

Marketing is like fishing

What I especially love about fishing, is that it provides quality time with those who are important to me. My son. My Dad. My Brother. My friends. And their kids.

We have landed little nibbles and big ones...in lakes, rivers, beaches and oceans.

Some of the valuable lessons learned while fishing are:

1. Persistence pays.
2. Always seek new pools of possibilities.
3. Dangle the hook and bait in the water in front of the fish. (Sounds like marketing.)
4. When the fish bites, set the hook and reel him in. (Sounds like selling.)
5. Bait your hook...with what the fish likes to eat. (Sounds like negotiating.)
6. Once the fish is caught, keep it comfortable. (Sounds like customer service.)
7. Attitude matters, yet you're compensated for your behavior and results.
8. Listen to the experts;
9. Don't brood over rejection. It's more fun to talk about the one you reeled in vs. the one that got away.
10. You've gotta be in the right place at the right time and then know what to do while you're there!
11. Reap the rewards, i.e. having bream that we hooked in the harbour, prepared by the gourmet chef at home, within a few hours from the time we caught it.

So how can you always find a great fishing hole with plenty of fish? Here's a simple, yet profit-peaking exercise.

Answer the following questions as they apply to you, your products or services, your business, your prospects, your customers or clients and your marketplace.

1. What are your customers CSCs - critical success considerations? (What are the factors that matter most to them and influence whether they're willing to give you and your company approval?)

2. What have been your most successful strategies to build your business?
3. What buying trends are you seeing?
4. What other organizations or businesses serve your prospects or target-markets...with whom you might create a strategic alliance?
5. What professional organizations do your prospects belong to? (How can you create and attain visibility within these groups?)
6. What trade, consumer or professional publications do your prospects read? (How can you position yourself as an expert, i.e. as a contributing writer, a resource for interviews, etc.?)
7. Do you have unique benefits or hidden assets about your company and people, that your prospects could receive significant value from...yet you're not telling them? (If so, what are these benefits or assets?)
8. What specific problems are you solving in a prospect's/customer's life?
9. What results and outcomes do you deliver to customers?
10. What are the top ten reasons that a decision-maker should buy from you and your company, rather than a competitor?

Profit points:

1. Daily, conduct the world's fastest strategic plan, by answering these questions:
 - § Where are you?
 - § Where would you like to be?
 - § How would you like to get there?
2. To gain market share - capture mind share. Meaning, creative favorable impressions about how you can positively impact others.
3. Find out what everybody else is doing, then don't do it! It's okay to emulate, just don't imitate. Instead, innovate!
4. Realize, you're rewarded for behavior and performance, not intent.
5. Know your marketing metrics. What's working? What ain't? Measure results i.e.
 - § new customers,
 - § average sale increases,
 - § deeper penetration and growth with current customers,
 - § dollars in the pipeline,
 - § sales volume, etc