

8 Easy Ways To Make Your Customers Love You

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Everyone knows you can't have a business without customers. However, one of the worst mistakes any business can make is focusing its marketing efforts on attracting new clients while neglecting past and current customers. Studies have shown that the cost of acquiring a new customer is far greater than what it costs to generate business from an existing client.

Thanking your clients for their business can also set you apart from your competitors, increase loyalty, boost sales and even build relationships that last a lifetime. Effective marketing depends on repeat exposure and showing appreciation is an affordable and effective way to build your company's presence.

Here's what you can do to show your clients how grateful you are for their business:

1. Send a thank you card after an appointment or major purchase. Thoughtful and unexpected thank you notes are an easy way to let people know you appreciate them. Consider sending a hand-written note in the mail. Sending birthday cards with a coupon is another way to express your appreciation.
2. Give small gifts. Token items such as flowers, books, and mugs make thoughtful gifts for clients. These can be sent on special occasions or can be sent for no other reason than to show your gratitude.
3. Let them choose their own reward. Give people what they want by letting them choose among several options. Introduce a rewards program that lets customers choose from a variety of gifts or coupons if they spend a certain amount within a month, for example.
4. Surprise them. Select repeat customers at random and surprise them with a free gift or a discount. Zappos, a company that is renowned for its strong customer service and company culture, gives "surprise" free upgrades to overnight shipping for many customers.
5. Fill customer service roles with people who are patient and have a pleasant attitude. Encourage your employees to be personable, particularly when they interact with your customers. "It's the simple things that mean the most to everyday people, it's about caring and listening to the

customer,” Jane Judd, the senior manager of Zappos' Customer Loyalty Team, tells Econsultancy. “Many times retailers are about the sale and not the experience. We try our best to be personable and we don't upsale our customers or put a time limit on our calls.”

6. Implement your customers' suggestions and tell them about it. Score points with your customers by proving to them you're taking their suggestions and complaints seriously.

7. Reward referrals. The highest compliment a business owner can receive is a referral. Always acknowledge when a customer sends business your way. This gesture deserves recognition in the form of a thank you note, discount on services or small gift card.

8. Pay it forward. If your clients are business owners, look for ways to refer business to them in return.

Be aware that some industries have strict guidelines about accepting gifts. Gifts can be perceived as bribes so when in doubt, ask your clients if such policies exist or stick to sending items with no monetary value.

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