



The Customer Buying Advantage – Extracted from the book “Take Your Team to the Top” by Christine Sutherland

*This article explains why just about every business in the world is talking a foreign language to its customers. Your customer literally doesn't give a damn why **you** think they should buy your service or product. When you can get inside your customer's head and discover what he/she thinks they are buying and you can talk to them in their own language, you have the most powerful persuasion tool known to man! Remember, your customer does not want to buy a drill – he/she wants to buy a hole in a wall!*

What Business Are You In?

I'll bet you think you know the answer to this question, but only a very few people reading this book actually will. You might think that's a dumb claim to make, especially if you've been in your industry or business for a long time, but it's most likely true because of the simple fact that we all see, hear and perceive out of our own eyes, ears and brain, and that the meaning we give to things and events in the world around us is unique to each of us.

So typically what everyone has done up to now is decide they are in a particular business, and then have gone about doing their best to offer the best quality and the best service, at the best price, and expect that their customers will be convinced to buy on that basis. After all, it's only logical, isn't it?

Trouble is, the buying decision is not logical. Fact is, customers purchase on emotion, not logic, but having made the decision to buy, they will then try to drag up a logical reason to justify that emotional decision. Often times the emotional factors are quite unconscious, and all the customer is aware of is the piece of logic they've "dragged up".

Science demonstrates this very well with brain imaging. When people are asked to make a decision, the amygdala region (emotional response) lights up well before they are aware of making a decision. Split seconds after that, electrical impulses flood the frontal cortex of the brain, overwhelming the logical processing that may be occurring there. No wonder logic stands little chance.

So instead of tearing your hair out when your customers don't respond to your obviously superior product or service the way that you think they should, let's step inside your client's mind and do our best to understand, from their point of view, what it is they are looking for, and therefore how we can best communicate, precisely and powerfully, the fact that our product or service is exactly that. No more, no less, but exactly what it is that they are looking for.

Domino Pizzas Don't Sell Pizzas – They Sell “Fast” and “Hot”

Domino Pizza advertisements are living proof of what happens when a business starts communicating in terms of what its customers are actually looking for. Notice that their ads did not say “the best pizzas” or “more toppings” or “tastes fantastic” or “quality ingredients” or “the best value” or “second pizza free”.

What Domino did push, precisely and powerfully, was “fast” and “hot”. Why did they do that? Because they asked people what was most important to them about pizzas and overwhelmingly, that was what people said. So there is one reason and one reason only why Dominos don't focus

on pizza and instead focus on “fast” and “hot” and that is because “fast” and “hot” is what the customer is actually buying.

Woolworths Don't Sell Fruit, Vegetables and Groceries – They Sell “Fresh”

Woolworths runs several different ads, focusing on different things and if you're like me you probably don't recall any of it except for the smiling faces over the top of the fruit and veg displays while you hear the song “We're Woolworths, the Fresh Food People, bringing fresh ideas to you”.

Like Dominos, Woolworths is a smart marketer. It knows that its profits depend on a precise understanding of what the customer wants, and on conveying that message powerfully and precisely in every marketing communication.

Profits also depend on backing up those marketing promises by ensuring the customer gets exactly what you've agreed to give! At our local Woolworths store, that's hardly the case, with wilted vegetables frequently on offer, and the deli attendants keeping food on display which is dry or old. If a store reneges on its promise by shortchanging on the very thing it's agreed to provide, the slogan looks more like a joke than a powerful and precise communication!

So smart marketing might get your customers to your door, but it will not keep them there unless you back it up. Let them down on the **emotional** promise you made, and it will take a very long time, if ever, to win them back.

Your Clients Define What Business You Are In

Perhaps now you can see how important it is to understand and clearly communicate your clients' perception of what it is you are supplying. Literally, it is your customers who decide what business you are in. After all, without them, you do not have a business, do you?

This concept of what is in the client's mind is so important that the late great David Ogilvey, founder of Ogilvey and Ogilvey (now Ogilvey Mather) refused to let any of his staff even begin a creative advertising campaign until this step had been done. He called it the “USP” or “unique selling proposition”. Geoff Ayling, Australian marketer extraordinaire, calls it the “CBA” or “customer buying advantage”, and in fact I prefer that nomenclature because it helps to take our mind away from the “selling” and put us in the buyer's shoes for “buying”!

If highly-successful marketers like these guys would never run a marketing strategy without this step, you'd have to be crazy to ignore their advice! But then we've noticed a lot of small business people enjoy recreating the wheel and making their own mistakes – that's probably why some 90% of them go out of business within 5 years. Are you going to be one of them, or are you going to be smart and follow good advice?

So stop for a moment and consider what it is you've been selling to your customers, and what it is they're actually buying. If you don't see a massive chasm between the two, perhaps you're one of the rare people who are blessed with incredible perception or have been through this process with someone else already. It's far more likely, if you don't see that big chasm, that you're blind to it and need help to see! That's what business brainstorming is for.

If you're not nearby a Speed Business group, at least get a bunch of business friends together and read and study this book. Have a friendly brainstorming session with them and get their help to

see inside your customers' heads – being outside your business, they're the next best thing to paying money to host a focus group of your own customers to get the answers straight from the horse's mouth.

Marketing Materials

Your advertisements and documentation need to communicate loud and clear that you know what it is the customer is buying. This means that on your business cards, letterheads, comp slips, brochures, flyers, ads, invoices/receipts, reports and web sites you use the slogan you've come up with to communicate your buyer's motivation to buy.

Woolworths the Fresh Food People

Access Corporate Communications – Good for Your People, Great for Your Bottom Line

Save Time, Money and Hassle With Imagine

Speed Business Networking Grows Your Business, Fast

All of your ad copy, brochure copy, and sales presentations will unerringly give this message, and every benefit you discuss leads unerringly to this message. If you find yourself moving away from that, you are moving away from your customers!

About “Take Your Team to the Top”

This step-by-step manual provides an innovative approach to business development and advanced sales training, encompassing both the science and art of manufacturing a successful sales cycle. It contains numerous case studies, and includes access to step-by-step action plans and personalised support to refine and integrate the strategies into your unique selling environment.

You might wonder how we're able to provide all that at such a ridiculously low price of just \$47? The answer is that most people “lurk” on the working groups, choosing to read and learn from other people's questions. Of course this is a superbly efficient way for us to provide top class consulting, virtually free, at the same time showcasing our own ability to leverage strong and almost immediate growth, and leading to more one-on-one consultancy briefs for our team.

You win and we win too. To grab your own copy and get instructions for working with us, just go to www.speedbusinessnetworking.com/sales_training_manual.html and follow the links.

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