

Special Report

Education - Based Marketing:

How to Make Business Come to You

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There is a misconception that your marketing's most important function is to promote your products and services. In fact, the most important function of your marketing should be to establish that you are knowledgeable and can be trusted. Most of us don't do business with people we don't trust. Even if you have the lowest prices, if your prospect doesn't trust you, it will be difficult to close the sale. This is the basis for Education- Based Marketing.

Education-Based Marketing is a powerful marketing strategy that establishes trust and credibility using educational messages. It is the direct opposite of traditional marketing, which uses selling-based messages. People are tired of hearing worn-out, old sales pitches. Barriers shoot up the moment you begin delivering a sales pitch. In contrast, people sit up and listen when you share important facts and expert information that help them make a good buying decision.

Determining Your Educational Message

Imagine stepping into the mind of your prospect and listening to their mental conversation at the very moment they decide to begin shopping for a [your product/service]. What questions are they asking themselves? The secret to attracting qualified prospects early in the sales cycle is to find out the answers to those questions and use them as the basis for your educational marketing message.

For instance, if you were to offer your prospect the choice between two free special reports, one titled "Why My Solution is Better Than Their Solution" and the other titled, "Six Secrets to Selecting the Right Solution for Your Business," which do you think would be chosen? From my experience, the second report will out pull the first report 10: 1. Educational information that helps your prospects solve problems and make better decisions is the type of information that will attract prospects.

How To Package Educational Marketing Message to Generate Qualified Prospects

Once you have developed your educational message you need to package it and offer it for free in exchange for your prospect's contact information. This is critical. Effective marketing is not just a matter of getting the word out but more importantly, getting a response back.

You can package your educational message in a format your prospect will respond to such as a written special report, videotape, an email course, a CD-ROM, a seminar, or even a toll-free phone message.

An important aspect to making your educational message enticing is to give it a great title. You'll notice in the second title I just mentioned I used a number (six) and the word "secrets." People like numbered lists and knowing things other people don't know (i.e. secrets). Put those two together and you have an almost irresistible title. Give your educational messages exciting titles and they will attract qualified prospects.

How To Deliver Your Educational Marketing Message

Now that you have developed and packaged your education message, you should develop strategies and processes to give it away. To do this you must first identify all the "customer touch points" in your business and offer your educational message at each one of those touch points. Common customer touch points are your business phone, website, advertising, publicity, networking conversations, home shows, etc.

For instance, instead of ending your business phone conversations like this, "Well Mrs. Jones, thanks so much for calling and I hope you come by and visit us." End your phone conversation with an offer like this, "Well Mrs. Jones, thanks so much for calling. By the way, we've just developed a great special report that talks about the top 10 common mistakes that people make when solving _____ problem. If you'll give me your address I'll send it to you free of charge. Would that be okay?"

You've just accomplished three very important things with this telephone strategy, (1) you've generated goodwill by offering a valuable free gift, (2) you got your prospect's contact information so that you can continue to market to her, and (3) you now have a reason for a follow up phone call after she receives and has read the special report.

Resist the Urge to Give a Sales Pitch

It's easy to set your business apart using Education-Based Marketing because most of your competitors are using selling-based marketing. The beauty of Education-Based Marketing is that you give prospective customers what they want, information and advice - and remove what they don't want, a sales pitch.

By offering helpful advice, you establish yourself as an authority because prospects see you as a reliable source of information. Be careful not to give in to the urge to include a sales pitch with your educational message. This will only erode the trust you have established and make you the same as your competitors in the eyes of your prospect. Instead, after you have provided some helpful information you should warmly invite your prospects to call you, visit your web site, come to your store, or take advantage of your free offer to do an onsite visit.

Conclusion

Education-Based Marketing captures prospects earlier in the decision process and establishes a relationship of trust, resulting in dramatically higher sales and closing ratios. Those coaches that seek to develop a relationship of trust by delivering a non-threatening educational message will position themselves as their prospect's first choice which to buy your solution.