

Do you appreciate your customers?

I am sure you appreciate your customers (or supporters), especially when they pay you (or donate) for the goods/services you offer. But do your customers know you appreciate them? How are you communicating appreciation?

If you are trying to establish or maintain a long term relationship with your customers or supporters, you must demonstrate AND COMMUNICATE that you appreciate their business/donations, and that you are not taking the relationship for granted.



How can you do this? There are several ways.

Reward their loyalty

Big box stores, airlines, credit cards and any number of other service/good purveyors provide discounts/points/bonuses for frequent customers. Giving customers a discount or something else of value gives them a reason to continue to work with you, and lets you reward their support.

Thank them

It depends on the size of your business, but thanking customers can be done with a simple hand written card, an email, a pre-printed postcard, or even through a personalized email marketing campaign.

Accommodate them

My kitchen sink was leaking, so I contacted my go-to plumber. I sent him an email explaining the situation and asking when he could come to deal with it. He could only fit me in the following week. I wrote him back and said that I would be looking for someone who could come sooner. His response was this:

Wow, that sucks but ok

Really? It sucks that I have to look for someone else? You know what sucks? Having your kitchen sink leak. Imagine if instead he wrote this:

“Totally understand. You need to get the sink fixed ASAP. If you can’t find anyone, let me know.”

As it turns out, I found someone to come that day! And fix the leak for a lot less than my soon to be ex plumber, who clearly is taking my business for granted.

Notice them

I’ve been going to a yoga studio for the better part of the last year but around Thanksgiving, I went out of town and had

a couple other obligations. Since I had not been in the studio for several weeks, the studio manager sent me an email with the subject line “Just checking in.” It said this:

Has it been a few weeks since you've been to yoga? Just remember you carry your yoga practice with you wherever you go. In the meantime, here is a 7 minute practice you can do right now in your chair. Don't stay away too long. ☐

This included the instructions for the seven minute practice referenced.

It all requires keeping track

All these require you tracking your customers/donors. For the yoga studio, this is probably part of the Mindbody software they use. For smaller organizations it may be as simple as a Excel spreadsheet. For bigger businesses, there are many types of customer management (CRM) software available. For nonprofits, there are specific donor databases.

Make them feel that you appreciate them

We all like to feel appreciated. And organizations of all types need to be sure to communicate their appreciation.

Why a thank you is good marketing



Thank you for reading this post, and thank you for reading my blog. I probably haven't thanked you before, so I apologize, because this post is about how thank you is really a marketing tool.

We've all heard of customer appreciation. Often, it is a deal available to new customers. Sometimes it is a gift with purchase. In many cases, the customer has to do something additional to get appreciated—sign up for a new service or buy more.

What about customers that just use a service, like a gym, cable, phone and have been using it for years. Do they ever get thanked? No, they often don't. Why? Because companies take the bulk of their customer base for granted. They imagine that if they are providing the service, and there is no problem, the customer will remain loyal. But in fact, customers are not always loyal. They will switch for lower prices, or better

service. They may also switch because a company does not seem to appreciate they have a choice in service providers. This is why more banks and customer service agents start any conversation with you by saying things like “thank you for banking with us.”

The bottom line is that saying thank you is about expressing appreciation. And most everyone likes to be appreciated. And yet, thank yous are sometimes hard to come by.

In your personal marketing or personal branding, saying thank you may be even more important. Think about it: What are you saying when you don't say thank you? You are communicating that you are uninterested, unappreciated, or that you take the gesture for granted. It makes you seem rude and self-involved. Some people will claim they are too busy to respond. Are you too busy to make sure that you are perceived properly?

Remember, no one is forced to be your customer unless you are a monopoly. And no one is required to help you out unless he or she wants to. It is simple to say thank you. Saying thank you boosts the perception that you care, that you are aware that what the customer or friend has given you has some value.