

The Basics of WOW

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Differentiate with Wow

Consumers are faced with a plethora of choices each and every day. Simple Google searches for terms like “chiropractor” or “dentist” will likely result in at least two practitioners to choose from that are near your home. In fact, when I searched for a chiropractor near my home I found ten within a two-mile radius.

Consumers are faced with so many choices that it’s sometimes difficult to make a decision. They turn to friends, family, co-workers, review sites and social media for advice. When this happens, do you want to be the business that they recommend?

In today’s economy, competition is fierce. It’s never been more important to differentiate your business from those of your competitors. The best way to do this is by consistently wowing your customers every time they interact with your brand.

Make a Customer for Life

About ten years ago I was in the market for a new dentist. The dentist I visited was friendly, didn’t keep me waiting too long and the work he did was exceptional. We made small talk when he wasn’t drilling out my cavity and for the most part I was indifferent as to whether or not I would use him again. When my appointment was over, I checked out with the receptionist and went on about my day.

I didn’t put much thought into the experience until the dentist called me later that same day. He wanted to make sure that I was pleased with the service and quality of the work and asked me if I was feeling ok. His personal approach surprised me, but



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it made me feel like he truly cared about his patients. Because of his personalized approach, I made the decision to move my entire family over to his practice.

Over the years he continues to deliver a consistent delightful experience. When something goes wrong with a treatment that he's performed (which is rare), he'll meet me at his practice to fix it. I don't have to wait until the next business day. Occasionally he'll send e-mail, cards or call to follow up with me. It's not too much effort, but it keeps him at the top of my list when someone asks me for a referral. He's definitely earned my business for life.

The Cost of Not Wowing Your Customers

Experts indicate that it can cost anywhere from 5 to 10 times more to acquire a new customer than it does to keep an existing one. Although they can't agree on a general statistic, they all agree that it costs more to find a new customer than it is to serve the customers you already have.

Small businesses must keep the long-term relationship in mind if they want to maximize the value of each customer (and develop their brands!). That means implementing efficient and effective processes that resolve issues quickly and treat customers as unique individuals.

Getting Started with Wow

Getting started with a Wow strategy is easy. There are seven steps that you can take to get started:

1. Deliver on your promises
2. Go above and beyond



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3. Respond to complaints
4. Make more deposits
5. Make an occasional withdrawal
6. Be consistent
7. Reward loyalty

Deliver On Your Promises

The first step in delivering a Wow experience is to deliver on your promises. This may seem simple and obvious, but it can really go a long way. Make sure that you're providing the service or product that your customers pay for, and don't make them wait too long to receive it.



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Go Above and Beyond

Observe your competition, and assess where you can deliver additional value. Ask yourself these questions:

1. What does my competition do to wow their customers?
2. What are some ways that I can set myself apart from my competition?
3. What can I do to deliver more value or better service to my customers?

Sometimes it's the small things that win a customer for life. Here are 50 ways that you can wow your customers.

Wow My Customers Worksheet

1. Place an X in the box next to the items that you'll want to use to wow your customers.
2. Add additional items that you want to incorporate in the space provided.

50 Cost-effective Ways to Wow Your Customers

	Fulfill orders on time		Respond to complaints
	Follow-up with emails		Call them and say thank you
	Answer questions that they pose		Send a handwritten thank you note
	Send a \$5 gift card with every purchase		Send a lottery ticket with every purchase
	Start a rewards or loyalty program		Feature a customer on your website
	Provide a surprise discount		Send cookies, fruit, or flowers
	Send a book with a personal note		Donate on behalf of your customer
	Send a pizza or a pizza gift card		Plant a tree on behalf of your customer
	Provide special private shopping hours or prizes during certain hours		Meet up with customers in the cities that you are visiting
	Throw a party for all of your customers at your next major event		Randomly select a few customers to receive a product that you upsell
	Provide a gift card for an item in your store or on your website		Provide an upgrade for free
	Provide offers to customers who contribute ideas or engage with your company online		Send unique swag, such as a guitar pick earrings for music lovers or sippy cups for parents with kids
	Celebrate an event, such as a birthday or anniversary		Schedule lunch at your office and invite customers to attend and share feedback
	Celebrate a milestone, such as number of years as a customer		Tell your customers how their feedback was implemented
	Send a gift card for a free car wash		Give them a free song download
	Offer free wrapping for product purchases		Include a free USB flash drive with their order
	Name a star after their company		Send a laminated reference guide or chart
	Send a box of office supplies		Create a video message and send it via email
	Send them a Payday candy bar		Send a small gift
	Provide group/bulk order opportunities		Upgrade their shipping to priority mail
	Follow them on Twitter		Hire them
	Give them bonus items		Pre-order exclusive items
	Send personalized address labels		Give them an inexpensive photo album
	Send samples of new products		Provide a make-over related to your product
	Give a night out at the movies		Send them a travel mug filled with tea

Respond to Complaints Individually

One of the worst things you can do as a business is to let a complaint go unresolved — if a complaint goes unaddressed or ignored, the issue can spread like wildfire on the Internet. Even if you decide you don't want to do business with the customer, it's still important to neutralize the frustration so that the customer becomes indifferent rather than angry or hateful.

When responding to disappointed customers, remember the 3R Method: Respond, Remedy and Reinforce. Here's the breakdown:



Respond:

Listen to your customers and acknowledge the issue. They are sharing their feelings with you and can often provide some much needed insight. When responding on a social media platform it's best to apologize for the experience and ask that they contact your office for resolution.



Remedy:

Offer a solution to remedy the problem and if possible explain how you'll keep the remedy in place for the future.



Reinforce:

Reinforce their commitment to return by providing a coupon, gift certificate or a hand written note.




Never take a complaint personally, and always try to respond to the customer in a calm and collected way. Respond individually and privately when possible. You never want to get into a debate on the Internet or in your office.

The worksheet below will help you get started on your resolution process.

3R Worksheet

Take some time to prepare your staff on how you want to resolve complaints. This worksheet should help you get started:

When a customer isn't happy I will train my staff to:

3 R Method	Your Actions
	<p>Respond with this acknowledgement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••••
	<p>Remedy the problem by providing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••••
	<p>Reinforce the desire to have the customer return by providing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••••

Make More Deposits

According to Stephen Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, human beings have an emotional bank account. This account starts with a zero balance and fluctuates based on deposits and withdrawals. As emotional deposits are made into your customers' emotional bank accounts, their trust and confidence grows — resulting in stronger relationships.

The easiest way to make a deposit is to simply be helpful. Ask your customers what help they need and provide a solution. The solution doesn't always have to result in a sale... and it can be as easy as providing tips and resources that are related to their purchase or inquiry. The key to a strong relationship lies in your ability to make more deposits than withdrawals.



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Make the Occasional Withdrawal

You won't stay in business very long if you can't get someone to purchase your products or services. The key to not overdrawing on your customers' emotional bank accounts is to tie your product or service to something that's helpful to them. Here are three ways to tactfully increase your revenue while continuing to be helpful:

- ✓ **Cross Sell:** Help customers by suggesting complementary products that they may need. This is referred to as cross selling. Customers aren't always aware of the perfect product or service pairings, and may be willing to spend more to receive a better experience.
- ✓ **Upsell:** Help your customers avoid stress by offering a warranty, add-ons, a better model or VIP service. This is

referred to as upselling. Listen to your customers and try to understand their needs. They might be willing to pay extra for special treatment.

- ✓ **New products:** Remember to help your customers by identifying things that will make their life easier or better by notifying them of new products or services. The best way to do this is by reviewing past purchases, engagements with your brand and talking to them.

The worksheet on the next page will help you identify product or service pairings that you can use to help your customers.

Be Consistent

Your brand is a representation of who you are, what you stand for, and the benefits (both physical and emotional) that your product or service deliver. Delivering a consistent positive experience to your customers will condition them to expect this experience each time they visit you. They'll begin to associate the benefits that they receive with your brand, and continue coming back for that experience. They will even share it with their friends.

Reward Loyalty and Referrals

Effective rewards programs are a big win for small businesses because they help customers develop habits that include your company. The idea of a reward program is to encourage repeat business and referrals. The more your customers participate, the more rewards they'll earn. The more rewards they earn, the more they'll appreciate the program. The more they appreciate the program, the more they use it and tell others about it. It's a really nice, never-ending cycle.

Establish a loyalty or referral program with rewards that are easy to obtain. Providing small gift cards, give-aways or discounts for repeat business or referrals is a great way to demonstrate your appreciation.

Use the worksheet on the next page to brainstorm ways that you can reward loyalty in your business.



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1. List activities that you can implement to increase referrals in your business.

Example: Provide free movie tickets to customers when they refer a friend.

Example: Provide an in-store credit of \$50 for every review posted on Angie's List.

Beyond Wow

Customers no longer put up with poor customer service, inefficiency and indifference. They simply choose a different provider for what they need, and often times they'll never tell you they've moved on. Small businesses that want to do more than acquire new customers need to implement a Wow strategy before it's too late.

Lifecycle Marketing

Wowing your customers is the third and final stage of a process that we refer to as Lifecycle Marketing. Lifecycle Marketing is about attracting new customers with quality content, selling your products or services, and wowing customers to earn repeat business and referrals — Attract, Sell, Wow. The real value of Lifecycle Marketing is the integration of the individual actions into a single system, which leverages the interconnectedness and interdependencies of each stage.

Implementing a sales and marketing plan based on this process will help you rediscover the joy of running your own business AND give you more time to focus on the things you love, like launching a new product, starting an online store, or watching your daughter's dance recital. Whatever you hope to accomplish, earning and keeping happy customers will get you there.

Sources

Attracting new customers will cost your company 5 times more than keeping an existing customer. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/alexlawrence/2012/11/01/five-customer-retention-tips-for-entrepreneurs/>

Conventional business wisdom contends that it costs 10 times as much to obtain a new customer as it does to retain an existing customer. Pricing for Profitability: Activity-Based Pricing for Competitive Advantage By John L. Daly (2002), p85. Published by John Wiley and Sons. ISBN 0471221597

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change By Stephen R. Covey (2013), p198. Published by Simon and Shuster. ISBN 1451639619

It is important to remember that companies want you to develop habits that include them. <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/ulterior-motives/201010/the-psychology-loyalty-programs>

About Lifecycle Marketing



Creating sales and marketing strategy for your small business can be daunting. Infusionsoft's Lifecycle Marketing model provides a simple framework you can use to attract customers, grow sales and deliver a wowing customer experience. Developed by a team of sales and marketing experts at Infusionsoft, Lifecycle Marketing has helped thousands of small businesses achieve success.

The beauty of Lifecycle Marketing is the simplicity of the model, which can be applied to any small business regardless of industry or business model. When put into action, Lifecycle Marketing will help you grow sales AND give you more time to focus on the things you love. Launch a new product. Connect more with your customers. Watch your daughter's dance recital. Read a book. Whatever you hope to accomplish, it will be well within your reach.

About the Author

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As the Content Strategy Manager at **Infusionsoft**, Tracie Rollins helps small businesses succeed by educating and sharing innovative approaches to solve small business challenges. She applies nearly two decades of experience to marketing strategy, research, and development of content that educates, influences and improves the lives of others. Education provides knowledge, knowledge drives actions and actions change the world.



Entrepreneur at heart, Tracie is the managing partner of The Rollins Advantage, LLC. where she helps small businesses implement cost effective marketing strategies that drive results. She has appeared on KTVK's Good Morning Arizona show, and has been featured in the Institute for Industrial Engineering magazine, Woman's World, Arizona Republic and multiple local publications.

A science undergraduate, she completed her bachelors of science in Industrial Engineering in 1997 at the University of Arizona. She earned her Master's in Business Administration in 2001.

About Infusionsoft

Infusionsoft is the sales and marketing software built for small businesses. Watch our **product demo** to see Infusionsoft in action.



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