



Your Products & Services Turnaround (Part 2)

Taking Your Ego Out

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Hello, and welcome. This is Naomi from IttyBiz, and you're listening to the Products and Services Turnaround track, part 2, called Taking Your Ego Out.

This may seem like an odd title for the Products and Services track, but it's actually pretty important. We're not talking about ego as in "I think I'm so great." We're talking about the ego – that focus on ourselves and our priorities – that makes us think we know what people want.

The truth is, your ego will only help you create the kinds of things that you want to buy. We need to get our ego out of the way so we can make sure we're making and selling things that other people are likely to buy. That's what we're covering here.

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.

Killing Cool

First, let's talk about killing "cool." We see so much of the shiny whizbang things other people are selling, or maybe even shiny things that we want to buy, and we get it in our heads that the things we make and sell have to be equally shiny. And more than that, we actually want to make it as shiny as possible because, man, wouldn't that be so cool?

But your customers don't want cool, and they won't necessarily pay for cool. Some will, but many, many others won't. I wrote this section on my iPad, and I have to tell you that it's pretty cool. It's shiny. And cool and shiny were some of the features that made me buy it. In fact, it's so shiny that about 7 million people bought one last year in the United States. Hearing things like that would make you really want to make something shiny, right?

But here's the thing: 7 million people in the United States bought an iPad, but around 300 million other people didn't. Apparently 98% of people in the States were not so impressed by the shiny. My mom doesn't care. Most of my family doesn't want an iPad. Just because it's shiny doesn't mean more people will want it – only a small fraction of people are impressed enough to pay their hard earned money for it – even if they love buying other electronics.

And in turnaround situations, you do not want to make your ittybiz depend on impressing a small percentage of potential buyers. Cool generally makes very likely buyers even more likely to buy – it's icing on the cake. Seriously, very likely buyers were going to buy the iPad anyway, even if the case was made out of plastic wrap. You know exactly who I'm talking about.

But here's the important thing: for every “shiny buyer” out there who will buy even a cling-wrapped iPad, there are 10 “non-shiny” buyers out there who just need their portable electronics problem solved, shiny or not. And whether you're selling electronics, coaching, jewelry or whatever, you need to make sure you're targeting that larger, non-shiny-seeking group of people when you're in turnaround mode.

And nothing impresses those multitudes of non-shiny buyers like these three magic words: Simple. Clear. Buyable.

Simple means, well, simple. Does this thing they're about to buy give them whatever they need? Does the laptop run Microsoft Office? If it does, I don't care how many whistles and bells it has. Does the coaching program help me lose weight? If it does, I don't care how many extra features the program comes with. Does the jewelry go with formal wear? If it does, I don't care how many embellishments are lovingly crafted into it. These are the simple questions that a lot of customers are asking. Answer them, and you make sales.

Clear refers to taking the cleverness out of it all. You don't need to burn your time or theirs coming up with clever names, or creating fancy features that you think show how cool you are but just confuse the customer.

I don't care to know that the computer processor is a 5000 gigahertz megachip. If you say it's fast, I'm sold. I don't care if your coaching uses the latest brain science to transform my subconscious eating and exercise habits. If you say it will make me lay off

the Doritos and want to work out, I'm sold. I don't care if your jewelry is made from sustainable, fair-trade parts ethically sourced from a progressive Cambodian village. If you tell me it's green, I am sold. Don't overcomplicate things for the non-shiny buyer.

Finally, we get to buyable. That thing that you sell has to make sense to buy and be easily purchased, without a whole lot of guesswork. Can I know that the product I'm buying from you will get to me in 3 to 5 days? Do you take credit cards? Is it easy to buy?

Do I see your prices for coaching up front, or do I have to fill out the dreaded request-a-quote form, which I hate? I don't want to be waiting or guessing. Now, if you do need to use a request-a-quote form for prices or shipping, you'll make me want to buy a lot more if you give me indicators of what to expect. You tell me that I'll hear back in 24 hours, or that rates go from \$150 an hour to \$100 an hour, depending on the number of hours purchased, and that's at least better. Now I have something to work with and can decide if I want to buy or not.

When I'm in your catalog looking at handmade necklaces, do I know if they're in stock? Do I know how to pay you, and can I do it now? Do I know how shipping works, and how fast I can get it?

Basically when we talk buyable, we're asking if you are making sure that there aren't any barriers in the way of someone figuring out if they want to send you money. Ask friends to look at your order process and tell you if anything's a hassle. If you look at it on your own, your ego will get in the way, because you'll see what you want to see, not them.

Simple. Clear. Buyable. Kill cool, kill shiny, and start making sure you're attracting those non-shiny customers instead. You'll make more sales that way.

Every time you say to yourself "people would love this" or "this extra thing would be awesome," **stop yourself**. Do you really know people would love this? Do you really know what they would find awesome? Can you tell me with a straight face that you can guarantee people would be swayed into a buying decision because of this, and that they wouldn't buy it without this bit of shiny? If you can't, don't add the shiny. Don't think of what they might love and start thinking of what they might buy. Good enough is good enough.

Because you know what **you** would really love? You know what **you** would really think was awesome? If more people bought your stuff. Focus on the most important things customers need, and include that and only that in what you're selling. You can add the awesome when you're out of turnaround mode, and charge more for that version.

Taking the Random Out

As you work on building the products and services that are going to get you out of your ittybiz emergency, it's essential that you make sure that the things you create have a sense of connection. The reason for this is because repeat buyers are going to be one of your most important sources of income.

You may think repeat buyers are a random occurrence, something you get from time to time when you're lucky, but that's not the case. Certainly you may have a few customers who will buy everything you produce, just because they like you, but that's not the rule, that's the exception.

Repeat buyers, as a rule, buy over and over again because the business they're buying from keeps making things that they need. That may sound obvious, but it's incredibly important. It's one of those things you don't always think about when you're creating your lines of products or services. But moving forward, this has to be a priority.

In other words, you have to start looking at every potential customer as a repeat buyer, and you have to make sure you're creating additional things to buy that make sense to go with the first purchase. We've talked a bit about this in other sections, but I want to really stress the importance of it right now.

If every customer has the possibility of becoming a repeat buyer, that means everything you make and sell should have some tie to something else that you make and sell. There should be no randomness here. If you have randomness in here right now, you want to start thinking about how to take that out of the equation.

You want to structure things so it makes total sense to follow up with your customers and give them relevant offers for other stuff you sell. And you want those follow-up offers to seem natural, and not random.

If you do weight loss coaching, for example, you don't want to be following up with people telling them about financial planning coaching that you can also do, or offering them that dating book you wrote way back when. Now, that's a ridiculous example, but I've seen people do this. Seriously.

Basically, look at what you're offering and ask yourself, "Could a set of these products conceivably be offered in a bundle?" As in, would it seem reasonable for a customer to purchase these items together, all at once?

For example, could a weight-loss teleclass be bundled up with a weight-loss or exercise ebook? Could a formal piece of jewelry be bundled up with a more casual version? Could three similar audio products be bundled up with each other? Basically we're talking the value meal here. McDonalds knows that a burger and fries and a drink should be a bundle.

I keep using the word bundle because it's an incredibly effective way to boost sales. If you have three \$50 products, and you have a 3-pack bundle of them for \$120, you're going to be making money two ways. First, the people who only want one of those items will buy one of them. And second, people who want all three will buy the bundle, even if they would never have bought two at \$50, or would have never bought all three individually.

It's odd, but it works because people like simple choices. Give me three separate things to buy, and I'll buy one thing. Offer a bundle as well, and in my brain the bundle is still kind of like buying one thing, because I'm not looking at three items and excluding two. I'm buying one thing - the bundle - and not having to choose between multiple things. It's easier to wrap my head around.

If your products and services don't have a logical, non-random connection, you lose out two ways, too. First, you get random buyers. You have people who want weight-loss coaching in who don't give a damn about financial planning. You have the person buying the dating book who doesn't care about weight loss or financial planning. The chances of a customer being interested in multiple products is slim. So you lose out on people making multiple, individual purchases. But the second way you lose out is you never get to sell the bundle, because it's pretty unlikely anyone will buy the whole set of things at once.

Think of the Wal-Mart's and Target's of the world. Ever notice how they're not random? How the sporting goods aisle is right next to the camping aisle and the hardware aisle? And how the laundry soap aisle is right next to the kitchen appliances aisle and the utensils aisle? There's no randomness there at all. They know that the money is in putting things next to each other that make sense to buy all at once.

And that's what I want you to think about when it comes to your products and services. If you have 3 products and only two are related, see what you can do to swap that odd duck out for something that goes with the other two. If you offer 3 services that you can't imagine being purchased by the same person, then start adjusting the content of those services – or maybe the way you position them, so that a bundle would be natural. Now, if your services are a bit on the pricey side, you may never sell a bundle, but at least you can follow up with customers who buy one and see if they want to buy one of the other two.

So the big lesson: Imagine that every customer you had was willing to make two or three more purchases of things they needed. Are you offering things that they're likely to need? If not, start moving things around as fast as you can. And offer bundles. There's solid money in that, because people love a bargain. Don't just sell what you think is cool. Sell what people are most likely to buy, cool or not.

Thanks for listening to part two of the Products and Services Turnaround track, called "Taking Your Ego Out." I'm Naomi from IttyBiz, and I'll talk to you very soon.