

How to Turn Your Customers into Members

Introduction

You simply cannot count on your customers. Customers are fickle and the competition is stiff. You may think that you have a loyal customer one day only to see them leave the next. The time has come to engage your customers more deeply and have an interaction with them that is meaningful to her and gives you great insight in her desires for your next upgrades and service offers.

Customers seek to be inspired over and over again.

In the new landscape, many will advise you to seek out the social media. That is useful to a point. If you have tried that route, you have also felt the burn out. It is just getting too hard to keep up with the incredible stream of information that is out there. To filter what is useful for you and then respond appropriately, it takes a whole team of dedicated people to do that right.

Furthermore, following the social media is passive. You are waiting for your customers to identify themselves before you can engage.

Members of an Exclusive Club

There is a better way and it is the cutting edge of marketing and customer service. Bring your customers to you and make them members of an exclusive club.

[Seth Godin](#) showed you what to do when he asked: Do you have customers or members? And... he is clear that the web likes business that have members.

All business can benefit from turning customers into members of an exclusive club. Not necessarily all your customers, perhaps just your most loyal ones. That depends on your business.

In many retail stores, 10% of the customers are responsible for 55% of your sales. These customers deserve a special treatment, because without them, your business wouldn't be.

[Paula Hart](#) recently demonstrated that to turn customers into members, you have to listen to their needs and wants. In her (retail) experience, customers want fast service, but they also want appreciation, recognition, to know that they really matter to your business. In her business, they rewarded their best customers with the possibilities for two-way dialogue. In a large retail store, it is hard to treat customers differently on the floor, but an exclusive membership program that allows for two-way conversation proved an excellent tool to increase retention, increase customer lifetime value and ... increase profit.

The Power of “Thank You”

Similarly, [in a recent Forbes article](#), Inspiration Guru Terry Barber details the value of saying thank you to customers in a genuine manner. The moment your customers believe that you are trying to sell them, the effect is reversed, and they will mistrust you. But calling a loyal customer to say “Thank You” cements loyalty.

You can take the thank you a giant step further. Bring your loyal customers into your orbit with a special membership as a way to say express gratitude. Inside, you give them even more information about the product they are buying from you, but most of all, you listen to their specific voices, their experiences, questions and concerns. You can address them in a targeted manner.

This is a powerful win-win situation. Your customers will feel very special and connected to you, so they will come back again and again.

Free Compelling Market Research

And, you have the easiest and most reliable market research tool in your hands. Customers are constantly telling you how you can improve your business. If you open this site to your best customers, you will find out what moves them, and tell others about it.

Do you know that too many people aren't aware of your core offerings? These customers, these members of your club, can tell you how they learned about your offerings so you can exploit that information in your next marketing offensive.

When you do engage your customers and make them members, it is critical to realize that you are forming a club, a community. That is not the same as building an audience. [Social media maven Chris Brogan](#) makes the distinction easy to understand. The difference is how the chairs are pointed. Are they only pointed at you, or are they pointed in a circle?

Listen Carefully

This is another way of saying: Don't miss the critical importance of listening to your clients.

Dell gets it. So does Starbuck. They have build sites for the sole purpose of listening to their customers. [Dell's Ideastorm](#) let's customers tell Dell what they want in future products and other customers can vote a comment up or down. Starbuck takes this even further on their [My Starbucks Idea site](#). They show their customers what action was taken on popular topics and requests.

LCS Websites

These are two giant companies. You may not have the resources to build such a specialized website architecture. That doesn't mean that you cannot have the same benefits as these companies are having from listening to their customers, bringing them in close as members of an exclusive club. All you need is a simple, easy to use tool that will run your website, your membership program and your social networking all at once. LCS Websites will do all these things for you for a ridiculously low prices. Go check it out at LCSWebsites.com.

LCS Websites provides webbased tools that will turn your customers into members of an exclusive club.

For information about **LCS Websites**, contact us at
lcswebsites@lmbesolutions.com

or visit us online:
<http://www.lcswebsites.com>

You can call us directly at
510.595.7300