

Generate Word of Mouth in Six Steps

Do you want a low-cost way to generate more customers for your business? This article provides six simple steps to get customers to come to you.

Let me ask you a simple question - do you want your customers to say positive things about your business to other people? I bet you do, because as we all know "word of mouth" is one of the most effective and low-cost ways to find new customers. And the most effective way to generate "word of mouth" is to provide extraordinary customer service.

Remember - the difference between ordinary and extraordinary is just that little bit "extra." So, what is that little bit extra?

I recently decided that I needed a new pair of training shoes. I was suffering from sore calves after exercising and put it down to the state of my shoes. (And before you say anything, there's no way I'm putting it down to old age).

A visit to a local sports shoe store resulted in me walking up and down the length of the store in my bare feet with my suit trousers rolled up to the knee. Two sales assistants were sitting on the floor watching my progress.

After much discussion between us they recommended two pairs of shoes that I should try. New shoes were purchased; no more sore calves and I told you it wasn't old age.

These sales assistants provided that little bit "extra." They made me feel important, they were warm and friendly, they responded to what I had to say and they listened to my complaints about my aching muscles. I've now recommended that sports shoe shop to several people.

Research tells us that customers want two basic things from a supplier: -

Firstly, they want quality core service. - In other words, they expect your product or service to work, to do what you say it'll do. (However, do this alone and you'll only provide "ordinary" service).

Secondly, they want friendly caring service. - They want to be acknowledged, to feel that someone is interested in them as an individual and that they're cared about. (This is what provides that little bit "extra").

Here are Six Steps to add that little bit extra and generate word of mouth:

1. First impressions are vital - It therefore makes good sense to consider what you look like and sound like. In a face to face situation it's important to make eye contact and smile. On the telephone, it's not what you say as an initial greeting that matters, but more important how you say it.
2. Warm and friendly - This is what most people want and it makes your life easier too.
3. Use names appropriately - A person name is one of the warmest sounds they hear. It says that you have recognized them as an individual.

4. Respond - If a customer says something, the intention was for you to hear it. And if you hear it, it's a good idea to acknowledge it.

5. Actively listen - When you think about it, most people aren't very good listeners. We'd all rather be talking. You have to work hard at listening particularly if you want to let the other person know that you care. Many people listen but don't show that they're listening. You've got to do all the nodding head stuff and look like you're interested. And remember over the phone; occasionally make some indication that you're still there.

6. Close positively - At the end of an interaction it's a good idea to make a positive statement on a business level and a personal level. Say something like - "If you have any further problems then please phone me on this number and I'm sure you'll enjoy your holiday next week".

Make no mistake about it, providing friendly caring service creates that little bit extra and generates word of mouth for your business