

True marketing gold that guarantees results

What is the one thing in marketing that guarantees results?

Is it your website? Your social media marketing? Your strategic, forward-thinking marketing plan? Your market research? Your promotions?

While all of the above help you to generate leads and close sales, there is one thing that you have that will guarantee those leads convert and make those sales happen.

It's your credibility.

If I can't believe what you are selling, then I am not going to buy it. In other words, without credibility, you are nothing.

Credibility means trust. If you are credible, your product or service is trustworthy. It's really that simple.

Let me illustrate with the tale of an unnecessary car repair:

A couple of months ago, I took my car in for a tire rotation and alignment to the tire shop where I had bought my tires. The rotation is free for the life of the vehicle, and the alignment costs \$99. After a few minutes, one of the salespeople came out to tell me there was a problem. The shop could not do the alignment because the front end arms needed to be replaced. This repair would cost \$600 (or six times what I had been planning on). The mechanic showed me what he was talking about, but my instinct (and pocketbook) said to decline this expensive repair.

When I walked out of the shop, I felt highly uneasy about what had happened. I felt that the salesperson was trying to upsell me and I did not trust her or the mechanic's

assessment. Also, there had been a change in both the appearance and atmosphere of the shop. Previously, it had a homey (and more trustworthy) appearance. The people were friendly, and seemed honest. Now, things had been spiffed up, and the front desk was manned by two fairly surly people that barely had a smile for me. I got the sense the shop had been sold and was under new management, and that the management was looking to squeeze more profits from its customers. After all you are not going to make a lot of money off free rotations, are you?

This week, I took my car in for routine maintenance to my regular (trustworthy) repair shop. I asked them to check out this front end problem. And, no surprise really, they said it did not need the repair. So either the mechanic at the tire shop did not know what he was talking about, or the salesperson was indeed upselling me something just to generate more money. Either way, the credibility of the tire shop has completely evaporated for me. I can't think of taking my car there, because I don't believe they will act in my best interest. I don't believe anymore in what they are selling.

You can't manufacture credibility.

You have it or you don't. Credibility derives from your actions, from the substance of your product or service. However, you *can promote* your credibility. You can highlight what makes you credible. When you communicate with your audience, you show credibility by your honesty. You can use customer testimonials and ratings. If you've gotten third-party reviews (like a product review in magazine), these are earned media mentions that help promote credibility.

The bottom line is that you can only promote your credibility if you act credibly. Otherwise, all your marketing efforts will be for naught.

Thoughts? Drop me a line in the comments.

