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The 8 Elements of Strong Off-Page SEO

By Phil Frost

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Read more at bit.ly/2x2yV6U

The whole point of SEO is improving your website's ranking in search engines. And while good SEO includes a checklist of website optimization tips, it's the marketing that happens on other blogs, forums and websites — and even in the real world — that can really fuel a climb in the search rankings.

This is called off-site SEO. It's those aspects of marketing that raise awareness of your brand while building your reputation with your audience. Guest-writing posts for popular blogs, getting great Yelp reviews and impressing the pants off of your customers are all examples of off-site SEO. With strong off-site SEO, people will want to learn about your business before even bothering with Google. Reach that point, and SEO gets a whole lot easier.

Read on for eight elements of strong off-page SEO that you should incorporate into your marketing strategy.

1. Sell a Fantastic Product

This is ground zero for off-site SEO. Great marketing can sometimes make up for a ho-hum product, but only temporarily. Eventually, the truth comes out — and good luck getting people excited about something that's average at best.

In addition to providing goods and services that are actually useful and valuable, you should also focus on how you can sweeten the deal with remarkable associated offers. Back your product with a lengthy warranty. Create a generous return policy. Open a tech-support line. Don't just sell your product —

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• Thursday, October 19: **CADM Meetup**
• Wednesday, November 9: **Membership Meeting**

CADM FALL NETWORKING

See page 3 and cadm.org/events for details and registration

10 Most Effective Tips for Customer Reactivation

By Ruth P. Stevens

Repinted from TargetMarketingmag.com
See more at bit.ly/2wlyG3v

Are you looking for the best ways to reactivate dormant customers and reduce churn? Here's a roundup of the ten most effective practices today, in both business and consumer markets. Consider which of these may be the most applicable to your business, your customers and your objectives. And don't forget to set aside some budget for ongoing retention and reactivation marketing. It's the best money you can spend.

1 Move Quickly

The longer a customer is inactive, the more likely an eventual defection. Early action is arguably the single most effective technique in reactivation marketing. But, you can take this principal a step further if you examine customer behavior patterns to predict inactivity before it even starts. For example, if purchase frequency slows, or order size shrinks, inactivity is likely to follow. Analyze the characteristics of your purchase cycle. Anomalies in a particular customer's behavior may indicate a problem that, with early intervention, can be addressed.

2 Segment Your Dormant Customers, and Treat Them Differently

As marketers well know, different customers have different needs, and represent different levels of value to the firm. Applying segmentation is a key success factor in the

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CADM Mission Statement

Ignition Is Our Mission. As Chicago's collaborative community for multichannel response marketers, CADM sparks ideas, business relationships and career growth.

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CADM Marketing Career Network

Sparking Career Growth

Have you visited CADM's Career Network at www.cadm.org/career-network? Were you aware that CADM is part of the Marketing Career Network, along with approximately forty other national and local marketing, advertising and communication associations? Whether you are a job seeker or an employer filling a vacancy, the Marketing Career Network is "Where the marketers go for jobs."

Are You Hiring?

More than 14,000 resumes are posted on the Marketing Career Network [MCN]. Go to www.cadm.org/career-network to sign up and post vacant positions. Target your recruiting and reach qualified candidates quickly and easily. The MCN offers employers the convenience of posting to a single network and eliminates the guesswork of choosing the right job boards to find quality employees. Post once from the CADM Career Center and your job listings will be viewed on all MCN Partner Career Centers at no additional charge!

CADM member posting rates begin at $225 per position for 30 days. That's a $100 savings over the non-member rate. Questions? Contact CADM's personal sales specialist, Brian Vo, at 866-964-2765 x2764 or Brian.Vo@boxwoodtech.com.

Are You a Job Seeker?

There is no cost to post your resume on the Marketing Career Network [MCN]. Go to http://www.cadm.org/career-network to sign up, and then search MCN for positions by location or keyword, such as job title. At the time of writing this article, 750 positions appeared on the network. Other services, such as Career Coaching, are available for a fee. Fees are discounted with CADM membership.

Glenda Sharp, Guest Columnist

Glenda Sharp, CAE, serves as CADM Executive Director. Contact her at info@cadm.org or 312.849.2236.

October

19 **CADM Meetup: Bocce Ball Tournament**

(plans and venue tentative)

5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Pinstripes, 435 E. Illinois St, Chicago

CADM Meetups are a great opportunity to network with other multichannel response marketers in a happy- hour setting. Bring a teammate and participate in CADM's 1st Annual Bocce Ball Tournament.

Free for Premier Members

$49.50 for Basic Members

$55 for Non-members

See cadm.org/events

November

9 **Membership Meeting**

5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Venue and Topic TBA

See cadm.org/events for details

December

7 **CADM Meetup**

5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Venue and Topic TBA

Direct From The Heart [DFTH] will put together a Holiday activity for Chicago's multichannel response marketing community to give back.

See cadm.org/events

Don't Lose Your *adMarks*!

Renew your membership today to ensure you don't miss out on the inside info, news and trends in the multichannel response marketing industry.

Make sure to renew today!

See cadm.org/membership.

CADM sparks ideas, business relationships, and career growth

The 8 Elements of Strong Off-Page SEO *(continued from page 5)*

convince customers that your business is the best place to buy from.

2. Find High-Quality Inbound Links

Since the earliest days of SEO, inbound links have played important roles in establishing a website's credibility. In recent years, though, Google started penalizing sites with larger volumes of low-quality inbound links. It's far more important nowadays to focus on high-quality inbound links from reputable blogs and websites.

With this in mind, you should always be thinking of ways to get more links from high-quality sites. Consider writing guest blogs or informative articles for influential websites in your industry, or pitch story ideas to your local media to get inbound links from news stories. You can also build high-quality inbound links by interacting with influential industry figures on Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media. You might even find link-building opportunities with clients and business partners.

3. Be the Best at Customer Service

Word of mouth is extremely powerful — not just the good, but the bad. Customers who have great experiences with retailers and local businesses are much more likely to become loyal shoppers. On the flipside, customers who feel spurned, overlooked or insulted might vent to their friends or, worse, rip your business on social media.

Simply put, be the best at customer service. Treat every customer with reverence, and make sure your employees are fully prepared to answer questions about your goods, services and policies. Everyone wants to be treated with respect. Do this well, and customers will look for your website — and further cement your online authority — the next time they need help.

4. Ask for Positive Reviews

Did you know 88 percent of online shoppers incorporate reviews into their purchase decisions? Or that more than half of young adults ages 18 to 34 trust online reviews more than friends and family? We could go on and on, but the point is this — businesses backed by positive online reviews are much more likely to be searched for on Google.

Encouraging customers to write positive reviews on Yelp and other websites is actually quite simple. It starts with selling a great product and being the best at customer service — two things we've already covered. You can also take the extra step of asking customers for feedback. Put Yelp buttons on your website and in follow-up emails for purchases. Also make sure you've made profiles for your business on Yelp, Angie's List and other relevant online directory sites.

5. Start a Blog

Blogging is unique on this list because it's beneficial for both on- and off-site SEO. Google's algorithm loves websites that are regularly refreshed with unique, high-quality content. Well-written blogs do this well. In addition, blog posts that are helpful, informative or simply entertaining are great for sharing on social media and industry-specific websites and forums; they also provide substance for email campaigns to reconnect with customers. All of this is helpful for off-site SEO.

Make sure to update your blog on a regular basis — nobody likes a blog that's gone stale. Experiment with different types of content, too. Create short how-to guides, post about community involvement or share your thoughts on an infographic from a relevant trade publication. The possibilities are endless.

6. Get Active on Social Media

Social media isn't just a fad. Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms have become interwoven in our lives. In fact, a Pew Research Center study from 2013 to 2014 found more than half of internet users had profiles on at least two social media platforms. In addition, 70 percent of Facebook users check their feeds daily, the study found.

This means your customers are most likely using social media. You should be, too. Focus your social media efforts on just one or two platforms (you can't go wrong with Facebook). Don't hesitate to interact with commenters, and be proactive about addressing complaints. Post regular updates that show the human side of your business. Share your videos and blog posts. You can even hold social media contests to build your followers and expand your reach. All these things can help drive interest and help your off-site SEO.

7. Produce YouTube Videos

You don't need to be a professional videographer to reap the benefits of YouTube. What's more important is creating videos that are valuable to your customers. Think in terms of guides, tutorials or demonstrations of your newest products.

Videos are the most engaging types of content online. You can share your videos on your website, your blog and on social media. Chances are, others will share them, too.

8. Volunteer in Your Community

Good things happen when businesses get involved in their communities. They get local media coverage, social media mentions and great material for their blogs and marketing campaigns. People often notice when businesses get involved, leading to generous bumps in word-of-mouth publicity.

Don't wait around for the perfect community event. Take the initiative and start your own! This is the best way to guarantee the coverage and mentions that generate positive off-site SEO. Think of how your business benefits your community and build an event around that.

Conclusion

Off-site SEO is critical to your overall marketing strategy. Yes, it's important to have clear meta tags and headers that match your primary keywords — but all those webpage optimization tactics are more likely to impress bots than actual humans. A concerted effort to boost your off-site SEO will eventually lead to higher-quality inbound links and better brand recognition, producing digital signals that establish your website as unique, valuable and credible. That can have a profoundly positive impact on your website's search rankings.

Want more tips to improve your SEO? Get your free copy of Phil's Ultimate SEO Checklist *at bit.ly/2jAl3Hd*

***Phil Frost** is Founder and COO of Main Street ROI. Phil leads the company's operations and is primary creator of Main Street ROI's marketing training programs. He is an expert in search engine marketing, website analytics, and sales funnel optimization. Phil's marketing thought leadership has been published on Forbes.com, Inc.com, MSN.com, and many other major business media outlets.*

How to Use Webinars for Every Stage of the Customer Journey

By John Jantsch

Reprinted from DuctTapeMarketing.com
See more at bit.ly/2xZH8re

Simply put, webinars (online meetings) are a convenient form of content that gives you the ability to create "one to many" engagements. One of the things I love most about them is that you can use webinars for every stage of the customer journey by altering the intent of the content as the buyer's questions, goals and needs change. In fact, you must consider this approach to get the most from this medium.

Think of webinars as a form of content, because that's what they are.

To see what I mean, take a look at the sections below to see what webinars can do for your prospects and customers throughout each phase of the journey. I've also sprinkled in ways that we at Duct Tape Marketing use them to give you some food for thought on how you might be able to apply these ideas to your business.

Create Awareness

When it comes to spreading awareness around a business, many marketers resort to blogging, social media, emails, PPC, and so on. While I am all for these methods of building awareness and use them myself, I'm always perplexed as to why more business don't add webinars to that list. They are an excellent way to promote useful content and teach timely topics.

Duct Tape Marketing Example: Every month we host what we call a System Webinar that covers topics that I believe are relevant to marketers at that time. Anybody is invited to these calls, and it's a great way for me to share my knowledge on a topic while at the same time give a good impression and introduce my business. Past topics included:

- Pay Per Click Advertising Basics
- Create a Referal Machine That Works Everyday
- Tips and Tools for Greater Productivity

Build Trust

I'm all for testing out various formats on webinars to see what works best for you and your audience, but if there is one thing I'm against on this type of platform, it's selling. Don't sell, give. Repeat that sentence over and over again so that it sticks with you.

Use your webinars to help your audience solve a problem they're having. This helps to establish trust and credibility, which are two attributes that are key if you want somebody to eventually buy from you.

Convert

A percentage of people who attend your awareness-based webinars will want to know how they can act on that useful content, so you need to be prepared for this question and create a webinar that outlines how you might be able to help them.

A conversion-based webinar can even be used to deliver a proposal to a prospect.

Duct Tape Marketing Example: Whenever a person expresses interest in the network, we recommend the next step is to attend our Benefit Discovery Session that takes place twice per month. In this webinar, I showcase the benefits of partnering with our Consultant Network.

Additionally, we conduct Total Online Presence Audits where we provide a detailed report that shows a business the highest priorities for optimizing their online presence. This report is presented as a webinar.

Train

Once you have clients, you can continue ongoing engagements through webinars, covering anything from onboarding to new feature rollouts and demonstrations.

Duct Tape Marketing Example: Within the Duct Tape Marketing Consultant Network, there is a plethora of tools, templates, and processes to get consultants up and running to make more money fast. Along with the benefits mentioned above, we also have Breakthrough Training Series calls bi-weekly for consultants, that address hot topics and best practices to further their marketing knowledge and expertise.

We also use webinars to train new consultants on our systems and processes, which have proven to work very well thus far.

Report Results

If you're in marketing, you know how important it is to follow metrics and report the results from your efforts. Webinars are a great way to deliver this information, whether to a client or an internal team.

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10 Most Effective Tips for Customer Reactivation *(continued from page 1)*

reactivation effort, just as it is elsewhere in marketing. Consider such segmentation variables as:

- Original acquisition source media, like email, SEM, direct mail, display advertising, event, or telemarketing.
- Channel usage. This can be communications channels like email or telephone. Or it can be purchase channel preferences, like retail store, tablet, mobile, or desktop computer.
- Product usage.
- Customer value, using indicators like RFM, cumulative margins, or intent signals.
- Inactivity length, typically divided by months or years, depending on the purchase cycle in your business.

3 Deepen Your Understanding of the Dormant Customer

There are a number of approaches you can take, among them:

- Analyze behavioral patterns, looking for insights. For example, you may notice that an unusually large order is followed by a period of inactivity, and hypothesize that the customer is not getting ready to leave—she just has all the product she needs for a while.
- Use data append to gather more information about the customer. Your database marketing partner can add data points to your customer record that will suggest effective reactivation strategies. Demographic, lifestyle and attitudinal data are often revealing.
- Consider some research, using an outbound telephone call, or a focus group, to gain insights into the reasons for the inactivity.

4 Communicate Through Different Channels

Thanks to marketing automation, email communications have become very easy to deploy, and there's no question that email is effective for current customer communications. But relying entirely on email may annoy lapsed customers, not to mention leave you exposed to possible spam traps. So don't forget the other options available — telephone, postal mail, mobile, retargeted display advertising, social media, your website — and add them to the mix to broaden your reach and keep your customers interested in your messaging. If your customer records are incomplete, ask your database marketing partner to append additional elements to allow communications through these other channels.

The most effective creative strategy for reactivation campaigns is to be direct. Use messages like "We miss you" and "We want you back."

5 Use Proven Offers

Once you've determined that the inactivity is not a customer service problem, then the essential tool for reactivation is a motivational offer. Discounts are widely used by marketers today — because they work. But consider additional offers that have proven to be effective in reactivation marketing, such as:

- If they last bought an ordinary product, offer them a superior version.
- Special service levels. Invite them into a special class of customers. Status and privilege go a long way to attracting a lapsed customer.
- Affinity products. Cross offer a product related to a prior purchase. A carrying case for that laptop, for example.
- Lifecycle stage. Look at where the customer is on the lifecycle continuum. A new customer will respond to a different offer than one that attracts a longstanding customer.

6 Optimize Your Reactivation Program With Testing

Testing can be applied at many points to improve results. Split-test new offer ideas. Test creative, personalization, the cadence of your touches, timing, media channel, as well as refinements like email subject line and from line. Once the customer is reactivated, test to find the optimal cadence and frequency of ongoing communications that will keep them engaged. In short, without testing, you won't know the full potential of your effort.

7 Clean Up Your Data

Consumer and business data degrades fast. A maniacal focus on data hygiene will pay off in all areas of customer management, especially in retention and reactivation. If your customer's email address has changed, you need to keep up. In fact, in some cases an address change may underlie the apparent inactivity in the first place. Your database marketing partner can help you keep your customer records up to date. Quarterly refresh is recommended.

8 Focus Your Messaging on Winback

The most effective creative strategy for reactivation campaigns is to be direct. Use messages like "We miss you" and "We want you back" in the subject line, on the outer envelope, or in the headline. Promote your offer prominently. Enhance your message with a sense of urgency, to motivate quick action. Examples: Act now. Limited time. Last chance.

9 Make It Easy to Respond

Anything that's in your customer's way will reduce response. Look for ways you can remove obstacles. For example, eliminate the number of clicks required. Pre-populate the webform with the customer's information. Provide the user name and password in case they've forgotten it. In short, streamline the process end to end.

10 Convert Customers to Auto-Renewal and Negative Option

One of the most effective methods to prevent churn is to eliminate the repurchase decision entirely. For frequently purchased products, consider offering an automatic replenishment program. Subscription businesses can add auto-renewal to their offers, either at enrollment or as an upsell. ●

A version of this article appeared in Biznology, and was excerpted from the white paper "How to Reactivate Dormant Customers." Go here to see and download it: bit.ly/2x1v8Hj.

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Webinars for Every Stage of the Customer Journey *(continued from page 5)*

Duct Tape Marketing Example: We present mid-month reports to our clients, and it's almost always through a webinar. The people we present to appreciate the efficiency and interactivity.

Referrals

Once you have educational content, you can start to offer it to strategic partners, which can eventually lead to guest appearances on their webinars or webinar collaborations between the two of you. This helps to increase your referrals and eventually lead to more business.

Duct Tape Marketing Example: I've developed relationships with many people within the industry that have helped me build up my client base and expand my referrals. For example, through relationships I've established, I'm doing webinars for BuzzSumo, SCORE, American Marketing Association, and Copyblogger this quarter alone. This helps to increase my exposure, reach new audiences, and expand my referral network.

Best Practices for Conducting a Webinar

There are numerous ways you can run a webinar, but below are a few best practices I would follow regardless of the format:

- Narrow in on a topic that the webinar will focus on and stick to it.
- Don't read off the slides – You can reference the points on the screen, but be sure to elaborate and expand on them to add value.
- Practice, practice, practice – Until you're a master webinar host, and even after you become one, it's important to practice so that you have a good handle on your talking points and your timeline.
- Promote the webinar – No matter how great the content you're presenting is, none of it will matter if nobody sees it.
- Make an engaging slide deck – You need to keep people focused on your presentation, and this starts with the visuals.
- Test your technology – I always log on a few minutes before the webinar start time to ensure everything is running smoothly from a technical perspective (this includes checking to make sure your computer is fully charged).

Tools

To implement these webinars effectively, you need to make sure you're using the right tools. We use the following for various types of webinars, and I highly recommend you check each of them out to see what will work best for you.

- Zoom
- GoToWebinar
- Loom

These are the most effective cases for how I use webinars throughout each phase of the customer journey.

John Jantsch *is a marketing consultant, speaker and author of* Duct Tape Marketing, Duct Tape Selling, The Commitment Engine *and* The Referral Engine *and founder of the Duct Tape Marketing Consultant Network.*

Attitude More Important than Income When It Comes to Spending Habits

By solely focusing on demographics or socioeconomic status, brands could be ignoring key consumers

By Leonie Roderick

Reprinted from MarketingWeek.com
See more at bit.ly/2jjmX48

Brands should not target consumers based on their demographic or economic status but consider their decision-making processes around purchases instead, new research suggests.

The study, conducted by creative communications agency Krow in partnership with YouGov, aims to unearth new insights into how families make purchasing decisions.

Using qualitative and quantitative research, YouGov interviewed 4,024 parents of children aged four or over and segmented them into four clear family types. These are not based on demographic or economic profiles, but on their different attitudes to the decision making process with purchases.

The study finds these decisions are influenced more by attitudes towards parenting and household management than by income, geography, family make-up or age.

"We thought money was going to be at the heart of people's decision making, but what actually came out was more their attitude towards how they want to run their lives, bring up their children and the relationships they want to have," **Aileen Ross**, planning director at Krow, tells *Marketing Week*.

The four family groups are: 'conscious nurturers', 'control seekers', 'practical planners' and 'plate spinners'. While their attitudes toward decision making differ, the data suggest each group has a fairly similar split when it comes to household income.

Some 32% of respondents — the largest proportion — fall into the ***'conscious nurturers'*** category. They believe it's really important for children's development to be included in the decision making when it comes to purchases. Preferred brands include Skoda, Pret A Manger, Simple and Waterstones.

'Control seekers', the second biggest group (28%), plan their spending in advance. They believe they know what's best for their children and that parents have a responsibility to make decisions on behalf of their household. Four in 10 agree that well-known brands are better than own label and they are more likely to opt for brands including Volvo, Argos, H&M and Superdrug.

"The study finds these decisions are influenced more by attitudes towards parenting and household management than by income, geography, family make-up or age."

A quarter of respondents (25%) are classed as ***'practical planners'***. Their decisions are based on practical criteria, so different members of their household contribute to decisions according to their area of expertise. They opt for brands including Nationwide, Lakeland, The Co-operative and TGI Friday's.

Accounting for 14% of respondents, ***'plate spinners'*** are the smallest group. They are just about managing or struggling to keep up with bills and have no formal rules in the household regarding how decisions are made. They choose brands such as New Look, Halfords, Nando's and Radox.

The Importance of Budgeting

'Practical planners' adhere to budgets in a very strict manner compared to all other families, meaning if brands want to be part of their consideration process they will need to start communicating with this group early on.

Nine in 10 (89%) plan their holidays versus 64% among all families, while 82% plan big ticket purchases compared to 58% of all families. Unsurprisingly, they are more likely to be up-to-date with bills and credit commitments (53%) compared to other respondents (47%).

'Conscious nurturers', meanwhile, are less likely to budget for day-to-day purchases (65%) versus other families (69%), as they are typically more affluent. A quarter (24%) of the families within the group earn over £60,000 versus 19% of all other families.

The smallest group, 'plate spinners', tend to work full-time or part-time, and are just managing or struggling to pay the bills. They tend not to experiment or stray away from their regular choices. As an example, nearly two-thirds (60%) always buy the same frozen food as part of their weekly shop.

A third have authorised overdrafts, 50% use a credit card for purchases and one in five have taken out a personal loan.

With this group, there is a greater chance of big ticket items not being purchased (15%) compared to all families (7%).

While there is a greater chance they won't buy big ticket items, 'plate spinners' do allow their families occasional treats, with two-thirds buying concert tickets and 79% treating themselves to food they know isn't good for them.

The study also revealed some broader insights into British families' purchasing decisions and financial situations.

While almost half (47%) of all families in each segment keep up with their financial obligations and have money to spare, one in ten (11%) are struggling. Another 42% of families are just about managing to keep up with bills and credit commitments but have no money left over.

Among all families, almost half (48%) of all day-to-day purchase decisions are made entirely by parents. For a quarter of families, children put forward opinions from the outset. Incidentally, families who are forced to stick to a strict budget are even more likely to have decisions made solely by parents (55%).

Ross concludes: "As a starting point into identifying the best way to communicate with families, it's good to have an appreciation of their decision making process in terms of how and why they go about their spending." ●

See more on the shrinking and emerging demographics marketers need to know at bit.ly/2mivSPy.

***Leonie Roderick** is a senior reporter for MarketingWeek.com, who covers food and drink, FMCG, media, luxury and utilities. She likes to talk to marketers who aim to change the industry for the better and who don't speak in jargon.*

Does Your Copy Have a 'Human' Voice? Or a 'Copywriter's' Voice?

By Gary Hennerberg
Reinventing Direct

Reprinted from TargetMarketingMag.com
See more at bit.ly/2r0Xrjt

The other day I got an email from someone I hadn't heard from in a while. The subject line was a casual "Hey Gary." Wow, I thought! I haven't heard from this person in a long time, so I eagerly opened the email. But in a split-second, I realized this wasn't a personal email. It was an auto-responder. And the voice didn't sound like the person I know who sent it. It felt like it had been written by a copywriter.

That experience jarred me into wondering about my own copy: Does it sound human? Do I capture the right "voice" of either the sender or the organization?

Sometimes copy gets lost by overthinking it, making sure every "t" is crossed and "i" dotted. Sometimes the tone gets lost through input from other marketing team members, rounds of approvals, and review for compliance, where the tone degrades into being less human and more unnatural — to the point of being distracting or off-putting.

So today I share a few thoughts about copy's "voice."

I've come up with a scale that might help guide you to the "voice" or tone of copy for you. It's a scale of 1 to 3. 1 is the most casual. 3 is the most formal. You might find there are more than three for your situation. These are examples of how you might greet someone, ranging from a close friend, to casual acquaintance, to someone you'd meet for the first time:

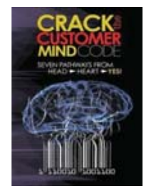
1. 'Sup, my brother/sister?
2. Hey there, <name>! How are you?!
3. Hello, <name>, nice to meet you.

In the example email from a friend I cited earlier, the subject line was a casual "Hey Gary." But the tone shifted, once the email was opened to a more canned, more formal, "Hello, nice to meet you" approach.

It was distracting. And disappointing. These unintended — but very real — impressions overwhelmed whatever impact was hoped for about the message content. So my advice is this:

- Know your audience. When you know your audience, you'll know if your voice can be casual or formal. Settling on the appropriate voice can be based on past transactions, the type of product or service you offer, or what you know about your customer's age, demos or behavioral data.
- Distinguish the level of relationship and product awareness. The voice of a subject line of an email, and headline of any copy (website, landing page, letter, etc.), should be based on the awareness and relationship your prospective customer has with your product or its category.
- Choose the right type of lead. The relationship and awareness (or lack thereof) dictates if you should use a direct lead (offer, promise or problem-solution) or an indirect lead (secret, declaration or story). I'll share more about these six lead types in a future blog post.
- Be consistent. Don't shift from one voice type to another within the same promo. If the copy has been significantly edited, be sure to read it aloud so you can hear if the voice is consistent throughout.
- Be consistent across channels. If you're using email, make sure the voice is consistent from the subject line to the email body, and from the email to the landing page, and yes, consistent all the way through the order page.

Finally, let someone read your copy who is unfamiliar with what has been written, to make sure the voice is appropriate and, probably most importantly, that it sounds like it was written by a human.



Gary Hennerberg *is a mind code marketing strategist. His latest book is* Crack the Customer Mind Code: Seven Pathways from Head to Heart to YES!, *available from the DirectMarketingIQ Bookstore. For a free download with more detail about the seven pathways and other copywriting and consulting tips, go to Hennerberg.com.*

Ask the DM Experts
by Susan K. Jones,
Susan K. Jones & Associates
and Ferris State University

What Does "Loyalty" Look Like in 2017? (Part One)

Q. *With hundreds of loyalty/frequency/relationship marketing programs available to consumers, how can we make ours stand apart?*

A. This year's RACOM IMC Roundtable, sponsored by the Midwest Marketing Education Foundation, featured **Ron Jacobs** as the kickoff speaker. Ron, among other achievements, is a CADM past-president, recipient of the CADM Downs Award, President of Jacobs & Clevenger, and patron of educational programs at DePaul University and through the Midwest Marketing Education Foundation.

Ron's topic bears directly on your question, as he sought to help his audience understand the difference between customer loyalty and rewards — or as he calls it "from communications to connected experiences."

Ron noted that the customer journey is more than just a simple transaction. Customers go through a process in which they, "Discover channels, devices, content, narratives and offers that help prospects and customers to discover, learn, act or purchase." All that sounds transactional, so Ron asks if we are using the loyalty program information we get as effectively as we can. He says we should be able to use more data to produce "more relevancy, more personalization and more complexity" in the way we interact with our customers. In other words, "agile marketing."

> *"Traditional loyalty programs reward existing or passive behaviors, with generic awards to reduce attrition. Modern loyalty is engagement, experience, specific milestones, behaviors and thresholds."*

Ron gathered some intriguing case study information in this regard, which he shared with the RACOM audience along with his sources:

- 68% of consumers expect loyalty points for spending time in store and repeat visits (Capgemini's Digital Transformation Institute)
- 41% of U.S. consumers are loyal to brands that allow them to personalize products or create something bespoke (Accenture)
- 51% of U.S. consumers are loyal to brands that interact with them through their preferred channels of communication (Accenture)
- 41% of U.S. consumers are loyal to organizations that present them with new experiences, products or services (Accenture)
- 89% of American consumers say they are loyal to brands that share their values (Wunderman)

Ron argues that it is clear that "Loyalty needs to evolve. Traditional loyalty programs reward existing or passive behaviors, with generic awards to reduce attrition. Modern loyalty is engagement, experience, specific milestones, behaviors and thresholds." Ron provided several examples along these lines, including:

- Unique experiences with individualized incentives
- Personalize and individualize experiences
- Have an onboarding process that encourages engagement
- Provide meaningful surprises that are better than users expect
- Retention and churn reduction are goals, just not the only goals
- Data helps to unlock identify high-value customer behavior

It's important to realize that transactional programs do not engender loyalty, as Ron explains. "Loyalty is belonging. It requires an emotional connection." Here are some of the unfortunate mistakes that marketers make all the time, leading to a loss of loyalty, per Ron:

- Travel brands seem to have forgotten why people travel — Online travel exposed a lack of authenticity latent in the travel business.
- Retail brands in-store shopping experience is unfulfilling — Don't blame retails ills on Amazon. They are opening retails stores!
- Marketers just check off the box when it comes to mobile — They don't read the customer conversations around their brands and mobile strategies are not based on preferences.
- The difference between 20th Century and 21st Century Loyalty Programs — In the 20th century, for companies it was about the Purchase. For customers it was about the Rewards. In the 21st century, loyalty is about engagement and retention. As Ron notes, "To increase loyalty, marketers need to improve user experiences, both perceptions and responses."

In the November *adMarks* issue, we'll continue to share Ron Jacobs' thought leadership about the best 21st century loyalty programs and practices.

"Ask the DM Experts" is a monthly *adMarks* feature. Professor Susan K. Jones draws on the knowledge of CADM members and other authorities to answer your questions — so tell her what you want to ask the experts! Contact Susan at sjones9200@aol.com or follow her on Twitter @sjones9200.

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