



Your Clients & Customers Turnaround (Part 2)

Getting Over Stupid Customer Hangups

Stupid Customer Hangups

Hello, and welcome. This is Naomi from IttyBiz, and you're listening to the Clients and Customers Turnaround track, part 2, called Stupid Customer Hangups.

Basically, in this section we're going to talk about three assumptions most people make about their customers and clients, and why those assumptions kill your ability to sell to them. You'll learn what your customers are really thinking and feeling, and how you can use that knowledge to get more of them to buy more of the stuff your ittybiz sells.

Before we begin, I want you to think about what it means to be listening to this part of the class right now. It means that you're keeping a promise to yourself that you're going to turn your ittybiz around. It means that you're not giving up, and that you're willing to do what you need to do to get the things you want. Remember that, because some days you'll feel down on yourself for not doing enough or working harder. You're doing something now by listening to this. Give yourself credit for taking that step. You can do this.

So, let's get started.

Stop Assuming You Understand How They See Marketing

The first assumption I want you to toss out the window is the thought that you have a complete understanding of how the customer or client sees marketing. The reason I want this to go is because most ittybiz owners in turnaround mode think that their target audience hates marketing.

And because they think their audience hates marketing, they're afraid to do it. They worry, "What if I send this email? Will people think it's spam, or get mad at me and unsubscribe?" They worry, "What if I send this piece of physical mail out – will people get turned off and think it's junk mail?" They worry, "What if I ask for the sale in person or over the phone, or what if I tell them about this other thing I'm selling, too? Will they reject me and think I'm a terrible person?"

That fear keeps you from marketing effectively, and it has to stop right now. Not because you're in turnaround mode, but because it's wrong. Assuming you understand how your customers see marketing – and being scared of it – is something that's based in emotion, not fact.

You don't know the facts. You can't know the facts. I mean, do you really know how people see marketing? Did you major in I Know How People See Marketing in college? I'm pretty sure you didn't, because in all my years I have yet to see a diploma with those words hanging on anyone's wall, ever. So you can't assume you **know** what people think when you market to them.

But here's what you can know – you can know how you think of marketing, and how you respond to people when they're marketing to you. Just look at how you behave when you shop and when you receive promotions. Look at what you like and don't like, and that will tell you a lot more than you'll get trying to read customers' minds.

Here's a little exercise. Think of your favorite store at the mall, or your favorite place to shop online. Let's say it's the Gap. You like the Gap. The Gap is expensive, and you don't like that so much, but you like them and the stuff they sell.

So one day you see an ad for the Gap on the bus. Do you think, "Hey, the Gap!" or do you think "Those damned marketers, they're always after my money?" You like the Gap. You're interested in them. You don't get mad.

Then you come home and see they sent you a catalog in the mail. Do you say "I can't stand junk mail!" or "How dare they send me mail?" No, you do one of two things. You pick up the catalog and happily look at it, or you say "Not interested right now," and toss it in the recycle bin. But you're not mad. You're not offended.

Then you go out to the mall another day and you're actually in the Gap. You're looking around, and there are these gorgeous 1969 jeans that you've been wanting, but damned, 80 dollars? That's not going to happen today. And then one of the retail clerks walks up to you and says "Hey, we're running a 50% off sale today if you're interested." Do you get mad? No. You. Don't. You think, "Huh, maybe I'll get these." You look around, decide you need to think about it, and you go home. But you're not irritated that the clerk marketed to you.

So now you're sitting at home, and you open your email. There's a message from the Gap email list you signed up for reminding you of the sale. Jeans. \$80. 50% off. You say, "Ok, I've thought about it. I'm picking those jeans up tomorrow, then."

That's a whole lot of marketing from the Gap. And not one bit of it bothered you. You know why? Because you're interested in the Gap, that's why. When you're interested in something, you want to hear about what's going on, as long as what you're hearing is actually interesting. I mean, you don't want to get an email telling you about their annual shareholders meeting, here. But a message saying "The new sweaters are out?" That's what you're talking about.

Here's the point of all this Gap-foolery. When you are not interested in something, you don't want to hear about it. That's why you call it "junk mail." It's junk to you, and frankly, you're pretty tired of seeing those flyers for the tire shop down the road. You sold your car years ago when you got the new place right on the bus line. So tire ads are junk mail. But the Gap isn't. Think about your own junk mail – you know what you toss and what you keep. And you like what you keep because you're interested.

And that brings us to your customers and clients. If you have access to people on an email list, a physical mailing list, a trade show, a craft fair, whatever, those people are there because they are interested. If you sell souvenir self-washing doggie doors, and 50 people are on your list, they are interested in souvenir self-washing doggie doors. They are not going to get mad when you email them about it. If you coach left-handed stay-at-home-mom jugglers, and 10 of them are at your booth at the local fair, those people are interested, and they will not resent you marketing to them.

In other words, if people are paying a lick of attention to that thing you do, then that lick of attention comes from being interested. And they are probably interested over the long term because you keep being interesting to them. So keep being interesting to them. Sending them content that's relevant to the thing they like. Sending them catalogs with pictures of the things they're interested in. Emailing them offers about the kind of thing they got on your mailing list for in the first place.

This will probably be scary for a long time, and that's okay. This doesn't all change on a dime. But it will change. Realizing people are more interested in your stuff than you think takes time. So does getting okay with the idea that they actually like getting marketed to, so long as it's interesting and relevant.

Here's what will make it easier for you. Keep an eye on things with your own shopping habits. See how you react when you get mail or email or catalogs for stuff you like. See how you react when you're in the store and you're really interested in something and an

employee comes up to talk to you. Notice what you like and how you like to be treated and do that to your customers. Notice what you don't like and what turns you off and don't do that to your customers.

But don't be afraid. Don't automatically assume that people will be unhappy you marketed to them. It's a cliché in marketing, but it's true: Everybody likes to buy, but nobody likes to be sold. Well, if they're interested already, then they're sold. Just give them nice opportunities to buy.

And when you finish that up, you can make your own damned diploma.

Stop Assuming They Have No Money

The next assumption I want to talk about is this thought that people have no money. I hear it all the time - "I don't know, my stuff isn't selling, I guess people don't have any money." Or I hear "My customers don't like to spend money. They're broke." The thing is, this just isn't true. It feels like it's true, but it's not.

What is true is that your customers are spending money, and spending a lot. They're just not spending it on you. We're going to work on changing that, but first we have to accept that. People have money, they're just not spending it on you. Right now, they are spending it on other stuff they don't need.

How do you know? Well, when money is tight for you, don't you often spend it on things you don't need? Look around you - everyone is doing it, every day. Remember the blanket thing that has sleeves in it? People have money. And even when they don't, they find a way to spend it.

My dad was like that. There was a time when he was unemployed and living off of close to nothing for quite some time. He was broke as broke can be. But he still bought really, really great cuts of steak, all the time. Where did he get the money for that, you may ask? He moved it. He bought the cheapest side items for his meals. He ate broccoli with everything because it was 29 cents a pound. He ate potatoes with everything because they were cheap. He moved money from the "not steak" side of the grocery bill and put it in the "steak" side of the grocery bill. He was interested in steak. So he saved money on what didn't matter to him and used it for what was important to him.

So that means your customers almost never have a money problem. They have an “I’m not interested enough in what you’re selling” problem. And that you can fix. You can make your stuff more interesting to them. You can weave stories around your stuff, and make good offers, and make the buying experience enjoyable. That’s what you need to focus on.

Again, we’re going to go back to your own shopping habits here. Look at what you spend money on that you don’t absolutely need, even when money is tight. Look at what makes you interested in the stuff you buy, even though it’s not necessary for survival. And ask yourself why. Ask yourself what feelings you have when you think about those things, and when you buy them. Ask yourself what those things mean to you and what they represent to you.

Think hard about that, and then think about how you can recreate those kind of feelings for your potential customers and clients so that they can become actual customers and clients.

Like the first assumption we talked about, this will take a while to wrap your brain around. But start looking, so the clock starts now. There are more buyers out there than you think, just waiting for you to make what you sell – and how you sell it – more interesting and relevant to them.

Stop Assuming They Know About It

We’re going to wrap up with one last assumption here – the one where you assume that people have already heard about the thing you’re selling or the offer you’re promoting. Chances are very high that they haven’t.

Here’s what I mean. Every time I run a sale or promotion, about a week afterwards I get email from people upset that they missed the sale. Here’s the thing, though – I send email four or five times during every promotion, minimum. But still they don’t know. And here’s why.

Let’s say you send an email out to your mailing list, and 30% of them open it and read it. 30% is a pretty good open rate for email. But that means 70% of people didn’t open it. 70% have no idea what you’re selling because they didn’t see the email, or didn’t get to it and more email came in and they didn’t notice it, or because they thought it was an email about something else. But 70% of people don’t even know the sale is going on.

So you send another email, and you get a 30% open rate again. Maybe some people who opened it are the same, and some who opened it are people who didn't open the first email. So now you're down to what, maybe 60% of your list not knowing about it? You could email every day for 5 days, and still, 50% of your list will never see it. Same with physical mail, or advertising. People don't necessarily see it all.

So when you worry, "I can't send another email! I've already sent two – people will get tired of seeing it!" The truth is, those people are very few in number. Most people haven't seen your offer. Keep emailing. But make it interesting, relevant and nice, so that the few who do see each one still like you.

That's the bottom line on this one – never, never assume your audience or list has any clue what you're promoting or selling. They get so many marketing messages every day that most of them fall through the cracks. So don't be afraid to contact and re-contact them – you never know which people will never know about your promotions and offers otherwise. It may feel scary, but if you do it you'll see your sales go up, and a full bank account helps make the scary go away pretty fast.

And that's it for today.

Thanks for listening to part two of the Clients and Customers Turnaround track, called "Stupid Customer Hangups." I'm Naomi from IttyBiz, and I'll talk to you very soon.