



Your Clients & Customers Turnaround (Part 4)

Follow Up Forever

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Hello, and welcome. This is Naomi from IttyBiz, and you're listening to the Clients and Customers track, part 4, called Follow Up Forever.

Before we begin, I just want to tell you that you're doing great because you've taken the time to listen all the way through to the end of the clients and customers track. That shows that you're serious about turning around your ittybiz, because you're already following through. I know you can do this, and you're proving me right already. So congrats.

Now, let's get started.

Why You Need A Plan

Following up with people in order to get them to buy something can be a really scary thing for an ittybiz owner. There's the worry that you'll seem pushy. There's the worry that you'll get an angry response back, whether it's a nasty email or a hangup on the phone. And there's the worry that by following up and trying to sell, you're moving over to the dark side of marketing.

Now, these are all real and valid fears. All three of these things are completely possible. Except for the nasty email and hangup part – that's guaranteed. Seriously, you could be following up with someone and saying "Hey, I've got this free cure for cancer and a million dollars for you, just tell me where to send it," and you will get hate mail. If people write mean books about Mother Theresa – and they do – people will say mean things to you.

The good news is, you don't have to let it get on you. There are mean people with an axe to grind, and you'll definitely catch them on their bad days. But there are lots of other people out there who want or need the stuff you're selling. These happy customers-to-be are the ones we care about.

The thing about these fears is that they tend to make you think that everyone you follow up with will be a risk. That everyone will see you as pushy, or hang up on you, or be the one final step into the sleazy world of marketing. But that's simply not true. As long as you follow up with enough people, and do it nicely, you'll get your ittybiz turned around.

So, first let's talk about why you need a follow-up plan – and specifically, a plan that has you following up with people, well, basically forever. Or until they unsubscribe. Here's the why.

Your happy people – and those are list subscribers and existing customers – are the single biggest asset your ittybiz has. And when you're in turnaround mode, they may be the only asset you have. So you need to make the most of it by very, very actively turning subscribers into new customers and turning existing customers into repeat buyers.

I've told you in earlier sections of this class that repeat buyers are your easiest way to bring in new money fast. In this section we're going to talk about how to make it happen. But a little bit more on the "why" before we do that.

Happy subscribers and existing customers are the easiest people to sell to. But to sell to them, you need a solid plan. You can't just follow up with them at random. Well, you can, but you'll stay in emergency mode and you won't get the turnaround you're looking for. You need that solid plan.

And when I say "solid plan" I don't mean a perfect plan. I mean a plan where you've actively thought out what it is that you want to do to get these people to buy from you. A plan that has the steps you're going to take ordered out so it all makes sense.

And that's important. So many times we don't do the follow up work because we get all caught up in emotion, and it all becomes a bit of guesswork. Should I follow up with this existing customer? When? How? Should I send an offer to my list? What kind of offer? If it's all guesswork, it never gets done, and the mortgage does not get paid.

But when you have a plan, it gets done. You know exactly when and how to follow up with existing subscribers and you don't have to get all emotional about it. On day 7 you do X. 10 days after purchase you do Y. It all makes sense. And money gets made. Turnaround is achieved, and the wolf finds someone else's door to wait in front of.

So now let's talk about how to make it happen.

How To Make A Plan

The way you start your follow up plan is to look at all the places where you have the potential to follow up with people. This basically can be summed up in three areas: Subscribers, New Customers and Repeat Buyers. Here's what it all means.

Subscribers are basically people who are on your list but have not bought. New Customers, well, just bought something or bought only one thing a ways back. Repeat Customers are your holy grail – these people just like sending you money.

If you do your follow-up right, more subscribers will become new customers, and more new customers will become repeat buyers. And then you can go to Vegas and drop your newfound income at the blackjack table, because you will be well and truly out of emergency mode.

So here's how to start doing that follow up right.

Get three pieces of paper and a pen. I'll wait, just hit pause. But seriously, do this part now. This is where you make the easiest money you'll ever make in your ittybiz, so don't do the "I'll get to that later" dance. Do it now. I'll wait.

(pause)

Ok, I trust you. Let's continue.

Subscribers

Take a sheet of paper and write "Subscribers" at the top. Then think about your subscribers and ask yourself, "Self, what am I doing to get these people to become new customers?" If your answer is "nothing," then you need to replace that with "something."

That something could be a lot of things. If you don't have a regular mailing schedule, then that's a good place to start. You've got to follow-up somehow. Once you do, you have to start figuring out how you're going to get them to actually buy something, and you can do that a lot of ways.

You can include a link at the bottom of each email that says “visit my store.” You can include a coupon code in your emails, too. Or in every 5th email. It doesn't matter, but you need to be doing something. You can schedule an email every month featuring a sale on one specific thing. But with every email, give an opportunity for that subscriber to become a customer.

Now, I'm not saying be pushy and sell in every email. You don't have to make the focus of your email some big grand promotional thing. People will get tired of that. But you could simply have a “visit the store” link at the bottom of every email so that when the time is right for any average reader, they have somewhere to go.

The key here with the subscribers is to give them something worth looking at. Make the mailings you send out so interesting and relevant that they'll have to open them. And if you don't know what to put in there, contact one person and talk to them for 30 minutes about what they'd like to see. You'll get a year's worth of ideas there.

The point of all this tomfoolery is to get you looking at your subscriber list and realize that they are not there for the good of your health. You need to sell them things. They are also not there for the good of their health, either – they want more of the stuff they're interested in. So send them interesting content, and send them interesting offers. Make a plan.

On this sheet of paper, you're going to write out the current way you follow up with customers, and then you're going to start brainstorming better ways to get them from the Subscriber camp to the New Customer camp, in ways that become automatic. And automatic means that you plan it out ahead of time – links at the bottom of newsletters, a sales email after 10 days, that kind of thing.

This may seem scary, but it's essential. The worst thing that could happen is an unsubscribe, but if they're unsubscribing they were going to do that anyway, they were never going to buy from you. Focus on following up with the people who are going to buy from you by giving them plenty of opportunities.

So that covers Subscribers for now. Let's talk about New Customers.

New Customers

The goal with New Customers is to turn them into Repeat Customers. Because once they make that second purchase from you, there's a lot of trust and consistency going on there, and it's going to make it very easy to sell to them again and again. So get yourself that second piece of paper, and write "New Customers" at the top of it.

On this sheet, you're also going to want to write down all the stuff you sell, and leave some space between each item, because you're going to use this for brainstorming. For the sake of example, let's say you were selling coaching, ebooks and something physical, like a CD program. You'd write that down.

Once you do that, you're going to look at those things and imagine that someone just bought that item. Then you're going to say to yourself, "Self, how can I follow up with them to get them to buy even more of that thing?" If they bought coaching, how can you incentivize them to get more? Email them when their hours are up? Send them a discount on more hours 10 days after they buy the original? You can do anything here, as long as you do something, and you do it on purpose. If they bought the audio CD, and you have 2 or 3 other ones, maybe you can give them a coupon immediately for free shipping on the other two if they buy right now. You can do whatever you'd like, but the point is, you want to be thinking about how to follow up with them to get more of that thing purchased, and when you're going to do that.

What I like to do – and what I tell my clients to do – is to imagine that you're the customer, and you bought something you really liked. How and when would you like to be followed up with? What kinds of offers would you like? Again, if you can get a customer on the phone and ask them what they'd like to be offered, you'll get all the ideas you need.

So that's the first question – "How can you get them to buy more of this thing?" The next question you want to ask for New Customers is "How can I get customers who buy one thing to buy my other things?" This may mean following up immediately with new coaching clients and giving them an immediate 25% off all your other stuff if they purchase this week. It may mean slipping coupons for coaching or ebooks into the Audio CDs when you toss them in the mail.

Again, it doesn't matter what you do at this point – as long as you're doing something. “Something” will get more money in the door than the “nothing” that you're doing now. You can always tweak it later.

So go through all the items on your New Customer sheet and think about how you can sell more of the thing they just bought, and some (or all) of the other things they haven't bought. Figure out how you'll incentivize them and when you'll follow up. Easy peasy.

Oh, and a quick note – you aren't required to incentivize them if you're selling things you can't afford to discount. Simply following up with them and raising their awareness with “Hey, I have this other thing you might like” can be effective, too.

Repeat Customers

So, now let's move on to the third sheet of paper. You're going to write “Repeat Customers” on this one, and this is where the real money gets made. Again, you're going to make a list of things you sell, with some space between them for brainstorming. And here's what you're going to do.

First, you're going to put yourself in the customer's shoes. They have purchased from you multiple times, and they're loving what they get. They don't mind sending you money. They trust you. They're happy with the quality of their purchase. Basically, for the repeat customer, every major objection to purchasing has been taken away. They are easy sells, because they're very, very happy with you.

So basically, when you make these repeat customers offers, they often don't hesitate to pick up what you're selling if the offer is good enough.

So what you want to think about here is the best possible incentive structure you can give them. Pick things you can easily discount, and send them fantastic discounts. Pick things you're willing to take a loss on, like an Audio CD, if you think it will grease the wheels for coaching. Basically, what you want to do here is keep them in the spending habit. Keep giving them good stuff that they like to buy, and take very good care of them.

Then, when you're selling new products or services that don't have a discount, they'll be very conditioned to buying from you out of habit. Now, I don't mean that you're

tricking them into buying from you out of habit, what I mean is that you've conditioned them to have such a good experience with you that they're confident their additional purchase will make them happy, too.

When you follow up with repeat customers, try and personalize the follow up if you can. Say "Kathy, thanks for picking up the audio CD last month. I thought you might appreciate a discount on this related ebook." Keep track of your repeat customers, and follow up with them in detail. I do not recommend doing this in an automated way, because what repeat buyers want is personal attention. They are your best customers, and you want to treat them as such.

So basically, on this sheet of paper you're going to be brainstorming ways to get these repeat buyers to have as much "repeat" going on as possible.

What To Do Next

So, once you've got this brainstorming done, you're going to want to get some extra paper and write out your plan, nicely and neatly. You're going to write down your follow-up schedule for subscribers. Your follow-up schedule for new customers, complete with the different ways you'll follow up with people who buy different things. And then you're going to write out your plan for following up with repeat buyers.

When you do this, you'll have a solid follow-up plan that you can pretty much put on auto-pilot. Without exaggeration, this will probably be the single most profitable thing you ever do with your ittybiz. This will help you get out of emergency mode. This will help you never have to get there again.

So take some time right now – and I mean right now – to get this hammered out. Don't go for perfection – just get something in place, right now. You can do it. I believe in you.

Thanks for listening to part four of the Clients and Customers Turnaround track, called "Follow Up Forever." I'm Naomi from IttyBiz, and I'll talk to you very soon.