LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

March 2021

A Small Business Guide to Experiential Marketing

10 Ways to Make Your Customers Happier

Are You Missing the QR Code Bandwagon?

8 Ways Your Company Can Get B2B Social Media Right

10 Reasons Why Direct Mail Marketing Still Works

Creating a More Diverse Workforce

Infographic: Video Marketing Stats 2021

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Thank you for taking a few minutes to read through this month's issue. Our hope is that the information you find in our magazine will help you achieve (and exceed) all of your goals.

As Spring arrives, we're all hopeful for a rapid return to a sense of normalcy. Many local businesses are still hurting from the restrictions placed on them as a result of the pandemic. We wish them all well, and hope that the restrictions are removed very soon.

In this issue, you'll find another variety of articles covering many topics that are important to business owners. We hope you enjoy the articles on Social Media, Experiential Marketing, Direct Mail, and other topics.

If you're not already receiving this magazine regularly, we suggest you add your email to our subscriber list. We have some exciting articles already in the works for the upcoming issues. Don't miss out!

If you find the magazine helpful, and know other local business owners that could benefit from receiving our magazine each month, please do us (and them) a favor by forwarding a copy to them.

As always, we welcome any comments or questions you might have, as well as the opportunity to explain how we've been able to help businesses just like yours.

Be Well!

Raj Deshpande
CEO
CroydonGate

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A Little About Us

Local Business Marketing Magazine is proudly provided by CroydonGate.

CroydonGate was started with one goal in mind. We wanted to use the scientific approach to Online Marketing and use our expertise to help our clients achieve their goals – whether it was to increase sales & customers, branding, website design, Social Media Marketing or Mobile marketing. We wanted to give our clients the ability to leverage the same cutting edge marketing platforms that the Fortune 500 organizations use, at affordable rates.

We are a one-stop-shop for all Online Marketing needs. Our Google Certified AdWords and Analytics Experts, Social Media Marketing Gurus and expert Web designers provide the professional service to our clients which results in consistently higher ROI for our client's Online Marketing Investment.

Did you know that we are a full-service ad agency? Did you also know that we specialize in helping small and medium sized businesses? We customize a program that meets the needs and budgets of each of our clients, and we offer Free Initial Consultations. Give us a call to learn how we've helped businesses like yours grow revenue. Some of our services include:

- Mobile Marketing
- Web Services
- Reputation Management
- Promotional Items
- Online Marketing
- Social Media Marketing
- Branding
- Conversion Optimization

Our goal is not just getting the customers to your site but to put a plan in place that will get them to take that next crucial step of calling you or placing that order online.

We use a scientific approach to the Online Marketing and we use Google Analytics, Multivariate A/B Testing, Sale/Search Funnel reports and other industry leading tools to understand the customer dynamics and we accurately optimize the Online Marketing parameters so that the marketing campaign works at a maximum efficiency level and increases our client's profit while reducing the conversion costs.

Give us a call to learn how we've helped businesses like yours grow revenue. If you have any questions, or would like to know how we can help you meet and exceed you marketing goals, please contact us.

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Marketing Calendar

March

Irish American Heritage Month
Women's History Month
Employee Spirit Month
National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month
Save Your Vision Month
Multiple Sclerosis Education and Awareness Month
Red Cross Month

March 14th - Daylight Savings Begins
March 17 - St. Patrick's Day
March 20th - 1st Day of Spring

1st - Compliment Day
2nd - Dr. Seuss Day
3rd - Simplify Your Life Day
3rd - World Wildlife Day
4th - Hug a G.I. Day
4th - Pancake Day – IHOP
5th - Employee Appreciation Day
6th - Dentist's Day
6th - Oreo Cookie Day
9th - Crabmeat Day
10th - Pack Your Lunch Day
11th - Popcorn Lover's Day
12th - Alfred Hitchcock Day
13th - Good Samaritan Day
14th - Potato Chip Day
15th - National Napping Day
18th - Awkward Moments Day
19th - Client's Day
20th - Day of Happiness
21st - Common Courtesy Day
21st - Poetry Day
22nd - Goof Off Day
23rd - Puppy Day
26th - Purple Day
26th - Spinach Day
28th - Mom and Pop Business Owners Day
30th - Take a Walk in the Park Day
30th - Doctors Day
31st - Crayon Day
31st - Tater Day

April

Autism Awareness Month
National Humor Month
International Customer Loyalty Month
Lawn and Garden Month
Stress Awareness Month
National Volunteer Month
National Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April 1st - April Fool's Day
April 2nd - Good Friday
April 4th - Easter Sunday
March 27th - April 4th - Passover
April 21st - Administrative Professionals Day (US)
April 22nd - Earth Day

1st - Burrito Day
2nd - Autism Awareness Day
6th - National Student-Athlete Day
7th - No Housework Day
7th - Beer Day
7th - National Walking Day / World Health Day
9th - Winston Churchill Day
9th- Day of Silence
10th - National Siblings Day
10th - ASPCA Day
11th - National Pet Day
12th - Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day
13th - National Scrabble Day
15th - Tax Day
15th - Titanic Remembrance Day
16th - Wear Your Pajamas to Work Day
18th - Pet Owners Day
20th - Look Alike Day
22nd - Jelly Bean Day
23rd - Picnic Day
23rd - Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day
26th - Pretzel Day
28th - Superhero Day
30th - Adopt a Shelter Pet Day
30th - Bugs Bunny Day

8 Ways Your Company Can Get B2B Social Media Right

Social media is a big roadblock for the majority of B2B companies. Most are unsure of how to implement an effective B2B social media strategy, while others neglect it entirely. Perhaps they have a consistent content strategy for LinkedIn but forgo other platforms.

If you think social media is unnecessary for your company, think again. Social media is perfectly placed to complement traditional marketing strategies, such as outreach emails, local networking events, and business conferences. It's time to also integrate Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube, into your social strategy.

A robust social strategy can transport your business into the big league. Here are eight ways your company can translate its tweets, posts, hashtags, and status updates into success.

1. Show some personality

One of the biggest misconceptions is that "boring" industries don't belong on social media. Companies like Adobe, Novartis, and Cisco are pros at social media and prove that even if your business isn't the most exciting, your content can be. Show the human side of your business and try to feature real people who work at the company. Adopt a conversational tone, cut the industry jargon, and try some gentle humor now and then. Try to ask questions and engage in online conversations if you're tagged or mentioned. Shaking off the faceless corporate vibe and supporting causes that align with your brand's values can win you fans in unexpected places.

2. Be clear about your goals

Decide why you're using social media in the first place. Do you want to generate more leads? Are you more interested in driving traffic to your website? You need to get clear about your objectives so that you know how to measure them. If your goal is to get more leads, you'll need to set up analytics for clicks, conversions, and new leads from social. However, people don't go to social media accounts to buy products, so you can't rely on social media for sales. It's a marketing strategy to amplify your brand identity and influence your potential customer's opinions in the early stages of the buyer's journey.

3. Create a social media strategy

Look at what your competitors are doing and think about how you can differentiate yourself. Create a social media strategy defining your audience, goals, social platforms, the type of content you will publish, and how often you'll post. Emphasizing your unique selling point (USP) gives your company focus and stops you from trying to be all things to all people. B2B social posts that remain consistent in their message have more sticking power. Then, when your clients have the specific problem you can solve, they'll think of you first.

4. Provide value

Every business has a specific audience. Whether its business owners, HR directors, or IT managers, your audience will respond to targeted social content. Don't just talk about your company because self-serving posts will have reader's scrolling on by. How can you make their lives easier? The intricate details of your room-booking app are unlikely to interest people. Instead, show them how it can streamline work processes and save staff time. Don't be afraid to share authoritative or interesting content created by others - even your competitors. Not only will you seem confident, but it will help you gain more respect as a go-to source of objective, relevant, and timely information.

5. Have great content

A huge part of providing value to your audience is to have great content. There's no point in creating a social media strategy if you don't have a high-quality website or informative digital assets. You need content as a foundation for every part of the buyer's journey. Content can include everything from blogs and e-books to webinars and videos. Once you've grabbed your audience's interest, you need to maintain it. Then they will remember your

brand and keep coming back for more. Best of all, if people like your content, they will share it. Social media can vastly extend the reach of your website, so make sure you create something worth sharing.

6. Adapt your message for each social platform

It makes sense that LinkedIn is the most popular social media platform for businesses, but if you rely on it, you're limiting your growth. While LinkedIn is great for connecting you with highly targeted individuals, it isn't the best place for branding. The other social media platforms are built for informal sharing, connecting, and entertainment. People visit them during breaks, which makes them the perfect medium for developing brand awareness. Instagram is ideal for curated visual content and comments, while Twitter favors quick, witty engagement.

YouTube is great for tutorials, building your authority, and responding to comments. Pinterest is often overlooked by businesses, but it's good for positioning senior executives as thought leaders and driving traffic to your company's website. Discover what platforms your potential clients are using and adapt your message. Across all the platforms brevity is the key and shorter posts perform better.

7. Research keywords and hashtags

Once you've gone to so much effort to provide social content that people want, you should make sure they can find it. Keyword research for social media involves tracking popular topics related to your product and determining the user intent and search frequency.

You can also optimize your posts by adding trending hashtags, which is a particularly effective method on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Search for a relevant word attached to a hashtag and the results will help you understand the kind of content your audience is engaging with. If you're feeling inspired, create your own hashtag; you never know, it might catch on!

8. Encourage your clients to post content

User-generated content (UGC) is the holy grail of social posting. When your followers and connections post to your account, it promotes authenticity and trust.

There are several ways you can encourage people to post, such as running competitions, asking your connections their thoughts on a topic, or hosting live chats. You can host events where your guests post photos and updates to social media with the relevant hashtag. If you ever send gifts or freebies out to clients, they can post about it, tagging your business.

Positive comments and other types of social proof provide brand credibility that advertising can't supply.

What can your business do to leverage the power of social media?

The use of B2B social media marketing is only going to grow in the next few years. Find out where your competitors are posting and performing well, then try to emulate that success with your own twist. When you use social media effectively you can increase traffic, improve your brand's authority, and nurture new leads towards a future sale.

Today's Marketing Platforms Have You Not Sure Which Way To Go?

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A Small Business Guide to Experiential Marketing

With so much competition from other businesses, it's more important than ever before for small brands to use innovative marketing strategies to stay afloat. This is why many small businesses are attracted to experiential marketing.

So, what exactly does experiential marketing mean, and how can your small business take advantage of this type of marketing? In this guide, you'll find out what experiential marketing means, discover how it can benefit your business, and learn how to use it effectively to build your brand.

What is Experiential Marketing?

Experiential marketing is an exciting approach to marketing that helps consumers experience a brand more fully through interactive and fun experiences. From product sampling and stunts through to popup shops and live events, experiential campaigns cover a broad range of marketing tactics to suit businesses from all industries.

Through immersive experiences, businesses can boost engagement with their products and services, build customer relationships, and create a lasting, positive impression with customers.

A Brief History of Experiential Marketing

The origins of experiential marketing strategies date back to the beginning of branding. There are many examples throughout history, but here are a few highlights - beginning in the nineteenth century:

In 1892, Wrigley's chewing gum was originally a free gift, given away with each sale of its baking powder to create a more memorable brand experience. The gum was so popular, it became the company's main product.

During the 1920s, General Motors and Ford Motor Company boosted their popularity by staging a series of car shows, giving potential customers the excitement of a live event to showcase their products.

Forward to 1936, and to promote the family's hot dog brand, Oscar Mayer's nephew built the Wienermobile, a 13-foot-long vehicle shaped like a hot dog. A driver took the vehicle around the streets of Chicago, handing out toy whistles shaped like the Wienermobile to build brand awareness.

By the 1970s, street marketing became more widespread. The Miller Lite Taste Challenge and the Pepsi Challenge showed how brands could take advantage of live, interactive experiences to reach a broad demographic of consumers and provide a memorable brand experience.

What Are the Benefits of Experiential Marketing?

The experiential marketing approach has a number of benefits for small businesses:

It's Memorable

Unlike other marketing strategies, experiential campaigns enable audiences to interact with your business, products, and services in a real-life setting, connecting you to people that would otherwise never discover you online. Crucially, live experiences are eye-catching; people remember the brand that made it happen, even if they only hear about it on social media.

Experiential marketing also has the ability to stimulate the senses of your audience through touch, taste, smell, sight, and sound that helps to form memorable moments.

People Can Try Your Products

In a real-life setting, potential customers get the opportunity to try your products before they buy. Service providers can also get involved by offering demonstrations and free trials.

Get to Know Your Audience

Experiencing consumers trying your product or service is a powerful form of market research. You can learn about what people like about your products and services and find ways to make improvements. Online conversations based around your live experience can also be tracked.

Word-of-Mouth Marketing

Experiential marketing is also a form of word-of-mouth marketing, which is one of the most powerful forms of advertising. When people have a positive experience with your brand, they're likely to tell their friends and colleagues - offline and online.

Boost Your Social Media Efforts

Incorporating your experiential event into your social media messages is a great way to build brand awareness online and extend your reach to a wider audience.

Foster Brand Loyalty

When people have an experience with a brand in real life, it triggers an emotional connection to the brand that can't be matched by other forms of marketing. Connecting with customers on a deeper emotional level is a great way to cultivate brand loyalty.

Grab the Attention of Local Media

Local media outlets love to cover special marketing events. The more creative you are, the more chance you have of grabbing their attention.

Experiential Marketing Best Practices

There are many different types of experiential marketing, but here are a few guidelines to make any experiential campaign more effective:

- Be creative. Your event should be special and interesting to build excitement.
- Involve your team in the creation process and consider working with an outside marketing agency to build and execute an effective experience.
- Encourage participation. Offer samples, host a competition, or run a live poll to get your audience involved in the event.
- Set Goals. Whether it's gaining new email subscribers or making a certain number of sales, set targets so you can measure the results of your efforts. You can then use the results as a benchmark for future events.
- Use your social media channels to promote the event in advance, update your followers during the event, and to share content looking back on the event.

Experiential Marketing Ideas

There are various ways you can use experiential marketing to connect

with consumers. Here are 12 ideas to help get you started:

- A product demo.
- A sample giveaway.
- A question-and-answer session.
- A class or workshop.
- A live video event.
- A site tour.
- A fundraising event for charity.
- A popup shop.
- A product launch.
- A product test and customer survey.
- A raffle.
- An in-store music event.

Whichever path you take, what matters is that the event leaves a lasting impression on consumers. To support your efforts, it's also important to link your experiential marketing event to your content marketing efforts, including social media. A branded hashtag, for example, will get people talking about your live experience.

Set Yourself Apart from the Competition with Experiential Marketing

Experiential marketing is growing in popularity because it gives businesses the opportunity to deliver unique experiences to consumers and quickly generate brand awareness. In a crowded market, it's a simple way to differentiate yourself from the competition by creating an experience that is fun, memorable, and attention-grabbing.

Whether you choose to schedule a monthly product demo, or host a summer charity fundraiser, the more experiences you can offer throughout the year, the more memorable your business will become.

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Creating a More Diverse Workforce

Even though companies with a diverse workforce are more likely to outperform their competition, many organizations still struggle with diversity and inclusion. Not only does that cut into a company's potential profitability, but it also looks bad in the eyes of its stakeholders. For example, many socially conscious consumers choose to do business with brands whose core values align with their personal values. That's especially true when it comes to supporting gender and ethnic diversity. Here are some tips to help you create a more diverse and inclusive workforce that's welcoming to all employees.

Diversify Your Recruiting Practices

Many businesses still use an outdated recruiting process that largely relies on current employees recommending people they know to fill job openings. Unfortunately, if your workforce isn't very diverse, then your new hires won't likely be very diverse either. Furthermore, you will miss out on hiring employees who can offer you the benefits that come with being from different backgrounds and having experiences that are

unique to your current workers. Therefore, you need to make sure that your company is recruiting prospective employees from a wide variety of sources. For example, you could post your openings with university career centers, employment agencies, diversity job networks, and online job sites. That way your talent acquisition strategy will be more inclusive.

Make Work Teams More Diverse

Another way to make your workforce more inclusive is to promote greater diversity on your project teams. For instance, when selecting workers for a project, make sure that you are selecting workers that come from different backgrounds and experiences - including ages, genders, and races. That way you will prevent teams from having the same perspective on topics due to everyone coming from similar life experiences. Furthermore, the more diverse your project teams are, the more inclusive they will feel to everyone on them.

Provide Inclusion Training for Your Management Team

Your company's managers should be setting the example when it comes to promoting a more diverse and inclusive workforce. One way to keep your management team focused on diversity goals is to provide them with inclusion training. For instance, your company could hold diversity trainings a couple of times a year to managers assess themselves, as well as identify areas of improvement and opportunities for greater workforce inclusion. Remember, diversity training isn't just meant to be something you mark off on a checklist. It should be about helping managers realize the value of a more diverse workforce.

Be Sensitive to Cultural and Religious Holidays

It isn't enough just to hire a more diverse workforce. You must also put in the effort to retain that diversity. That's why creating an inclusive work environment - one that is welcoming to all employees - is important. You can promote inclusion by showing your employees that you value their culture by allowing them to take time off work for religious holidays and cultural celebrations. There are a couple of ways to do that. Many businesses give their workers paid time off (PTO) that they can choose to use whenever they want.

Therefore, your employees could use their PTO to celebrate their cultural and religious holidays. You could also grant a certain number of "floating holidays" that employees could use take off work on specific days of the year. By fostering a more accessible work environment, you are demonstrating that your company is a welcoming place to work for those from all backgrounds.

Hire a Chief Diversity Officer

Lastly, your firm might need to hire a diversity expert to help make your workforce truly diverse and inclusive. For example, many businesses are creating a new leadership position called a chief diversity officer. The chief diversity officer can assess your organization's diversity successes, as well as opportunities for creating a more inclusive work environment. In fact, their first project should be to prepare a full diversity analysis of your company for its leadership. That way your management team will know what's needed moving forward to build a more diverse and inclusive work environment.

In short, promoting workforce diversity and inclusion is a company-wide effort, so make sure that your leadership team, hiring managers, and employees all understand their respective roles. For most organizations, promoting diversity is an ongoing project - and there's always room for improvement. Creating a more diverse and inclusive work environment might also require some strategic restructuring. However, ending up with a well-rounded organization that is more representative of your target market will be worth it.

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10 Reasons Why Direct Mail Marketing Still Works

Many companies have written off direct mail as a thing of the past. Businesses are now focusing most of their marketing efforts on digital marketing. However, direct mail marketing still has a lot to offer. So, it would be unwise to consign this form of marketing to the history books too soon.

Businesses cannot afford to neglect online marketing. Even so, direct mail campaigns can be beneficial when used in tandem with digital marketing. Here are ten reasons why direct mail marketing is still an effective marketing strategy, even in the digital age.

1. Cuts Through the Noise

Internet users are inundated with ads all day long. Banners, sidebar

ads, and intrusive popups have become so common that people are becoming ad blind. Meanwhile, the amount of direct mail that people receive has been declining. Consumers are no longer overwhelmed with daily piles of junk mail. So, a well-conceived direct mail campaign can cut through the noise and get noticed by people in their homes.

2. More Personal

Digital marketing can be very impersonal. Even an email marketing campaign to a warm mailing list can come across as nothing more than mass advertising. However, when something comes in the mail addressed to the consumer, it appears far more personal. Direct mail also demonstrates that more effort has been put into the campaign. So, direct mail advertising material seems less disposable.

3. A Broader Audience

The internet provides access to millions of people. However, it would be a mistake to assume that everyone is online every day. Although 81% of Americans say they go online once every day, only 28% say they are online most of the day. These statistics demonstrate that many people only go online briefly to perform a specific task and probably do not look at many advertisements. Conversely, everyone opens their mail and gives all their physical mail at least a cursory read.

4. It's Tangible

Emails can disappear into the spam folder, and online ads can be easily ignored. On the other hand, a physical mailer can be touched, read, and put to one side for reference or reading later. The tangible nature of direct mail can make the advertising more compelling, more memorable, and sincere. There are also more options for creating marketing collateral that will stand out from the rest when you use the physical medium of direct mail.

5. Direct Mail Has More Authority

Direct mail is ranked as one of the most authoritative types of marketing. Almost anyone can pay for online advertising, but direct mail shows that a business has invested effort, time, and money in their advertising campaign. Direct mail also has a more formal feel to it, further adding to the collateral's authority. If the marketing material is of high enough quality, it looks like it deserves to be opened and read.

6. Longer Lifespan

If you design your direct mail campaigns well, your marketing collateral could have value for weeks, months, or even years. Suppose you mailed out a branded physical calendar, for example. Then that calendar could be hanging on someone's wall for the next twelve months. Even something as simple as a flyer might be put in a drawer for future reference. Emails, though, are deleted in seconds or lost amongst all the spam. Even a saved email is likely to get buried in a folder with all the other unread emails.

7. Increases Engagement

No one would suggest that direct mail can now replace digital marketing. However, a direct mail campaign is an excellent way to get more people to engage with your online presence. For example, you could include a

discount code in your direct mail that can be redeemed online. And, because direct mail is less common now and more personal, a discount code can appear to be much more of an exclusive offer for the recipient.

8. More Opportunities to Get Creative

Online advertising is relatively limited in terms of the formats that are available. With physical mail, though, you can send postcards, flyers, formal letters, brochures, and more. You can also send items of value through the mail, like free gifts. Something as simple as an inexpensive pen, for example, will encourage more people to open and read your direct mail. Free gifts and other items of value sent in the mail also allow you to benefit from the principle of reciprocity.

9. People Trust Direct Mail

Gaining people's trust is crucial in any marketing. With all the fake websites and phishing scams on the internet, people have become suspicious of digital marketing. Because direct marketing requires effort, people are generally less suspicious about direct mail marketing they receive.

10. Cost-effective

Studies have shown that direct mail can achieve a higher return on investment than digital marketing. Companies also have complete control over how much they spend on physical direct mail campaigns. You can produce professional-looking physical marketing collateral for surprisingly low unit costs, and that collateral can be stored and used as and when required. Some studies have shown that some direct mail campaigns can generate a 13 to 1 return on investment for businesses.

Many businesses have turned their backs on direct mail. But they may have been premature in writing off this old-fashioned form of marketing. Direct mail is often trusted more by consumers. In some situations, a high-quality direct mail campaign can bring a greater return on investment than digital marketing. So, if you have deserted direct mail, it might be time for a rethink.

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Are You Missing the QR Code Bandwagon?

QR, Quick Response, Codes are extensively used by business around the world. That's those square boxes with lots of little markings in them that seem to mean nothing. They do mean something though, and they can quickly respond with a message, link, or action to the person taking a photo of them on their smartphone.

They are becoming popular with real estate agents who are tired of the expense of printing full color brochures of homes and having to constantly check their brochure boxes at their listings to refill them. Even more powerful, while the buyer prospect is in front of the home, on the sign is the QR code to take them to the website created for that listing. They can see all the detailed information and large images of the interior of the home while they're out front.

QR codes have come a long way in their uses for business, with more capabilities for those little square boxes:

- As already mentioned, they can take the person to a website. Any businessperson, from professionals to home cleaning services, can put a QR code on their business cards. Why make the prospect type in a URL (site address) to get there when their phone can take them directly to the page?

- Using the URL path, marketing ads, from park benches to newspapers and magazines, can take the ad viewer directly to the business website, even a specific page with information being advertised.

- Sending a vCard (Virtual Business Card) is easy with a QR code. The complete contact information

for the businessperson or the business is automatically placed in the Contacts of the person taking the photo with their smartphone. There is no more typing it in or losing the card before they do so.

- Still another use for the URL function is with Google Maps. Suppose a businessperson wants to give someone directions to their place of business, or anywhere, on a map. Once that place is used in the Google Map search, the URL in the bar at the top of the screen is that address location. Creating a QR code with that URL lets the person with their smartphone scan it to have the map pop up in their phone.

- A plain text message for the viewer can be displayed via a QR code. Suppose there is some advertising or other message that a business just wants to let prospects or customers know about. Maybe it's a special sale or discount for a limited time. The QR code simply displays the message on their screen when they scan it.

- A powerful feature for some would be the ability to let the viewer of the code send a pre-written text message to the business or person. Once the QR code is set up with the email address of the businessperson and the message, it simply takes one click by the viewer to send the email.

An example would be an email asking for a price quote or a description of services, etc. For faster receipt and response, the same thing can be set up with a QR code to text the pre-written message.

There are more available functions for QR codes, including:

- Sending a Wi-Fi login--for example, when entering a business, the phone user can scan it to log into the business Wi-Fi system.

- You can send a link to your profile or to post on Twitter or Facebook. This could be great for soliciting easy feedback from customers.

- Display a pdf file.

- Play an MP3 file.

- Direct them to an app store.

- Display an image gallery.

- Linked to an event registration

- Link to a Dropbox

- Link to a YouTube Video or Channel

- Link to an image file

- Link to a PDF file

- Link to a Location

In this age of smartphone addiction and heavy use of them for browsing the Web, using QR codes can increase business marketing clout and customer interaction dramatically. A marketing company should also be able to customize the QR code with your colors, and even adding your logo into the graphic.

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10 Ways to Make Your Customers Happier

What comes first on your monthly sales meeting agenda? Do you celebrate the increase in new business? Or do you review orders from existing customers?

If you spend more time reviewing new business opportunities than you do taking care of existing customers, you are not alone. After all, new-business sales show that the business is expanding. And it's always great to know you are winning against your competitors.

However, it is much easier and cheaper to retain a customer than to gain a new one. And, without customer retention, your sales from new customers will merely replace those lost due to customers switching

to a new supplier. Fortunately, keeping existing customers on-side is relatively easy, but you must commit to improving customer care. Here are ten straightforward ways that you can retain customers by keeping them happy.

1. Learn About Your Customers

You need to understand who your customers are to connect with them and meet their needs. The first thing to do is learn more about the person who typically buys your product or service. You can discover your customers' basic demographics by looking at the web analytics on your website. You might need to do more market research, though, to get the full picture of who your customers are. The crucial thing is that you need to create a persona of your typical customer and then target your customer care efforts at that type of individual.

2. Stay in Touch

You can't stay friends with somebody with whom you never have a conversation. So, make a point of periodically reaching out to your customer base. You can start by following up on new sales with a thank you note and a request for feedback. You can then stay in touch by sending newsletters, special offers, and making the occasional courtesy phone call. Keeping in touch with the customer base will keep your brand at the forefront of people's minds. Your regular communication might be all it takes to nudge an existing customer into making another purchase.

3. Get Personal

Try to make your service as personal as possible. Use people's names in emails and letters, for example. Send seasonal greetings to customers. Remembering customer's birthdays will also help to make your brand seem more human. And, of course, you can engage with customers via social media. Faceless corporations and robots don't make friends. However, companies that present a friendly face and get personal with their customers can generate a loyal following.

4. Be Transparent

Don't hide anything about your business. Instead, be clear about your offer, prices, and how you deliver your product or service. Have a clearly defined process for dealing with complaints and other issues that your customers may have. Even unhappy customers can be retained if you are honest and deal with any problems quickly and efficiently. However, if a customer suspects that they have been misled, you will have no chance of getting any repeat business from them.

5. Create A Loyalty Program

You are probably happy to offer a discount to reel in a new customer. But do you provide any rewards to your loyal customers? One of the best ways to encourage repeat business is to set up a loyalty program that offers discounts or special offers to existing customers.

Loyalty programs provide incentives for customers to stick with you, and they are a great way to give something back. Loyalty incentives will also help increase customer referrals, which will boost new business sales.

6. Reply to Queries Promptly

No one likes to be left waiting for a reply. So, respond promptly to all types of communication. Set response time targets and monitor performance against those targets. It will also help if you let people know how long it will be before they can expect an answer from you. Responding promptly to customer queries will help you keep on top of your inbox, too. A well-managed inbox will allow you to act on the more serious customer issues faster.

7. Special Offers

Offering special prices to existing customers will help tie them into your brand. These deals could be occasional one-off special offers. Or you could hold a regular seasonal sale. Offering reduced prices will reduce your margins. However, special discounts will incentivize customers to make more purchases in the future. Be sure to put adequate effort into communicating your special offers to your base, though. Your customers can't take advantage of offers if they don't know they exist.

8. Build a Community

Depending on the type of product or service you well, you might benefit from creating a community around your brand. User days, for example, are great for building brand loyalty in some sectors. Or you could encourage a conversation about your products on social media. When you have a loyal community surrounding your brand, it is much easier and cheaper to promote new products to your customer base. People also enjoy belonging to a community, so that it will also increase customer retention.

9. Do not Over-Promise

Over-selling products may gain you more first-time customers. But, if customers are disappointed in what they receive, they will never buy anything else from you. It is generally better to under-promise and over-deliver than it is to oversell. People pleasantly surprised by a service or product will be likely to tell their friends about the experience. And people who get more than they expected will be more likely to buy from you again.

10. Be Generous

Grocery stores give away free samples because they know that those who accept the gift will feel obliged to buy something in return. Any business can use this theory of reciprocity to make customers happy and encourage more repeat sales. You don't need to offer free product samples like grocery stores do, though. You could, instead, send existing customers valuable information in the form of a free e-book, or you could offer free online training courses or hold free seminars.

Almost any kind of business will benefit from keeping customers happy. Repeat sales may not feature heavily in your business model. Even so, satisfied customers leave great reviews and will be more likely to refer your business to a friend. It is not difficult to build trust with your customers and develop a relationship with them.

When you do work on putting a smile on the customers' faces, you will find that they reciprocate with more sales and referrals.

FUN FACTS

The word 'March' comes from the Roman 'Martius'. This was originally the first month of the Roman calendar and was named after Mars, the god of war. March was the beginning of our calendar year. We changed to the 'New Style' or 'Gregorian calendar in 1752, and it is only since then when we the year began on 1st January.

- March 2, 1933 - King Kong (film) opened at New York's Radio City Music Hall.
- March 6, 1950 - Silly Putty was introduced as a toy by Peter Hodgson. It was invented in 1943 by James Wright in an effort to make synthetic rubber.
- March 12, 2008 - Hulu opened online.
- March 18, 1852 - Henry Wells and William G. Fargo founded Wells, Fargo and Company.
- March 21, 2006 - Twitter was founded.
- March 30, 1939 - Detective Comics #27 was released, introducing Batman.
- March 31, 1889 - The Eiffel Tower, 986 feet tall, in Paris, France, was inaugurated.

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Video Marketing Statistics 2021

64% of consumers will make a purchase after watching branded videos on social platforms

95% of a message is retained by viewers when watching via video, compared to **10%** when reading it in text

62% of people say they were more interested in a product after seeing it in a Facebook Story

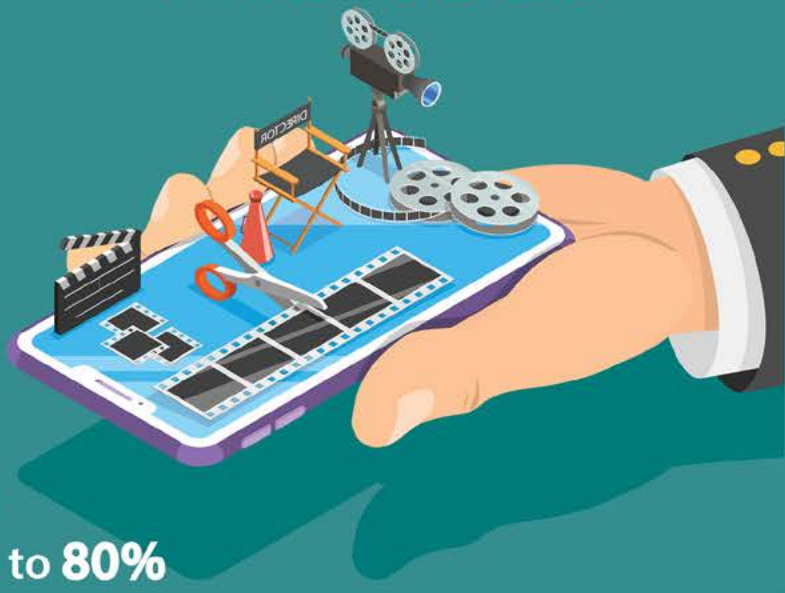
Facebook has over **8 billion** video views per day

More than **1 billion** videos are viewed on TikTok every day

Snapchat users watch **10 billion** videos each day

YouTube has **1.9 billion users** with over **1 billion hours** of video viewed each

- Social video generates **1200%** more shares than text and image content combined
- A website is **53 times** more likely to reach the front page of Google if it includes video
- Having a video on your landing page can boost your conversion rate by up to **80%**
- Video increases organic search traffic on a website by **157%**
- Adding video to your emails can increase click rates by **300%**



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