

It's not always about the money (customer feedback part 1)

Going by the emails I receive, some companies think that I don't do business with them solely because I can't afford to.



Every few weeks, a yoga studio I used to attend until my favorite teacher left sends me a dollars-off promotion. Come back, they say, here's an \$8 discount.

Then there's the company that is always sending me discounts for handyman services.

And there's a cosmetics company that sends emails telling me how I can get a free something or other with purchase (Only today! Only friends and family!).

It's not about money.

None of these companies has any idea why I am not a return customer. They've never asked me, but I'll tell you my reasons.

I haven't been back to the yoga studio because I don't like the teacher that is currently teaching during the time slot that is convenient for me. Additionally, I hurt my shoulder and I can't do yoga right now.

I haven't used the handyman company because I don't have a

current need. That's not to say I won't in the future, but there's nothing (knocking on wood here) that needs fixing right now.

The cosmetics company just yesterday was offering me a free lash-extender mascara. I wear contact lenses and I never use mascaras that extend because it bothers my eyes, so even a free mascara is not an enticement.

But at least they are tracking.

To their credit, these companies have noticed that I haven't been a customer for a while and they want me back. But they err in thinking that doing business is simply about money.

Here's the thing: Getting customers back is not as easy as offering a discount or a gift with purchase. You have to understand what motivates your customer.

The decision to buy something or do business with a company is often about more than just price. There are other factors, both tangible (e.g., need, convenience, timing) and intangible (e.g., trust, satisfaction, appreciation) that affect whether you shop somewhere or buy a certain product.

Sometimes, you have to ask.

If you've lost business or aren't getting repeat business, you have to ask why. Don't assume that everything can be fixed with a dollars-off promotion. Companies are collecting emails to do marketing or to send reminders. Well, they can also send a survey or even a personalized email.

Imagine how much more effective it would be if the yoga studio owner sent me an email saying she's noticed I haven't been there in several months and she'd like to know if I am still living in town or doing yoga.

How do you track your clients or customers? How do you entice them to come back? Let me know what works for you in the

comments.