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# **Doing The “Little Things” Will Keep Your Customer Base Strong Year After Year...**

While we all want to increase our profits, one of the most important things to remember is that to build a business that will stand the test of time, you MUST have a strong and loyal customer base. But how do you get loyalty out of a customer, especially in today's business world? I have outlined a few things that I have helped others implement that have strengthened your customer base. Most of the tips apply to those who have been in business less than 3 years, but if you are a business veteran feel free to "double-check" to see how many of these you do regularly:

- \* You must research your target audience's needs and wants. Anticipate any objections your visitors may have about your product offer. Remember, it's your business, but you must appeal to your customer's needs and wants.
- \* Remember not to use outrageous or unbelievable claims in your ad copy. Don't say "Biggest or Best" if you are not. People are too savvy online and won't believe you. Instead of outrageous claims, use testimonials.
- \* If you are just starting out, pick a good name for your business and product. Your names should be memorable and describe the kind of product your offering. Many people have business titles that are a play on something else, such as the barber who called his shop "The Golden Shears" or "Central Perk" from the TV show Friends.
- \* Solve your customer complaints by being quick and friendly. The faster you respond, the more your customers feel you care about them. This can almost always bring the customer back to you, and is more valuable than a lower price.
- \* Never think your customers are satisfied with their purchase. You should be constantly finding new ways to better your products and services.
- \* Market yourself, as well as your product. Remember products come and go, but you need to promote yourself and your services. Your products are secondary. To promote yourself, you could write articles, ebooks, do free consulting, do speaking engagements, etc.
- \* Find new target audiences for your products or services. For example, if you're selling coffee to stores try to also sell it to coffee shops. See if they will let you advertise this in their menu, with a little sticker (reprinting the menus are too expensive).
- \* Use logos and slogans for your business. They make it easier for people to remember and identify your business. Think of Nike and their "swoosh". It doesn't even have to say Nike and you know what it is.
- \* Try to get a story written in the local paper about your business every 5 years or so. If the "main" paper won't do it, there are probably a few local papers that you can get to write a story. This keeps you in the public eye & it is free. I have gone to many restaurants, shops, etc, because of what I had read in the paper.
- \* Offer free samples or trials of your product. This will let people experience your product and attract people to your business. If you're in the restaurant business, make a large serving of a new dish and offer your guest samples while they wait for their main order.
- \* Get involved with the community. Donating your products/services to schools, churches, or sponsor kids soccer or little league teams is a good way to get involved & getting your name out there.

Hopefully these have helped you at least a little bit. Whether you are in a small town or a large metropolitan area, people feel more comfortable if they know who they are buying from and support. Good luck!

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