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How to sell more stuff

October 2, 2013

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Kate Jones

We uncover the secrets of supercharged sales people.

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The secret to increasing sales is the Holy Grail for business people worldwide.

It's easy for salespeople to get locked into a comfortable sales pattern, particularly after convincing themselves they have tried everything.

But as the late American salesman Zig Ziglar said, "Timid salesmen have skinny kids".

So if you want to sell more stuff, get out of your comfort zone and go for it.

1. It's not all about you

So many businesses assume customers are interested in their backstory – the company's history, who's in charge. Truth is, so many people just don't care.

Rhondalynn Korolak, author of *Sales Seduction*, says some customers will instantly zone out and in doing so, decide not to buy.

"Some businesses are so full of crap about themselves and their brand," she says.

"The customers, however, don't give a damn about your brand, they care about finding a solution."

2. Guerilla marketing

Customer strategist and publicist Brian James says selling works best when done assertively.

"In Australia we're too polite and staff have become order takers, not salespeople," he says.

"Most sales people wait for customers to magically come inside. You need to step outside your comfort zone and do something to entice people.

"It's part-charm, part-pushiness."

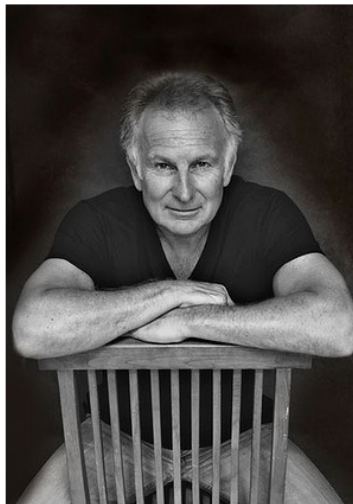
3. Safety in numbers

A pop-up message system telling customers of recent purchases made internationally or locally is now a common feature of many online stores.

Andre Eikmeier, chief executive of online wine retailer Vinomofo.com, says it's slowly becoming more popular as retailers realise the value of a psychological theory called social proofing, or in lay terms, the herd mentality.

"We're a tribe-based race and like to do things together," he says.

"It's the equivalent of the busy restaurant concept. We all want what everybody else wants."



Be assertive when selling, says Brian D James.



Andre Eikmeier believes in 'social proofing'.

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4. Put a limit on it

Put a little pressure on your customers by telling them your sale is limited and your sale stock is limited. Try tags such as "selling fast" or "almost gone" to give customers that little nudge towards the cash register.

5. Value-adding for the customer equals increased value for business

Giving customers that unexpected extra gives them a reason to remember your service, a reason to come back and something to tell their friends.

"Make them a special offer, invite them to events, give them discount vouchers," says James.

"Add-ons make it a memorable experience for customers."

6. Emphasise the feeling of missing out

No one likes missing a bargain, so make sure your marketing highlights the lost opportunities if customers don't purchase your product.

"Focus on what people will miss out if they don't buy and this helps people justify the purchase to themselves and to others," says Eikmeier.

"So offer something at half price, but only for 24 hours."

7. Neuromarketing

Now the subject of university degrees, neuromarketing is fairly complex. It's all about the way a consumer's brain reacts to marketing stimuli.

So many of our decisions are made instantly – whether to walk into a store or not, to click "buy" or not. Neuromarketing examines how those decisions are made and how to trigger the parts of the brain making them.

It may not be worth going back to school for, but it's worth knowing the basics.

8. Spend less on advertising

Go back to basics and analyse which advertising is working for your business.

"Most businesses who have been around for years can cut a substantial amount off their marketing and PR budget and still achieve more in sales," says Korolak.

"Talk to your existing customers, directly market to them and build a relationship with them."

9. Tell your friends!

Offering discounts to customers who introduce their friends to your business is one of the oldest and most successful sales tricks in the book.

Eikmeier says it's the most effective way of signing up new members at Vinomofo, where customers who invite friends receive a \$10 credit.

"Your customers' friends will probably be interested in the same things, so empower and incentivise them to share their purchases," Eikmeier says.

10. Make sure your offer is the best

The golden rule for all sales people.

Eikmeier says the best offer always combines the best product with the best price.

"Your product and price combo have to be the most competitive," he says.

"Having the best price is great, but you can't put a full stop there."

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