

The Power of Word of Mouth

Sometime ago I explained that the most important way of increasing your sales and getting in front in your niche is to accelerate the speed with which decisions are made. The best way of accelerating those decisions is to make them easier for your prospect.

Competing for attention

This in turn is best accomplished through high-credibility word of mouth, instead of confusing low-credibility advertising, sales people or other traditional forms of marketing. Word of mouth can be hundreds or thousands of times more powerful than conventional advertising. If you doubt this, consider the fact that we're all exposed to hundreds of individual ads or sales communications every day, from radio and TV commercials to newspaper and magazine ads, posters, signs, direct mail, salespeople, brochures etc. They become diluted.

How many of those ads do you respond to? If you're like most people you'll probably respond to one sales communication every few days, if that, out of the thousands you've been exposed to. That's just one response in several thousand exposures... and even then you're more likely to ask for more information rather than buy.

If, on the other hand, a friend, a colleague or a trusted associate recommends a specific product or service to you, there is a 20-50% chance that you will take that recommendation.

A dominant feature in marketing

In other words, you are much more likely to act on a trusted recommendation than you are on a commercial communication. And when you do so, you are also much more likely to purchase rather than merely request further information.

I frequently ask business owners to tell me their most important source of new business and the dominant response by far is "word of mouth". So if word of mouth is such a dominant force in marketing, why is it also the most neglected?

I've come to believe that most people don't realise that they can do very much about word of mouth and that as a consequence it is out of their control. In fact, this couldn't be further from the truth.

Word of mouth can be very much in your control and, under the right circumstances, will result in a stampede of customers to your products or services that cannot be stopped by your competitors.


Think about it. Word of mouth is independent and is therefore much more credible than even your most sincere salesperson. It can also spread like wildfire, which means that it can reach more people faster, than any other medium. Even people who are deaf to the bragging cries of the marketplace will often listen to a friend.

Even more important than its speed, credibility and reach is its power to get people to act. What happens just before someone decides to do buy is very often a pressure free conversation with a colleague or friend where the product or service is spoken of in glowing terms. In study after study, across all industry sectors, word of mouth was found to be the prime purchase trigger.

The good news is that word of mouth can be produced and controlled at least as much as advertising, salespeople, PR, promotions and other marketing activities... and none of this costs you a penny, when you know what to do.

Look out for more of my articles covering this subject.

Best wishes



Andrew Pearson MBA

andrew@uniquebusinessstrategies.co.uk

This is one of a series of articles published by UBS Unique Business Strategies.

If you want to read more on business strategy visit

Unique Business Strategies and chose from a wide range of articles, white papers and books on for example Business Strategy, Marketing, Management and Operations.

Popular reads on Marketing include;

- How to Create a Customer
- Marketing Strategies that No One Teaches!
- Create a Top Reputation in a Niche
- The Simplicities of Marketing Planning
- The Secret Language of Control
- The Power of Word of Mouth

To find out more please write to

andrew@uniquebusinessstrategies.co.uk
