are actually creating

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business for the both of you, they might start to see things your way. This arrangement doesn't just get you new customers, it can also increase your competitor/partner's sales too.

Last, but not least, customers love these sorts of deals. Who wouldn't love to get to try out multiple products for the price of one? You've also made their lives easier by doing research on what your competing products are and given them a way to try them without having to figure out which ones are good. After all, if you are associating your product with one of your competitor's products, it shows that 1) You believe your audience will appreciate the competing product, and 2) You are confident that despite promoting your competitor's product that your company will still be their provider of choice.

Even if you lose a few customers, its highly unlikely these customers would not have eventually found out about your competitor anyways. And, remember, your competitor will eventually promote your items in their marketing too, if they are smart, and you might end up with some of their clients, meaning it will probably all wash out in the end *except* that sales will be up!

Implementation

The steps to implement your desired I'll scratch your back strategy can vary depending on the products or services you sell and the competing market that is being associated with your offering. However, an example of implementing this strategy might use the following steps:

- You find a competitor who might have similar offerings to your own.
- You contact that business person to tell them how both you and they can increase sales by cooperating for a short time on a specific offer.
- You both make an agreement, preferably in writing, as to how you will cooperate to offer each other's products to your customers.

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- You want to be sure that your competitor can fulfill the offer if there is a great demand.
- Look into automatic delivery systems, especially if you are dealing with an infoproduct give-away.
- Decide whether you are going to split the sales revenues and share them, or whether you each will keep your own revenues.
- If you choose to share, you will want to set up some electronic format to allow your competitor to see how many sales are made and what they can expect to be paid, even paying them automatically, if possible.
- Promote the offering in your marketing offers as a “free bonus.”
- Evaluate the price on your product and see if you can actually raise the price with this “free bonus.”
- Keep to your side of the promises too and treat your competitor as a customer, because at this point they are!

There's not much else to this offer. It's brilliant in its simplicity and just takes a bit of planning and audacity to propose it to your competitor first. They will probably think you have lost your marbles until they see how effective it is at generating sales for the both of you. If you have been doing market research for some time, you will probably already have a good idea of who your biggest competitors are. If not, this is the perfect time to start doing this type of market research. It will motivate you to learn more about other people's offerings and this can help you improve your own offerings.

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With sufficient planning, you can work up an offer that may be just the thing you, your competitor, and your customers have been looking for, but never found in one place at one low price. It will also build trust with your customers who will evaluate you differently, and with more integrity, for promoting a product that can be helpful to them, but may seem impossible to give you any monetary payback, when quite the opposite is true. Be prepared to have additional quantities of your primary product, and make sure your competitor can fulfill their side of the bargain, because sales will probably jump through the roof!

Customization

This strategy is very flexible in how you can customize it. It may seem that you will only be adding similar offerings, for instance one book from you and a different one from your competitor. But, the way to customize this is really much wider than that and you will find that this is a strategy that can really stir your creative juices.

Think about more than just products, you can also use this strategy with services too! For instance, you might sell a membership in your club or website for a specific amount, and throw in a free membership to your competitor's website or club too! Your competitor will realize the benefit of this offer immediately when they see more people signing up to their website.

It's not your responsibility to see that they convert to sales for them, that's their responsibility, but the odds are good they will reap additional sales. And, it really doesn't cost them anything to allow you to offer a free membership because many people even offer trial memberships to attract customers too.

Maybe your competitor wants to offer something for free, that he regularly offers to the people on his site, but he wants to do it on your site to target people in his demographics who are already buying similar products to his own. If that's so, you can approach them with an offer where they already use a freebie to attract business, now you give them the opportunity to use it to advertise on your site. It will be very hard for them to tell you "no."

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Don't forget to brand your freebie so that it promotes you when it comes time for your competitor to partner their offerings with your free giveaway. In that case, you will want to make sure it is something that is branded with your website, your company name, and if you can add additional offers there, do so. Again, you want this promotional item to create new client opportunities for you and to sell more of your own products. It's not really a freebie, it's a marketing promotional tool targeted to the demographic that both you and your competitor reach.

Even if you have some doubts, our advice to you is to just try it. Seeing is believing and even though it may defy your present mindset, the results will soon help you shift your reality to one of more cooperative ventures and an abandonment of lack thinking. Remember that the universe is big enough for everyone to claim their abundance and someone else's sale does not negate your own potential for success. Once you start to practice this type of abundance thinking, you will begin to attract more abundance in your life in the form of additional customers, higher sales, and more networking wealth within your primary area of business.

4

The Can't Lose Gamble

This is sort of a cross between two popular games you played as a kid: “I dare you...” and “I bet you...” Let's face it, we all want to feel lucky and gambling on the unknown and winning is like tempting fate. So, like in the case of the “I dare you...” game, you would dare someone to do something outrageous and when they didn't do it, you'd call them a coward or worse. In the case of the “I bet you” game, you were trying to show off your status or smarts by betting someone that they couldn't beat you at a game of your choice. Both of these games rely on the dare that you are going to do something outrageous if a certain gamble comes true.

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Except that in this marketing strategy, you are the one that is going to take on a bet that will seem like a completely outrageous dare to prove you wrong and cost you the price of your product or services.

You will basically be saying: "I dare you to prove me wrong, because I am going to gamble the value of my offerings on my belief that I'm right." The sillier the dare, the more people are likely to take you up on it. Just like when you were a kid and you started with "I dare you to eat a bug" and ended up graduating to things like: "I dare you to ask so-and-so on a date." Well, here, your gamble must seem like a genuine possibility that you will fail and actually be wrong. And, on top of that, people will want to rub it in a little by making you lose money, which won't happen if you do this right.

Strategy

In this strategy, you are going to guarantee that if a certain event happens, you will give your customers the product free (by returning their monies), or at least an additional product free. This type of offer appeals to just about everyone because people don't have to do anything extra to potentially end up with your product for free. Instead, it's a game of chance and many people put their money up to play a game of chance, just think of the lottery, it works on the same principle.

You want your gamble to reflect the market niche that is your corner of the market. Obviously, you don't want to gamble something on something completely irrelevant as it can quickly degrade into absurdity and your customers won't end up with any sort of brand recognition. So, you want to carefully reflect on your market niche and then provide a gamble that is in line with it and appeals to your customer base.

Say you are selling rain barrels in a drought. You could make the outrageous guarantee that if it rains so many inches by a certain date, that you'll give away the rain barrels for free. Or, if you don't want to do that, you can suggest that you'll celebrate by giving customers who bought rain barrels a weed trimmer for free, or some other product you are selling. Here you've tied your offer to an environmental concern that is potentially on everyone's mind.

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If you are in the business of selling lawn and garden stuff, and you've added rain barrels to your offerings, this can be an offer that appeals to your demographics. Odds are, that if it doesn't rain, you will be out money from people who won't buy your lawn and garden products. So, it's a good time to offer to gamble that you are willing to give away your lawn and garden tools, if it does rain so many inches by a certain date. This will spur the sales of the one item they may be likely to buy in a drought: your rain barrels. However, should the rain return, they now have the guarantee that they will get something else they might want for free.

It will seem like a deal that is too good to be true! Who do you think they will buy their rain barrels from? They will be hoping so badly for rain, that they'll come to your store and buy your rain barrels. Since no one can control the weather, it will be a high-risk gamble that you could end up losing money on, making your customers feel they got an even better deal!

However, your guaranteed gamble should be so specific, that you will know whether the inches rained will be measured by a certain lake level and on a certain day. It shouldn't be open to interpretation and it should definitely be tied to your niche market.

Psychology

Why would this strategy work? Why does the lottery work? It's based on the premise that people can get something for nothing, if they're just willing to take a little risk. So, in your own way, you are saying: "I dare you to take me up on this offer!" They will assume you are taking all the risk and they are going to either end up with a product or a free product.

This offer especially appeals to people who really like to take risks for the sake of big gains. This can be an entrepreneur, an athlete, or even activists.

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Appealing to the passion of the moment and engendering their participation ethos will put them right in the moment to buy your product.

In actuality, if you craft your offer properly, you can manage the risk so that if the gamble doesn't work on your behalf, you have insurance to offset the cost of your losses. Or, you can offer to give some infoproducts for free to buyers of a related product, if a certain event or something that you bet on comes true. This will still be seen as a great deal, especially if you normally sell the infoproduct for a high dollar amount.

Giving away an infoproduct is one of the safest ways to implement this strategy because you don't really have to pay to create a new one, you just make a copy. You don't have to pay to deliver it either as you can email it. And, it gives you an excuse for collecting the emails of people who may be purchasing a product from you that might not otherwise want to offer it to you. As long as they agree to this offer, you can add to the terms of the agreement that they agree that their email will be used to deliver the free product, if the event occurs, and to send other offers and promotional material. Then, if the event occurs, you do a mass mailing claiming shock and dismay, but you also have a whole lot more people on your direct contact list too. And, it cost you nothing to produce – even, if you lose the bet.

So, you can offer an outrageous offer and still make out like a bandit yourself!

Implementation

The steps to implement your guaranteed gamble strategy can vary depending on the products or services you sell and the competing market that is being associated with your offering. However, an example of implementing this strategy might use the following steps:

- You review your market niche and decide on some item that you want to sell.

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- Evaluate whether you can afford to have to give the item away for free if your guaranteed gamble goes against you, or whether you prefer to offer a freebie if that event occurs.
- If you choose an additional item, then make sure it ties into your market niche as well.
- Don't forget to count additional shipping costs if you decide to ship a new product, or send them an infoproduct so you don't have additional shipping costs.
- Think up the way you want to word your offer to make it seem like an unbelievable deal. Just make sure it is within your market and not something that isn't later associated with your company.
- Use words in your offer to describe your guaranteed gamble that invoke some of the fun and madness around your offer. We will discuss more of this in the customization section.
- Set up the offer on your website. It should be very explicit on the terms so there is little room for misunderstandings later.
- If you want, you can even pass it by a lawyer to make sure you are promising only what you think you are promising.
- To sign up for the offer, a customer should have to provide their email address and home address (for physical items) and agree to be contacted via email on updates, news, and more from your website.
- Don't use discounts with this offer, always suggest that you are giving away a full value product.

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- Keep track of who buys your product who may be entitled to a free product if you lose.
- Keep your customers glued to your website by fretting about the possibility that you might lose the bet and how close you are to losing it. This drives up traffic and gives you a captive audience to sell other products to during the time of the offer.
- Hedge your bet, if you must, with insurance.
- If you lose, be prompt about sending the free product and thank them for their participation in your promotion.
- Continue to promote your other products to these new customers, since they had to agree to those terms to participate.

Customization

The customization of this strategy is primarily done through the wording or the types of products offered. No matter what you choose, it should be intimately associated with your niche market. If you sell bicycles you don't want to give away underwear, unless it is sports biking shorts. If you offer sports equipment, you don't want to give away cooking pots because it 1) it won't appeal to your niche market, and 2) the free product won't remind them of you one bit later on. So, the purpose of picking items that are associated with your market is twofold. It should be so appealing that people think it is worthwhile and an unbelievable offer that would make them feel dumb for not taking you up on it.

Examples of possible offers for niche markets might be like the following:

If Tiger Wood wins the US Open in sudden death in 2013, I'll give you a commemorative stamped golf ball set for free (in this case, you would have

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lost, but you get the idea) if they buy a specific golf-related item from your sports store.

In the case of the drought, you know that people are checking the rain levels in their area when water restrictions start to hit. You can tie your offer to this if you are a lawn and garden store, making the drought a marketing tool for you when people won't normally be thinking about other offers in your store.

This offer would say: "Buying rain barrels in a drought is smart! But, what if it starts to rain? We're willing to give you the rain barrel for free (by refunding their money) if we get 20 inches of rain from January 1st to May 15th!

Further customization could be done to move your slow sellers, by tying them into your outrageous guaranteed gamble. If they don't sell anyways, by adding additional incentive to buy, you will get more orders. If you have to refund the money, odds are you can time it so it coincides with planting season and they're ready to start doing things with their gardens.

The time factor is the last way you can customize these offers, as shown above. If you are trying to move particular items by a specific date, then you can tie them into events on holidays like Christmas or Thanksgiving, as long as the offer matches some of your offerings and doesn't seem contrived. If you do something around Christmas, again, you have the advantage of gaining new customers at just the right time and offering them a free product may result in getting many more sales at just the right time.

5

Specials Bonus Offers

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This marketing strategy, unlike some of the others, can be used for affiliate programs too. Here, you are going to make your shoppers feel very smart for getting a bonus, but only if they buy a particular product you are promoting first. The reason for this is that you are going to quiz them on some aspect of this product that you sold in order for them to get their bonus.

Strategy

So, instead of promoting the product you are actually selling, guess what? You will be promoting the bonus offers. You will want to set up a sales page that talks about this great, free, bonus offer first, to hook the reader in to wanting your product. The bonus offer should be something related to the original product, in market niche, and it should be perceived to be something of high value, whether it actually costs that much to produce or not.

For instance, suppose you are marketing coursework on accounting. You could set up an affiliate offer that gives away tax or accounting software for free. The offer should be something that appears to be worth hundreds of dollars, even though, you yourself won't be paying that much. However, you want to promote free software and accounting programs special pack for people who bought your coursework, but with a catch. They have to answer a little question for you to prove they've done their homework with you on your original product.

Why are you making the buyers of your program jump through hoops to get your bonus? Well, because it makes them feel smart for getting the bonus. And, they won't be able to wait to tell their friends how much free stuff they got because they knew how to answer your question properly.

So, you've set up your sales page and the top of the page in big bright letters you should say: Answer this question below, and steal an additional \$400 worth of accounting and tax software for free!

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Then, immediately below in smaller letters let them know that they have to buy your original product to answer the question and get the free bonuses. The offer is only open to those customers who have already bought some original product that you are mentioning on this site. And, if they own that product, they are about to cash on an unbelievable bonus only open to those people who can answer the question correctly.

Then, ask the question and remember to tie it to your original product. So, for the coursework, you would say that in the coursework video entitled “Taxes” what was the word that Joe Smith used to describe tax time at the beginning of the video? Frantic, maybe was the word that you want them to put into this mini-quiz to get the bonus offer.

Psychology

You might be wondering how this works to increase sales when you are just giving away a bonus. Well, the strategy is not to offer a bonus to those people that have already bought your product, although on the surface it seems that way. And, to the average reader, it won't even come through that you are actually looking for new customers who are still trying to make up your mind to buy.

The sales page may even be completely unassociated with your website, and someone may stumble onto it without even having heard about your coursework at all. Maybe they Googled taxes and up came your offer. Here they get a glorious description of a bonus offer only available to buyers of a particular product. Now, they'll be wondering, if the bonus is so great, how much better will your coursework be? Why not buy the coursework, get the bonus, and feel good about getting two things for the price of one? The fact that you aren't just giving a bonus away to your customers, but you actually make them work for it also provides additional incentive to buy, for people who consider themselves smart shoppers.

There's also a component that you are one of the few people who saw the offer and got the answer right, therefore you belong to a club of people who have

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proven to have the smarts to win the nice things in life. It's a way of belonging or identifying with intelligent people who get good deals.

Don't forget that your quiz topic can be geared to the two different motivators of sales performance: fear and desire. This can help them want to avoid loss or experience some sort of pleasure from having the right answer. Don't underestimate the power of psychology, even when it comes to a single question. The question doesn't have to be about a boring fact, it can be something like: "What did Ann Smith say on page 21 that was the #1 way people save money on groceries?" Obviously, the reader may not know the answer, but their interest might be piqued enough to learn how to save money on groceries that it appeals to aversion to loss psychology, and thus they buy your product because of the bonus and the question that hooked them in.

Implementation

The steps to implement your specials for smart shoppers strategy can vary depending on the products or services you sell and the bonus that is being associated with your offering. However, an example of implementing this strategy might use the following steps:

- Pick a bonus product or package that is distinctive and specific enough for you to use to develop a quiz questions for your customers and that you can afford to give away. Make sure it is perceived to be valuable for your market niche.
- Pick a related product from your line that you want to increase sales on or to promote.
 - Make note if it is an affiliate offer or your own product.
 - Write up a sales page promoting the bonus product.

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- After describing in glowing terms the bonus offer, immediately put down that the offer is only open to those who buy the associated product from you because they need to answer a quiz question relating to the other product to get the bonus product.
- Make sure you put a link to the regular-priced item so they can buy your offer to participate in the bonus offer.
- Then, on the sales page, put a very specific question associated with your regular product. For instance, on a particular page, what was the five-letter word to describe certain shoppers? The answer might be “smart.”
- Set up an area where customers can automatically download your bonus product if they get the answer right, if the bonus products are infoproducts and your offer is your own.
- Otherwise, you will have to make a thank you page for the correct answer page where they can plug in the receipt number of the affiliate offer before you take them to the free bonus.
- Check around for scripts that you can install on your website, if you want to automate this without programming it from scratch.

This strategy, unlike other offers, requires a bit of upfront planning and programming. If you have an online presence you will want scripts or to hire a web developer to help you install the scripts. So, you have to put up a little more money to get this strategy up and running than the other offers. But, once you have it up, you can use this strategy with multiple products and bonus offers, just setting up their own individual sales pages.

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Customization

This strategy works for when you are trying to increase sales for a particular product, or even when you just want to draw attention to multiple products on your website, without being specific. People love a good brain teaser, and web quizzes are very popular. Or, if you are in a market niche that might need to educate consumers, you can offer a special bonus to people who do a quiz on some aspect of your business.

For instance, say you are having slow sales but lots of traffic on your site. You can do a special for smart shoppers on one product and this will increase the chances of getting more sales. However, what if there is no traffic coming in? How do you expect to get sales with your special for smart shoppers when not enough of them are showing up? Obviously, you can also use the quiz questions to attract an audience of smart shoppers who are in your demographic. These would tend to be general, informational quiz questions that you promote in other areas of the Internet.

You would post the quiz and then you would go to relevant portals with people within your demographic marketing niche and post the fact that you have a fun quiz up to test how much they know on a specific topic. If they answer all the questions right, they get a freebie! You can expect lots more traffic with this strategy and now that you have people who like to be challenged and their email addresses, you can continue this type of marketing with email notifications and specific products.

For that reason, don't limit this strategy to the WWW alone. You can use the same strategy as a fun game in your newsletter, or even send out a postcard near seasons when people might have a higher interest or more money in their pockets to spend on you. This keeps your name in front of potential customers and adds some fun to your site too.

Why not try this approach to generate repeat sales? Say, someone comes to your site and buys a product that did not have a bonus offer. When you

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package that item or deliver it online, why not tell them that they might be interested in another offer that comes with a free bonus? All they have to do is answer a simple question, once they buy the product.

This strategy is so effective and easily customizable, that you will soon start to see creative ways to use it to generate more than sales, but also a captive audience. Say, you want to host a large, paid, seminar where you intend to educate and promote your coursework, but you want to guarantee a number of people in attendance for the seminar.

You can put up a sales page with your coursework and explain that for those that come to the paid seminar offered at such and such a place and time, that you will provide them with a free bonus for registering and paying ahead of time and answer one simple question on the registration form. That question can then be used for marketing research to better target the sales of the products you intend to promote for sale in the seminar. And, of course, you know how big a crowd to expect, and how many new customers you might have for future marketing projects.

Educational types of questions can help your audience to learn why your services are important and how they differentiate from other providers of the same product or service. For instance, say you are a real estate agent specializing in foreclosure. You put up a quiz that says: "Choose the five different ways you can forestall foreclosure" and receive a free bonus "How to Make Money in Foreclosures." That free bonus may, in fact, be a promotional brochure that explains some of the ways your services can help people who are facing foreclosure or for investors who are buying them.

Remember that there are many different scripts out there for a variety of different quiz formats. The simplest special for smart shoppers would only have one question that relies on buying another product to know the right answer. However, once you start expanding this strategy, you might want to figure out how to use different quiz formats to make the game more fun and to continue to mine this strategy without getting boring or predictable. You are dealing with people who like to be challenged, so that means you want to have something up that will appeal to them, not just the same old thing.

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6

Top Secret Clubs

It's very flattering to the ego to be invited into a secret club. It gives one a sense of belonging and specialness that can be irresistible to deny. So, why not use the same type of need for belonging or approval to create an offer that is irresistible to people looking at your products online? This is much easier than you think, because the technology of the WWW is all about coding behind the page of text.

The programming language of web pages primarily is HTML (HyperText Markup Language), for static pages. These are pages that do not rely on backend databases to generate new pages, but always remain the same. When you program a link for another web address (URL), you use HTML to place special coding in the page that will take people to another page. It's this special feature of HTML that can make programming a simple secret door to a private secret club very easy on the Internet.

Strategy

The strategy is to provide a bit of fun and the cool factor to your offer. It won't just be the secret door that is viewed as cool but there is also a feeling of "being cool" that one gets for being a special customer to get invited through the secret doorway entrance to the secret club.

You will want to invite some segment of your market niche to the secret club, via a special secret door programmed into some part of your sales page. The code will not appear obvious to the average reader, but it will be something that you have to be told about, either in a special notification email to that segment of your customers.

You may want to reward your best customers with a special bonus, just for buying over a certain amount of goods or services from you. Maybe you want

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to provide information on the link to those people who attended a particular seminar or event. However, you don't want to do it in a way that everyone has a chance to play, so to speak, just a few select people who you've chosen to receive the information they need to pick up their free bonus offers.

You will be offering this strategy online, in customizations, you will learn how to do it for your offline customers too. The idea is to put in some sort of secret code that a customer must recognize to be able to access a bonus or discount offer. This tells you several things: who is taking the time to read your website or literature, and whether those incentives work with your segment of the market or not. We will discuss exactly the type of coding you need in your HTML to get the results you want in the implementation section of this chapter.

Psychology

The psychology works on a two-fold principle here: recognition and the desire to be part of an exclusive group. Maybe your site doesn't offer a membership program for sale, but it doesn't mean people can't earn points based on how much they buy to give them access to special offers. This can build in customer loyalty and give your customers the feeling that they are highly appreciated.

It's like a grading system whereby you grade your customers and decide which ones should be allowed into your secret club or not. All the customer has to do is fulfill some basic requirements based on their activity on your site. You can even discuss the types of offers your special customers have received in appreciation to help build up a little envy and cause others to want to join the secret club.

If you want to give an added oomph to this designation of a special type of member, you can even provide special icons to a member that they see when they log in, so they can see how far they have to go to join a special club within your website. Or, if your site is a membership club that offers people to view other people's screen names, you can add the icons next to the screen

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names. This adds some form of elitism to the website and impresses other people who might feel they want to become a higher level of customer too.

One player that does this very well is eBay. They use the designation of Powerseller with icons to help distinguish people who use their services more than others. They offer people in this special club access to more products, services, and discounts on fees that regular members do get access to.

They, however, cleverly disguise the name from being “powercustomer of eBay services” to “Powerseller” of their own products. Well, if they are selling more on eBay, let's face it, they are buying more on eBay too and generating more commission sales for eBay too. So, the designation of being in a special club makes them appear powerful and savvy. Yet, the one who really benefits from this arrangement is eBay, who now understands which customers to focus more of their resources on so they can generate higher profits.

So, do be careful what you name your club. You want to name it something that implies that the customer is powerful or smart or has a high status, in comparison to other members or customers on your site. You don't want it be looked on as a bribe, but rather as recognition of the high worth of certain members to your business.

Implementation

The level of difficulty to implement the invitation to a special club strategy depends on how complex you decide to make it. Are you just going to have one level of distinction or multiple memberships available? Are they going to be free or paid? What products or services are you going to offer to set these customers apart and also provide you with more marketing opportunities? Do you know how to program HTML or will you need to hire someone? Do you need to add special programming to keep track of usernames and passwords for a membership site? As you can see, this strategy can be as simple or as complex as you decide to make it. The point is still the same, you want to invite people to a secret club where they get goodies that others don't get.

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The steps to implement your invitation to a secret club strategy can vary widely, depending on what you choose to implement. However, an example of implementing the simplest form of this strategy is given below:

- Set up a sales page that looks just like all your other pages. You will be selling some product or service there and it should show no indication that there is a special offer hidden within it.
- Add HTML coding to the page on either an image, a period in a sentence, a dash, or an exclamation point that will take people to your bonus offer or discount page.
- The HTML coding for the sentence with the offer will look like this if you are using it with an exclamation point:

It makes me feel special and smart to know that there is a code I can access at the end of this sentence by clicking on the exclamation point `!`

Of course, your sentence will not indicate that there is a special offer, it will simply be a sentence that seems ordinary, like the rest, except for the extra coding in the HTML to create a secret back door.

- In the case of a discount offer, set up the discount page to show an electronic coupon code they can use when filling out the sales order page that they just left. They can write down the coupon code and get an additional percentage off the stated price on the sales page.
- In the case of a bonus offer, they won't even have to buy the product on the sales page to get the appreciation gift for already having met your requirements to be included in the secret club. If you want to

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offer an appreciation bonus offer, then you can have code that you set up for the secret back door take them straight into the a download are to get the secret appreciation gift.

- Finally, you can offer a bonus offer for those that buy your product, similar to the specials for smart shoppers offer. Here, you will have the secret back door take them to a different sales page where the bonus offer is included for going through the back door and they can order from there.
- Since the search engines will crawl all the web pages that are on your site unless you tell them not to, we suggest that you use additional coding on the secret pages to tell the search engines not to crawl the page. This keeps out opportunists who aren't in your secret club by finding it simply by getting it as a result in their search engine query. You can do this by modifying the robots.txt file in your website area.
 - In the robots.txt file you will want to include the following:

User-agent: *

Disallow: /mywebsite/myspecialoffer.html

(The asterisk lets ALL search engines know to ignore this web page.)

- Then, you will send out an email notifying people in the market segment that you've identified to be power buyers, and let them know that there is a special offer for those people you want to appreciate or empower.
- There are other ways to keep out potential opportunists from your page, but they are too complex to get into. You can secure the site with .htaccess files and set up security policies for members, but that will most likely require a hardcore web programmer to implement correctly.

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Customization

You can customize this strategy, as mentioned before, to include multiple products, multiple membership levels and secret clubs. The more complex you make this, the more you will most likely need to hire a programmer to do it online. However, you can also customize this strategy to work with it offline and keep track of things manually until you can afford to hire the services of a professional programmer. The difference in costs of mailing versus the cost of hiring a programmer may be enough to get you to decide to do it this way.

So, remember getting AAA membership postcards in the mail that you could get a free bonus offer if you read the entire letter and found the secret way to get more bang for your buck? It's the same idea except that the secret club is not as driven by a class distinction than by a smart shopper distinction. Either way, you can use this idea to create your own marketing campaign that offers your present customers the chance to either upgrade their membership, and get a special bonus, if they read the letter and find out how to mail or email back their acceptance by including either a special phrase in the email, removing a sticker and placing it on a special place on the return form mailed back, or getting sent to your website where they can find the back door on a membership page, instead of a sales page.

When you use offline methods, you will want to work with simple formats like a postcard and try to figure out things that appeal to your market segment. You will want to keep track of your membership offline and this eliminates the need for security or passwords and user name tracking that you need online. As you grow your membership, you may decide it's time to offer some online benefits too. But, until then, you may find that this type of invitation to a secret club is less complex and easier for you to handle than an online one that requires some upfront costs on programming and technical support.

It's nice to know that you do have the option to do whatever you want to customize this offer, even sending out special membership cards to people offline, instead of using icons, to get them to identify with your products and services. If you also have a retail store, as well as an online presence, you can use the cards that collect stamps every time a customer buys to help people receive special discounts and promotions. The idea is still about the same and

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can be included with your online offers too to create interest in your website offerings.

7

Somebody Mentor Me

This strategy is great for products or services you are thinking about creating or offering, but want to gage the market demand first. Even though your offer goes out as a plea for help or mentoring, it is really going to help you define who you should target first for sales and how you can include information that is relevant to this market segment.

You are going to want to make the plea for help as personal as you can make it, so that it appears you've only sent it to a small number of people whose opinion you value highly. A person is more likely to respond if they feel the plea is directed specifically to them, versus a group. So, you will be using some technology to help you make the plea personal, while giving them a nice thank you for agreeing to mentor you with your problems.

Strategy

The strategy is simple to implement but requires an understanding of how to reap the rewards of getting mentorship from your customers. You don't want to assume that the entire goal is to sell a product immediately. In fact, this strategy tends to work well for products that have not even been created yet. You are in the process of creating them, and once you get input as to what your market wants, you can alter the product to suit the market's demands.

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So, here, you are sending out a mass email to people who already signed up to your site and/or bought some of your products. The purpose of this email will be to ask for help with a new upcoming product that you are developing. You can suggest the product is complete, but may have missed something and you want it to be comprehensive. For that reason, you are contact this specific individual to see if there are additional things they would like to see in your topic that you can include in the upcoming, to-be-released product.

Do not send out a mass email to people who you get off a list, because you will be spamming them. Also, it is quite clear, that even though you can use their first name, that you have no previous relationship with the person and so it makes your “mentor me” request seem pathetic and manipulative. Stay clear of using this approach in frameworks that will insult a recipient's intelligence or come off as a stupid trick. There are already enough people out there who think adding a personal name to a mass spam email will make them a sale.

More likely, it'll get them reported to spam abuse.

In the letter, you will address your customer by name by adding programming that uses your customer database to merge into a form email letter. If you've never done this before, you can open Microsoft Word and look up merge mail letters. It's the same concept. You take a database of names and you create a form letter. Where the person's name would go, you include coding in the template which is usually \$firstname (or the field name in your database next to a \$ sign). When you actually send the email letter, the system will pull the correct information from your database, or contact list, so each person receives an individual plea for mentoring. The beauty of doing this online is that you don't have to do separated mailing labels and stuffing of envelopes to get this very personal approach to work online.

At the end of the letter, which we will go over in the implementation section of this chapter, you will add a postscript telling people who read your email letters that they will get a special thank you from you for participating. If they do email back, you will have set up a special email address in your website to receive these replies and to autorespond with your special thank you, which can be a discount or a bonus offer.

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We do need to discuss a little more about the strategy, in terms of what more you can get out of this besides a sales. You are actually set this up to take reservations to a product you haven't even created yet. Minimal response will mean that you probably need to change the topic or choose to abandon the project all together. Once you receive your replies, you will read each one and use them to help develop a fantastic product that meets the needs of everyone who responded. If you hear the same thing over and over, you will know that these are the things you need to really nail to make it an irresistible offer. The big issues that your mentors identify will be the same issues that will sell your product when you develop the sales page too. They will be your benefits. The feedback is even invaluable for helping to improve other products in your lineup too, which should increase sales in those areas.

Finally, you will be able to send the people who responded to your plea for mentorship, a specially targeted email offering them a discount or bonus offer, if they decide to buy the final product. You can even set it up as an early bird special because you appreciate their input so much.

Psychology

The psychology of this offer should be very subtle. It appeals to people who have a strong service orientation. It can also appeal to people who want to feel as if they are in a position to help others because of how knowledgeable they are. If you write up the offer correctly, it can even appeal to people who want to build relationships that offer them a sense of recognition and value. So, you do have to be careful not to overuse this strategy. The psychology only works if you aren't seen as either a high-maintenance emailer who constantly has problems that requires other people's input (thus making you less of an expert in your field) or as someone who is manipulative, with a poorly disguised sales pitch.

You do want to test this strategy to make sure your recipients are getting a merged email and not the actual code. This can happen easily if you aren't

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using the technology properly and is a big tip-off to the recipient that you've sent out a mass email and you aren't really interested in their particular participation or knowledge. At that point, it comes off as insulting and sloppy.

Instead, try to create a warm, and friendly, atmosphere within the letter that shows that you are interested in creating a better relationship with others. The key here is relationship. You are asking to upgrade your connection with your customers from being acquaintances to having a more intimate relationship.

People really do evaluate others when they choose to make that step or not. So, you have to come off as friendly and non-threatening and with no targeted sales agenda whatsoever in the first email.

Implementation

The steps to implement your mentor me strategy should include a very subtle and winding road to the final sale, so that it is not obvious that was your intent to begin with. An example of implementing this type of path for the mentor me strategy is listed below:

- Decide on a topic or product that you think will appeal to your market niche and enhance your product line. Pick one that you think will have high demand.
- If you don't have a database, then set one up with the names of your customers, separated into two fields, first and last name. However, you probably have a database, even if you don't realize it. It's the list of email addresses in your contacts area in your email client. These can be imported and exported, if you need to use them and your email client doesn't have a merge feature. Outlook 2010 does have a merge feature, so for the sake of this example, we'll use Outlook 2010 as the email client.
- Open Outlook 2010 and get into your contacts folder.

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- You can set up filtering there or use the entire list.
- Under the Tools menu, you will select Mail Merge (you may have to expand the chevron at the bottom of the menu to see that option) and select document type to be E-mail messages.
- Once in mail merge, choose the fields you want to insert into your template and click okay.
- This will open Microsoft Word, where you can type your letter, with a friendly, non-threatening tone that invokes the reader to help you out by mentoring you.
- Click insert merge fields in the merge tool bar, by placing your cursor where you want to use the field in the document and then choosing the merge fields. Do this each time you want to contact field to be shown in the letter.
- Go to the Tools option again, when you are done, and choose to mail merge to email messages.
- Test this out with your own email address or your friends before sending out a mass mailing to see what the final product looks like.
- Your letter should look something like this:

Hi [customer's first name here],

I'm wondering if you can help me out with something. I have just finished writing up my newest ebook on how to make money on the Internet. It's taken

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a long time and I think it includes everything that might be important, but I'm not sure and I could use your help.

I'm hoping you would take the time to let me know what you think is the number one issue that should be discussed in this ebook, so I can make sure it's included. If you've ever had problems making money on the Internet or just felt some things were too difficult in practice, I want to know so I can address those issues.

I really appreciate your help with this, and you can email me a response at [email address to autoresponder here].

Your Friend,

[Your name here]

P.S. I am so confident that you are the right person to help me with this issue, that I'm going to send you a free thank you gift when you reply.

Customization

There are a variety of ways to customize this offer and put your stamp on it. It could be as simple as adding some form of visual attraction to your email messages with images or stationary. It could be as complex as using it with snail mail options instead of email. You can personalize the appeal letter, and you can personalize the thank you gifts.

You may not even know exactly what product or service will be in demand, but you can end up with two or three great ideas for new products. Then, you can start to customize the program, by gaining additional marketing leverage through the mentor me offer. Once the sales of one product is done, you can cross-sell the additional products or services that you've identified to the same

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group, using one of the other strategies described in this ebook. Remember not to hound people to participate, but make it worth their while with a special thank you.

You can also customize the thank you gift to help customers identify with your services more. Maybe you want to send them a gift box of lifesavers, with the message "You're a lifesaver" included in the gift. Or, you could send them a mouse pad with your logo and website address on it and the words: "Gold Star Mentor" on it. It's really up to you, exactly how to personalize the thank you gift. The point is you want to show effusive appreciation, even when you offer them a discount to a pre-sales offer.

Even if it costs you some money to send a bonus offer or a discount coupon, your potential for making far more than you spent is high. People love to see their ideas recognized and put into action. They will identify with your business more and, if the thank you gift is something they really like, they will contribute again when you decide to ask for help again. Just remember, don't do this every time you want to have a pre-order because people catch on fast.

8

You're The Expert!

This strategy is somewhat similar to the mentor me strategy in that you are going to be asking people to contribute their ideas. But, instead of making

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them a mentor to your own work, you are going to ask them to show off their expertise. Since people love to be recognized for who they are or what they know, this can be a powerful way to modify the mentor me strategy to something even more effective.

Strategy

Here you are also going to send out a mass email requesting assistance, but you won't be asking for this in the same way or using the responses in the same way either. Instead of asking for help to help you with your own work, you are going to give your customers the opportunity to highlight their own areas of expertise *and* receive recognition for it online.

You will have to be specific about the topic. For instance, you might want them to give you their best tips on wine selections, if you are someone that sells wine glasses. You do want the appeal to be related to something in your own niche market, so don't try to wander too far. If you sell sporting equipment, you could ask for your customer's best tips about tennis.

Other than that, you don't want to be specific about the replies you get. You can even make it clear that you are looking for just about anything relevant to the topic. Explain that if the tip you receive is good enough to be included in your next ebook, that you will also give full credit to the author of the tip. So, don't forget to ask for their name, website URL, and business name too, if they have one.

And, as your customers are writing up great content for you to create a new ebook with, you will be setting up the ebook to include your own company information and affiliate offers. You are also going to have one copy of your ebook that has master distribution rights available and another that doesn't.

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Master distribution rights are when you allow someone who buys a copy of your ebook with these rights to distribute the book by selling it themselves. Master distribution rights sometimes even allow some modification of the content, but not other types of content. So, they can take it and modify it slightly, but cannot remove your own website and offers information. Some master distribution rights allow even the affiliate offers to be modified so that the people who buy the product can make money too off the distribution.

By having an option to buy the master distribution rights to the book, you can price your offering higher, and you can also help it to go viral. Fresh content sells quickly on the Internet and content that is customizable to a certain extent is favored by Internet marketers for their own programs.

Psychology

The psychology of this offer is not hard to see. It's all about letting people show off their expertise and then rewarding them with credit for it. There are so many people who work hard and never get recognized that this is a chance for them to do something that leaves a genuine, individual, mark of accomplishment for others to see.

Since this isn't really hard to understand, and it is very normal for everyone to want some sort of recognition, the appeal does not have to be subtle at all. You can state exactly what you are looking for and why you are doing it. You are looking for experts! You are seeking opinions! You want to get all those juicy tips and combine them into the best book ever! And, you're willing to give credit to those people who make it into your book.

In fact, it can be fun to even be bold about why they should do this for you: "You'll be famous!" It's not something that needs to be subtle at all!

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Implementation

The steps to implement the you're the expert strategy is as simple to implement as the mentor me strategy, except that you won't be using a subtle approach. An example of implementing this type of path for the you're the expert strategy is listed below:

- Decide on a topic or product that you think will appeal to your market niche.
- If you are gathering tips through your website, set up a contact form there and don't forget to set up an agreement statement to publish that information in an ebook with appropriate credit that they must check off on the form they reply with.
- If you have a database of contacts, and it's not in the contacts already in your Outlook 2000 program, then you want to import it into Outlook first and send out a mail merge instead of using a website contact form.
 - Open Outlook 2010 and get into your contacts folder.
 - You can set up filtering there or use the entire list.
- Under the Tools menu, you will select Mail Merge (you may have to expand the chevron at the bottom of the menu to see that option) and select document type to be E-mail messages.
- Once in mail merge, choose the fields you want to insert into your template and click okay.

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- This will open Microsoft Word, where you can type your letter, which tells them they have an opportunity to become famous by showing off their expertise. Ask for the best tips they have.
- Ask them to include in their reply their their full name, any website URL they want published, and their business name too. Tell them that if you choose their tip, you will publish this information and give them free promotion that way.
- Click insert merge fields in the merge tool bar, by placing your cursor where you want to use the field in the document and then choosing the merge fields. Do this each time you want to contact field to be shown in the letter.
- Go to the Tools option again, when you are done, and choose to mail merge to email messages.
- Test this out with your own email address or your friends before sending out a mass mailing to see what the final product looks like.
- You can even do both the web contact form for any new people who are not customers of yours, but may want to send in tips, and a mail merge for your own customers who have given permission for you to contact them.

That's about it. The nice part of the implementation process here is that you do not have to set up an autoresponder with a thank you gift. The thank you gift can actually be the final product, if you choose to give it away to the contributing authors. Many marketers will have one or two free giveaways with master distribution rights to propel traffic back to their sites and increase their affiliate income. The books generally tend to pay for themselves.

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Other people charge for the book, or they charge for distribution rights, or both. It's really up to you to do what works best for your particular business.

Customization

To customize this offer, you will have to significantly increase the expenses of setting up a membership platform for your website. This includes the ability to join forums with tips for people in various categories and access to additional products.

With the addition of a membership platform, as we discussed earlier, you will have to include programming for security, in terms of user names and passwords. You may have to add some sort of support or programming for lost passwords or technical problems. So there is a bit more upfront costs when customizing this offer for a membership concept.

You will have to make the decision whether to charge for membership, or whether to use to make it free. If you charge, it can help offset some of the costs of supporting a community website, but if you don't charge, you will be able to attract more people to the site who can add content for free for you. It can be a great way to draw people into your site where you can then showcase your sales offerings.

Don't forget that you don't have to just do ebooks. There are many ways for people to show off their expertise and they aren't all in the written media. You can request video film clips, artwork, or photography. You can create your own genre of items that you want to see showcased on your site with the author's permission. If you don't understand how this works, take a look at social networking sites that collect photography, like Flickr or one that collects short videos, like Youtube. Obviously, we are just starting to figure out that everyone has some sort of expertise and is willing to post online to show it off.

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These types of offers don't even have to be about serious subjects. You can choose subjects that highlight a person's creativity and that you think will sell well in your niche. For instance, you might want to ask for tips on how to cook vegetarian dishes in less than 30 minutes, if you sell cookware or woks. You might ask for tips on how to flirt to get a date, if you have a dating site. You may want to ask for tips on flower arranging, if you sell flowers. There's really nothing that says that the topic has to be of a serious nature. In fact, more fun topics may be of more interest to people downloading free items than those that cost money.

You will want to advertise your offer in various places, not just your own website. That's because this offer is designed to get you new customers from other places by exposing them to your website and offerings through a free or master distribution special product. That information will be included in the offer and it won't be allowable to modify it. So, wherever this book gets posted or downloaded, your information will automatically be in front of a potential new customer who can visit your site just by clicking a link in the product.

Another way to customize this offering is if you have a local business and a website presence. Maybe you can create a book about tips that can help people in your local area. What are the best dishes to try when you are in your particular city and where can you get them? This can be printed out in paper format and offered as a freebie to people who are visiting your store. It will also contain a URL to take them to more ways to get important information they might want. You can even tell them about any discussion forums that they might want to visit on your site to help them get even more information on the same topic.

When you do end up writing the book, make sure you have gotten permission from everyone to use their information. Do give credit where credit is due. If you sell the master distribution rights, you will probably have to say that they cannot remove the author's name or contributing information unless the entire tip is removed. That way you keep your promise to the experts who were willing to contribute that you will either include it and give them credit or you won't include it. So, when you offer master resell rights the same has to stay

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true otherwise your expert may find that book somewhere else and start fuming when they see a different name under their verbatim tip.

9

Other Top Sales Techniques

The seven strategies we just discussed are not the only marketing strategies out there, but they are some of the more powerful ones. In this chapter, we will discuss other techniques you can use that might benefit your business, but we won't go over them in as much detail as we did the first seven. Just be aware that there are always opportunities to be creative when you create offers.

Some strategies will work better for you than others. This is natural as these are generic ways to generate more business that much be adapted to your own individual market niche. Each market niche has its own audience and this will determine the level of success you experience when you choose to try one offer strategy over another. Eventually, you will begin to understand what works for you and what doesn't, but at first, you should not worry about taking a trial and error approach and use as many of these as you can. It will provide a little market research and help you create winning offers in your particular market niche.

Some Other Techniques

Some of these techniques you will recognize as being used by different retail places around you. They can work just as well for you online. We are not going to discuss the psychology, implementation, or customization of each

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individual strategy because it would create far too big an ebook. You can think about these aspects of each offer as they apply to your market niche when deciding whether this strategy will benefit you or not.

Memorable Pricing

Are you trying to point out some aspect of your business like 44 years in service? You can price all your offers with \$.44 at the end. So, if you sold an ebook for \$29.95 regularly, you might offer a memorable price of \$29.44 to celebrate your 44 years of being in business. Another way to use this strategy is when there is some memorable event that your audience will want to highlight because of its meaningful, you can use a number to help bring people together in a united cause. Think 9/11.

Special Features

If you've ever bought DVD movies, you know that some packages offer special features like interviews with the actors, video of the set design, and more. So, although for ebooks, it may be hard to offer two different versions, one with special features, and one without, you can easily do it with some of the videos you might be selling online. Just have one section where they can download a DVD, and include another one where it is a package with special features.

BOGO

Buy one get, get one free is an industry standard. You can use the same principle to sell your own products, offering to give away as a free bonus some related item, or even the same item, if they buy the original offer.

Demos

The idea of demonstrations was taken to a new level when software products came out. If you know how to expire your products after a certain period of time, or offer an online demo with limited features, it can help sell your products. Customers will have an opportunity to try out the item to see if it meets their needs and you will have your name in their household. If you are selling info products, you might want to give away demos of clips of your larger products, so they get a taste of how the bigger, paid, product can meet their needs.

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Lifetime Memberships

If you are trying to build a membership site, you can keep payments low, or free, and offer a lifetime membership to help build your community faster. This should be a limited offer for a period of time and clearly stated that you intend to rescind the offer at some future date. If you want to continue to offer lifetime memberships, you can then increase the price to something substantial or decrease the features to newcomers that your original subscribers got and change the pricing.

Mystery Sale

There are people on eBay who make a good amount of money selling nothing but a mystery. That's right, maybe you have a product in mind, but it's not moving. You can offer a mystery sale where you quote the value of the product or products and give them an idea why they might want to buy. This format works very well with auction sales where people get to decide how much they are willing to spend on a mystery gift. You do have to give the approximate value of the mystery gift without inflating it, and you don't want to sell anything that may cause your buyer to feel cheated.

Sample Baskets

You've seen these out in retail stores, where multiple samples are placed in a basket and then priced accordingly. Some people can't make up their mind when they get in a store, what they want. Others want variety, but not necessarily quantity. The sample basket is a great way to make a sale with people who may want to budget numerous products but not have enough money to do so. You can do the same with products you offer online, where they might get reports, instead of full ebooks, or you might actually be selling physical products online that are suited to this strategy.

Competing Product Trade-In

This one is hard to do with online offerings, but not impossible. You will ask your customers to trade in their competing products in a virtual way. You may ask them to photograph a sales receipt of the competing product and submit it, or you can do an honor system whereby they just declare they have another product they want to trade in. If you own a retail store, as well as an online

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presence, you can use this strategy to bring people into your retail space by offering trade-ins at your retail location. Then you can describe the actual requirements of a valid trade-in and how they can get discounts or free bonuses for getting to your store. Things like this may be even more important for people who have a physical business space as people are becoming wary of making extra trips to the store due to high gas prices.

Regret Buyouts

Okay, sometimes we screw up and do something to cause inconvenience or monetary loss to our customers. Maybe, they received our product in the mail and it broke on the way. Maybe, it never got there. Maybe, it was late getting there. As a business owner you know that not every variable in the delivery process is under your control. Even when you deliver products online, sometimes there are download problems or issues with the customer's hardware that don't allow them to open your products. Either way, you now have the opportunity to express your apologies and offer a discount or bonus by way of making it up to them. This not only conveys that you are listening to your customer's complaints, but that they are important to you. In the meantime, you've opened the way for a future sale.

Pre-Sales Orders

This is also known as an early bird discount. You offer to sell your product to customers for a very special price, if they commit to buy early. You may have a certain date range from when you offer the product to when it goes full price. Or, you can offer new members, special discounts to celebrate their new membership for a special amount of time from when they joined your site.

The key to making these successful is to always stick by your word. If you said that the discount is available until June 15th, eastern time, then on June 16th, whether it is still June 15th somewhere else in the world, it doesn't matter.

This one can be a little tricky to implement because there will always be latecomers wanting the early bird deal. Just say no. It won't work later if you allow latecomers to try to wheedle an extra discount out of you and others find out. Or worse, the same customer continues to ask for discounts on other pre-sales promotions that are already closed.

Payment Plans

If you are offering very high-end products, people may want to buy, but not

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have all the cash on hand. Try to offer various payment terms to help them split the cost over a period of time. If you don't decide to implement this strategy, you may actually find yourself losing sales. Having a little flexibility in payment plans may be the extra kick that gets someone to buy.

Limited Time Offer

This strategy works well on auctions sites these days, but not so much on regular sales. The reason for this is that customers have become much more savvy that limited time offers may not be as urgent as you are making them seem. If you've ever driven by a close-out sale of a furniture store that every season says it is selling everything at discount prices for a limited time until the store closes, and then seen the same thing the following season, you'll know what we mean. This technique has been overused and it feels more like a con instead of a great deal these days. It doesn't mean you shouldn't use it, just be sure to make up a really good reason why it's true. And, don't repeat the same reason next year because people will remember.

Buy Back Guaranteed

Now, don't start fretting that people will buy, use, and then return it, leaving you high and dry. Just because you offer to buy back a product in the first six months, if they don't want it anymore, doesn't mean everyone will take you up on your offer. And, you don't have to buy back a product and supply cash as part of the buy back. You can state in the terms of the guarantee that the buy back will be in the form of a discount coupon on some of your other products. So, even if they return the product, you still have a customer and a future sale awaiting. Customers like this guarantee, in case they feel they didn't get what they wanted with your original product, and you can maintain a good relationship with them anyways.

Free Lifetime Updates

This is similar to the buy back guaranteed strategy. But, instead of offering to buy back a product for a limited time, you instead offer free lifetime updates on a particular product or sets of products. Your customers may or may not have to return the originals to get the update. It all depends on the type of product you sell. Info products really don't require any kind of return as it's

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not going to cost you anything to send the lifetime update to your old customers. Physical products, you may want to weed out some people who won't take you up on the offer due to time constraints or hassle, by requiring them to return the box, product, or receipt, on the original product to get the update.

Free Financing

Instead of offering discounts, you can tell customers that you intend to pay a portion of the product yourself, like 50% or less. All they have to do is put down a deposit of 50% and you'll finance the other half. Depending on your margin for profit this can be an irresistible offer for higher end products, just like lower end products.

As can be seen there are so many different techniques that can be used to amp up sales, that it can really pay to be creative with your marketing offers. Keep an eye out for how other people market their products, particularly your competitors, and when they do something that brings them lots of business, there's no reason you can't use the same strategy. Maybe, you will think something up that is a sure-fire sales method and use it to promote your products. Or, you may find that the strategies in this ebook need a little twist and then they work better than you could have ever anticipated. There is not real formula to how you implement any of the strategies. Be open to new ideas and keep your market niche in mind at all times.

10 Conclusion

Not every strategy will work with every market niche exactly as stated. Maybe you are in business to sell boats, and offering a free boat won't work. Maybe you sell real estate online for investors and offering discounts isn't something that is up to you, but up to the owner. You can still find ways to tweak the offers so that you use the basic techniques within your own market niche.

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You can decide that while you can't deliver a boat in a special gift box, you can deliver some other product related to boats in a special gift box. Maybe, you even decide to create virtual gift boxes of travel destinations that they can go to on their boats, if they buy your boat. In that case, a trip would be the box and the boat would be the merchandise. Similarly, if you are selling real estate, you can decide to combine your offerings with a different real estate agent in the I'll rub your back model, if they showcase your offerings as well on their website. It's all a matter of tweaking each offer so that it makes sense for your particular market. For that you have to understand how each offer works and then test it to evaluate the success or failure of your marketing campaign. If it fails, it doesn't mean it wasn't a good strategy, just that your market niche may require some additional creativity to implement it so that it appeals to your audience better.

Trial And Tweaking

Okay, you've identified a marketing strategy that you want to try. Now, you should read up on the psychology of the strategy and decide whether your audience fits the demographic profile that would appreciate such an offer. You would not attempt to offer specials for smart shoppers strategy as is, for instance, if you are in the market that delivers convenience products and services. It's simply not very convenient for people to spend time filling out quizzes, even if they get some convenience product in return. You really want the strategy to tie into the psychology of your primary market.

So, you might take the special for smart shoppers idea and give it a little twist. Maybe your customers equate efficiency with being smart, and that's why they buy your convenience products. So, you will have to set up a single multiple choice question, versus larger quizzes with many questions. And, that single question should relate to something that is a secret that will make their lives easier several hundred-fold, if only they bought that original product.

The idea here is that you are inconveniencing your customers because they have to hop through a hoop to get the discount. It doesn't mean you can't use this strategy, just that you will have to make it seem as if this is a convenience

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and not an inconvenience. The way to do that is to set up the framework to make it easy to participate, by using one of two clicks of the mouse, and using their own desire for convenience to be the actual prize. You should also emphasize that the bonus offer will be delivered immediately to their email addresses, if they get the answer right. Then, you will set up an autoresponder to make sure you fulfill that promise.

Even so, you may find that this strategy is simply not as effective as a different strategy with your customers and it might work better to try a different one first. You should look for one that matches your demographics way of thinking to make it very effective. So, maybe you don't start with the special for smart shoppers, and instead you offer them a virtual gift box that can be downloaded immediately when they buy your offer, however, you are going to let them choose which gift box is more convenient for them: a CD, a USB flash drive, or a free membership to your site.

Offering people who have busy lives choices that make it convenient for them to buy is a good strategy in modern life. You want to also make it clear that they have several ways to pay for your offer, including Paypal, credit cards, checks, and whatever else you find your customers use to make their lives easier.

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