



The ABC's of Getting More Business

GOLTZ ON BUSINESS
by Jay Goltz

As we sit around during what is probably one of our slowest months, February, it's probably as good a time as any to think about how to increase sales.

There are three ways to do this. To tell you how to do this in detail in just one article is impossible, but I can highlight some questions you might think about.

A - GET NEW CUSTOMERS .

Advertising is probably the most obvious way to bring in new business, but it is also complicated. There are several questions you should ask yourself.

1. Are your yellow page ads effective? Are you targeting the right areas? Do they really draw in people from more than five miles away?

2. Do your ads have what they call in marketing a USP (Unique Selling Proposition)? Could your competitors use the same ad without changing any of the text? Are you promoting your company's best assets?

3. Does your location attract new customers? Is your signage effective?

4. Are you advertising enough? (What is enough? Darn if I know. Is Elvis really dead?)

5. Have you done your own research as to what news papers people read and what radio stations they listen to?

6. Do coupon mailers bring in enough new customers to justify their expense?

B - ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS RETURNING ?

The cornerstone of most businesses is repeat business. Poor quality or service are good ways to scare away existing customers.

1. How often are customers unhappy with the end result of your framing? Is the order always ready on time?

2. If your repeat customer base is shrinking, consider why. Is the average age of your neighborhood customer going up while their spending goes down? Is the average income dropping?

3. Have you changed your product mix? Are you paying attention to what customers

want and giving them more of it? Have you weeded out slow moving merchandise, and added new merchandise?

4. Does your store look like it did ten years ago? Twenty years ago? From before I was born? It's very easy to not notice your interior is looking worn when you look at it every day. Your customers notice in about three seconds.

FINALLY, C - RAISE YOUR AVERAGE SALE

Don't brainwash yourself with the idea that your customers won't spend more money for a nicer product. If you do, you're cheating yourself and your customers (at least the ones who want something nicer).

1. Are you or your employees still afraid to show the customer better, more expensive mouldings?

2. Have you bought any of the new value added glass on the market? Are you and your staff knowledgeable enough to sell it? Do you remember to suggest it?

3. Are you and your staff knowledgeable and proficient about museum quality framing, whether the piece has monetary or sentimental value?

4. Do you sell other things that your customers may want to buy, i.e., photo frames, picture lights, artwork or posters?

5. How many customers walk out without framing something? Obviously this may happen sometime, but it is an excellent barometer of how you're doing. Don't kid yourself. "Let me think about it", usually means I don't like your selection, I don't trust you, your prices seem too high, I don't like your taste...

I know these things seem rather basic, but that's the point. It's the "basics" that make or break a business. If you choose to use this list as a checklist for your business, involve your entire staff, even if that means just you and your spouse. Ask an outsider – a customer, a friend, a vendor. When you answer the questions, try to be objective and be hard on yourself. You won't be half as hard on yourself as your customers are on you. ■