



THE PERFECT CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP

*A guide to eliminating cold calls while increasing
cash flow*

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Introduction: *Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is not a new term. In fact, many companies have made millions of dollars by creating online tools and systems to facilitate customer relationships. The problem is typically “user error.” No system can substitute for human behavior.*

*In this e-book, I am going to give you seven strategic tips to develop the Perfect Customer Relationship. Since the foundation of everything that I do is derived from God’s word I will give full disclosure that this document is blessed spiritually to achieve success. In the Bible, the number seven is about completeness and perfection, both physically and spiritually. The number is directly tied to God’s creation of all things. Now that you understand how the number seven is an intentional and spiritual guide to the **gun**, you can see how it elevates your business to a space where everyone wants to go. All business owners want to better understand how to create and increase cash flow on constant basis. It’s very simple! Pay attention to the customer or clients that you have on a regular basis and treat the new customers to an experience that they will never forget.*

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Seven Secrets to Build the Perfect Customer Relationship

- 1. Create the relationship.**
- 2. Define the roles between the Person/Company and the Brand.**
- 3. Define Success. Identify: what does success look like for the customer and the company?**
- 4. The opportunities and obstacles for achieving the stated goals.**
- 5. Communicate with each other.**
- 6. Keep the relationship alive.**
- 7. Win together. Lose together. Battle together.**

These seven secrets require a lot of habit developing on the part of the company's management team. They are only as good as the consistent execution required to achieve perfection.

1. Create the Relationship

Creating a relationship requires a lot of things going right and minimizing mistakes as much as possible. Think about the first time that you went to a prom or special date. You went through a lot of trouble to put on your best performance and wear your best clothes. You invested a lot of money for an initial introduction. Clearly, you wanted to make a great impression. This should be the same process for creating a business relationship.

In most cases, you may not ever create an intimate relationship with the prom date or first special date. However, you still want to leave a good experience. Why? That person can



become a character witness for you when the right person comes along. Or, you may learn something from that first interaction that will help you with future relationships. My point is that you have not wasted your time. This is a very important point! Don't miss it! Business owners tend to believe that every relationship is supposed to result in a client or customer. Take that scenario out of your brain. That approach is very frustrating and ineffective. Take your time with each relationship and let it take its course. If you leave a bad taste in the initial interaction, you can guarantee that the word will get out about your character in a negative way. However, if you are not pretentious and leave a great experience your character will undoubtedly be given praise. Use each relationship to build your business based on the first date.

Relationships come in all shapes and sizes. Some people will become customers or clients. Some people will be connectors to customers or clients. Some people will be resources for customers or clients. Allow them to determine which space to play in your CRM program. If you are using a CRM software divide the relationships into those categories. In the beginning, I talked about how things go right. Segmenting your database to address the needs of each group separately is one thing that you want to do right. You don't want to lump everyone into the same category. You lose a little bit of the perfection when you tamper with the structure of developing relationships. If you talk to a person who is a resource like they are a potential customer, then you will lose them. It's very important to make sure that you make relationships as authentic as possible.

The key to all of these relationships is to do more listening than talking. Learn as much as you can about each group. Then you can relate to them on their level.

2. Define the Roles between the Person/Company and the Brand

Now that you understand how to create the relationship, it's time to define the roles between the person/company and the brand. First of all, you must determine your brand promise to any customer. What are you going to give them consistently every time?

Let's start with the potential customer or client. The role of the customer or client is to always purchase as often and in as many ways possible from your company. Most small



business owners are just looking for the single purchase. The best brands in the world are looking for the incremental purchase. They want to make you a lifetime customer or client. If you are planning to make this person a lifetime customer, then you have to keep them coming back for more. Apple does a great job of this with its products. They keep you coming back for more products, services, and accessories that only they can provide. Or, the perception is that only they can provide those things. You want a lifelong customer or client.

Next, let's define the connector. The connector is just as important as the client or customer. This group or individual will keep referring business to you on a regular basis. Chambers of Commerce and networking groups are good for this. The problem is that most small business owners don't know how to use these groups in this fashion. Just imagine if you can make your chamber or networking group a marketing and sales team for you. How? Clearly articulate your brand promise to customers. Make it very simple for the chamber team to refer business to you. Make sure that they clearly understand the role that they play in growing your business. You pay some sort of membership fee to the organization. What is your expectation of this group? Don't forget that there are individuals who can play the connector role as well. Give them the same ammunition. Provide both with marketing materials, your tagline and contact information.

The resource is a great way to help the business and build a relationship. Sometimes people may come to you with a problem or issue that you can't solve. It's good to have a pool of resources that they can use. This will keep you on their mind as a problem solver. That's a great strategic spot for your company.

Treat each relationship in a way that benefits them and you. It's important to communicate the value for each and clearly define the roles that they play.

3. Define Success: What Does Success look like for the Customer and Company?

Let me make this perfectly clear: Success needs to be shared by the customer and the company to ensure that a brand lasts to satisfy customers for generations. Managing expectations and defining success is paramount in making the relationship work. What does success look like?



Disney comes to mind when talking about setting expectations and defining success. When I took my kids to see *Mickey Mouse and Friends* they were thrilled and excited. When my grandkids saw *Mickey Mouse and Friends* two decades later, they were filled with the same excitement as their parents were two decades prior. *Mickey Mouse and Friends* continue to build on the relationship from one generation to the next. What if you can develop this type of relationship with a customer? Success is determined by the actions that your company takes to create the perfect experience for the customer. Disney makes sure that they develop habits in doing the little things right. The parade is one of the highlights where young people get to see all of their favorite Disney characters past and present. Once that happens the children and parents now share an experience that they will never forget. Colin Powell once said, “If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude.” How does that work for a small business? Whether you are a local dry cleaner, grocery store or automobile repair shop, you need to understand what is success in your customer’s eyes.

Determining success goes back to listening to what your customer needs to enjoy a great experience with your company. Once you know the expectation then you can work on delivering the promise. Prepare your team to develop habits to organically grow the relationship. Then, you should work closely with your client to work in partnership to achieve success. That’s when you share success with your client. If only one entity feels the success, then you both lose. There has to be a joint feeling of success. It’s important to keep going back to defining success throughout the process. A good reminder will keep everyone on track.

Set a good vision, mission, and goals for success in everything that you do. Openly discuss the habits that need to be formed to easily manage the client’s expectations. If your team and your client do things without thinking about it, the relationship is more organic and has a greater chance of success.

4. Identify the Opportunities and Obstacles for Achieving the Stated Goals

Some people define luck as: when preparation meets opportunity. There are many opportunities for people to realize success. Are you a barber who helps your client be



successful by looking professional at work? Are you a janitorial company that ensure an office is cleaned overnight to make the right presentation during the day? What opportunity does your company have to make the right impact on the client or customer?

Great companies recognize the opportunity to create luck in their relationship with clients and customers. They clearly understand how to overcome obstacles while actively engaging the opportunities. The bigger the opportunity, the bigger potential impact to grow the customer relationship. Applebees used an opportunity to give their customers a “wow” experience when they realized that most families had two working parents. They noticed that most people were eating out or doing take out. As a primary dine in establishment they used the understanding of the market as an opportunity to add a service that enhanced the customer experience through Applebees Curbside To Go. Customers could call in their order and wait in the car to pick up a hot meal on the way home. I am sure they faced obstacles along the way. Yet, they worked out those challenges to keep the customer experience on a high.

Building relationships is not about luck in the way that most people define it. It is, however, about how the business owners pays attention to the needs of the customer and the opportunity to positively impact the customer experience. The key is to plan for those moments. You have to prepare your company to meet the ever changing demands of your customer. Each industry has its own opportunities. Business owners have to keep up with the evolution of their respective industries. Watch for trends in technology, laws and people. The Applebees example should give you some insight. They knew that family behaviors were changing. They addressed the need of that customer by being aware of those changes.

Customers appreciate when you understand where they are coming from. If you prepare your company to address their challenges and exceed their expectation, then you are taking advantage of an opportunity. Since you are prepared to meet the opportunity, luck is being created. You are not just throwing a wish into the air.

5. How Do We Communicate with Each Other?



Good communications are about having a two-way discussion with both parties understanding one another. A one-way communication is when someone is talking at another party. This is a very common mistake with small businesses. We believe that sending emails, posting on social media and networking event communications is talking at the customer or prospect.

Your goal in communications is to develop a conversation with your customers and prospective clients. This requires a skill that I have talked about in this e-book. Listening to the customer or prospective client will help your company strike an interesting conversation where both parties can participate.

Sending e-mails to your database is an art. We measure our database e-mails based on the interaction between the receiver and our message. Remember, we are not trying to sell to the database. In this case we are simply developing a relationship by having frequent conversations. To start a conversation with your database you have to know their interests and needs. If you peak their interests and address their needs a dialogue is imminent.

Social media interaction is supposed to be engaging. Posting information on your social media sites require targeting an audience that cares about your content. What messages are you focused on? What reaction do you want to get from the reader? Carefully choose your content to speak to one specific audience. Don't try to be vague.

Networking events tend to be sales focused. Attendees make huge mistakes by talking too much and not listening enough. Listen carefully to other people while networking. Practicing this skill will help you to eliminate cold calling forever. If you contact someone from a networking event with information that you heard from them your chances of an initial meeting will increase immensely. They feel like they know you.

In networking the goal should be making the initial contact and a memorable first impression to spark a flame for a new relationship. The follow up is a huge opportunity to extend the relationship. Don't make the common mistake of not creating a two-way communication. Your message to the receiver will ignite a conversation. Keep the dialogue active. Your mutual discussions via email social media and networking is the key!



6. Keep the Relationship Alive!

Relationships are tricky. You have to get off to a great start. You have to be consistent in building the relationship. Then you have to make sure that you don't forget special moments for your client or customer. What's important to them?

Remember, your ultimate goal is to build a loyal customer! As stated in a previous section of this e-book it's imperative to start the relationship with good two-way communications. But it should not stop there. Starting is one thing. Maintaining is a whole new story. Maintaining relationships requires the messenger to be very empathetic to its receiver. My wife always says to me, "Do not start something you cannot finish!" For example: Don't start a relationship with your customer by giving them discounts if you are not going to be giving discounts on a regular basis. Your communications will be somewhat disingenuous if it appears that you are doing the old "Bait and Switch." This is common with used car salesmen. That's why they have a horrible reputation, because they appear to hook you with a deal. Then it turns out that the deal is not so great. This happens a lot in communications, some companies over promise and under deliver. They want to be impressive. It's more important to be authentic, honest and consistent with customers and your community. Don't try to embellish the truth. If you are giving your customer value, then keep your message consistent to value. If you are giving your customer status, then keep your message to a high end dialogue. If you are a discount brand like Wal Mart and Amazon, then you just need to be consistent with that message as well.

Another very important miss by small business owners is understanding the special moment for customers. When I was still a marketing director in the gaming and hospitality industry, it was very important for me to know special dates like anniversaries and birthdays for our guests. When you make a big deal about a special moment for a customer they will never forget. I recall a former guest talking to me about an anniversary celebration that I orchestrated over ten years ago for her and her husband. Although, he passed away she never forgot what our company did for her. Today, she continues to be a loyal customer of that brand.



Empathizing with your customer or client is the key to growing the relationship. Some people start off great when someone is a new customer. Eventually, the newness wears off and companies forget to maintain and grow the relationship. Keep the relationship alive!

7. Win Together! Lose Together! Battle Together!

This title sounds like a marriage or a team slogan. Well that's really what you are shooting for. If you are married to your customer you will win together, lose together and battle together. That's when you know that you are destined to keep clients and customers for a very long time.

Winning is easy for everyone to celebrate because of the feeling of excitement, accomplishment and value. We can join in together to congratulate each other because the results work in our favor. The climate is jubilant and the attitude is confident. It's very popular to be in the winner's circle because, winning is very contagious.

Losing is the opposite of winning. Therefore, no one wants to lose because of the feeling of sadness, disappointment and discouragement. Typically, there is finger-pointing because we want to blame someone for the failure. The climate is frustrating, the attitude is confused. Everyone hates to be a loser, because losing is deflating.

Battling together builds character and closeness. If you have ever noticed people come together when they have a common enemy or challenge. That's why as business owners you have to build a partnership and solid relationship with your customer or client. How do you get this done? Read this e-book over and over again until you know it from beginning to end. If you can accomplish the *perfect customer relationship*, they will win with you, lose with you and battle with your company. No matter what arises, your loyal customer will be with you.



This e-book is designed to give you a small taste of the knowledge and wisdom from your personal marketing mentor, Shaundell Newsome. His experience of over three decades of marketing and communications will be shared with you on a weekly basis. Thousands of small business owners have experienced Shaundell's teachings about the Twelve Steps of Marketing over the years through radio, internet, workshops and seminars.

Sign up to be a member of the Sumnu Solutions Zone (SSZ) to reserve your slot to be mentored by Shaundell Newsome, creator of the Twelve Steps of Marketing and SBA Minority Small Business Champion of the Year 2008.