

INCREASE CLIENT RETENTION BY FOLLOWING UP

By Diane Conklin

You just made some sales, whether it was from the platform, on a teleseminar, after sending an email or your online newsletter, or from a direct-mail piece. It doesn't matter how you made those sales; you're feeling pretty good about it. Most marketers think this is the end of the road—that their work is done.

But smart marketers, like you, know this is just the beginning. This is where the fun starts. The real money is made after the initial sale, on the back end. Your follow-up system can decrease refunds by as much as 53 percent and increase backend sales by 100 times or more.

Following up with your clients is an area of your business where systemization is essential, because it makes your life a lot easier.

You should have some sort of process, also known as a “stick program,” for following up with your clients after you make a sale. You might send them an unexpected bonus; have a staff member make a courtesy call as a customer-service gesture, just to check in with the new client; send them a thank-you card; or send an email with a free download.

Your process might be simple or relatively complex. Either way, the more times you touch your new clients after they make their initial purchases, the less likely they are to cancel their accounts.

Following up might be as simple as making a phone call after your customer receives a package to see if they have questions. On the other hand, your follow-up program might consist of five to seven steps, or perhaps even more. You might send your customer a thank-you card for their order; then, a week later, you might make your customer-service call to make sure they're happy; followed by the arrival of a box of cookies; after which point a telemarketer might contact them to see if they would like to attend your upcoming seminar. Finally, they might receive your monthly newsletter.

Once you have a client on your mailing list, they should be receiving regular communication from you—

at least once a month. More communication will be necessary as you begin to market new programs and services or schedule upcoming events you would like them to attend.

You should also have a follow-up system for your regular clients. People who are buying from you multiple times a year should also be followed up on. This is called “relationship marketing.” Everything you do in your business either adds to or takes away from the relationship you have

with your clients. The better your clients feel about that relationship, the more likely it is that they will buy another product or service from you.

Your clients must know, like, and trust you. If they do, they will remain with you longer, buy more, refer more new clients, and freely provide great testimonials you can use in your marketing.

Every program, every event, every sale you make, should have its own follow-up program, and your staff should know the steps to follow for each of those programs. If you have five to seven contacts

or “touches” with your clients after every program they invest in; after they register for your seminar, workshop, or teleseminar; and after they become a coaching member, your profits will skyrocket, and fewer and fewer people will seek refunds and drop out.

Taking the time to institute follow-up programs will increase your profits. Once you have the program in place, it should require very little staff time—and none of your time. Following up will be one of those things that happen seamlessly in your business while dramatically increasing your profits. **N**

Diane Conklin is an internationally known author, entrepreneur, coach, consultant, event planner, speaker, and copywriter. Diane is a direct response marketing expert who specializes in showing small-business owners how to integrate their online and offline marketing strategies, media, and methods to get maximum results from their marketing dollars. As a marketing and business strategist, Diane shows entrepreneurs and small-business owners how to outperform their competition by measuring their marketing, as well as strategically use multimedia campaigns to stand alone in their marketplace as the go-to provider for their products and services.

