

Are you scaring off your prospects?

It seems that many vendors and service providers are resorting to scare tactics to get prospects to do something: renew, register, etc. They use pressure terms and frequent reminders to communicate that if you don't do something right at this moment you will forever be suspended, terminated, interrupted or be victim to some other dire scenario. You won't pass go and you won't collect \$200 for sure.

For example, just this morning I received a renewal email from a county program I am enrolled in. This is the first paragraph, which I have redacted to hide the sender's identity:

Deborah Brody,

Your certification as a registered vendor in the XXX Program will expire within the next 90 days. If you wish to remain in this program, you must renew your registration before 08/04/2014. If you have not renewed your registration by 08/04/2014, your participation in the XXXX will be suspended until you have done so.

Granted, this is not the scariest email, but it is not very friendly. To say my participation will be suspended sounds a bit threatening. What if, instead, it said something like:

Dear Deborah Brody,

You are currently certified as a vendor in the XXXX Program, and your certification is due to expire August 4. We value your participation and ask that you renew your registration by August 4 so that you can remain in the program without interruption.

Better no?

And then there are the endless emails I get from Network Solutions with subject lines like: *Your Services Will Be Interrupted*. Mind you, I have more than a month until I have to renew, but yet NetSol sends me variations on this email two and three times a day! I feel harassed, and now I am searching for another registrar.

Pressuring your prospects can become a turn-off. Sending too many emails is a form of pressure, and often, adds to the prospect's stress level. You don't want to stress your prospect, do you? What you want is to encourage him/her to make a decision.

Think about motivations, and how people respond. Do people respond positively to a negative pitch? Perhaps some do. However, as the refrain goes, you attract more bees with honey than with vinegar. Compliments are better than criticisms. Feeling like a hero is better than feeling like a deadbeat loser.

What do you think? How do you respond to negative emails? Do you ever feel harassed or threatened by vendors and service providers?