

Title:

Question Everything

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642

Summary:

Listen to a capture every question your clients and prospects ask. Then ask some more questions. Use the techniques described in this article to build better marketing materials.

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Article Body:

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Or, more to the point of the title, question every word you use to market your business and then answer every question in your marketing.

People make buying decisions in ways that we may find hard to imagine. The mental, logical process and the emotional, feel good process come together at some point in every sale. The problem, though, is that this process is invisible to the marketer.

Here's my best advice for making sure that your marketing materials hit the logical and emotional mark.

Every time a prospect or client asks a question, write it down. Collect these questions on an ongoing basis, make every sales person note the questions they receive. In a very short period of time you will see patterns develop. If you are getting some of the same questions over and over again you can bet that your marketing materials need to address the answer to those questions.

The questions our prospects ask are often clues to what matters to them. So, forget about the new shiny features of your gizmo and address what's really on their mind. Do it now, because some of your prospects won't think to actually ask, they'll just move on.

It's one of the reasons FAQ pages are so popular on web sites. Maybe you should create one for your sales team as well. Make a game out of getting good

questions. Ask everyone in your organization to bring a client or prospect question to a weekly sales meeting. This can and should include everyone that has any contact with clients.

### The Art of the Question in a Question

This can be a bit intimidating for a less than confident salesperson but you must develop the art of asking questions too. Every sales trainee has been schooled at some point to ask probing questions to find a prospect's pain, but really successful sales folks go beyond that fully understand what a prospect is thinking.

This is done by getting them to explain a question. When a prospect asks a question often they are doing so because they think it's a question they are supposed to ask in the buying process. Your job is to help them understand what they really need to know and you start this by finding out what they really mean by each question.

It's a bit of an art, but sometimes it's as simple as asking them to explain a question or asking them to "tell you more" about something. For example if a stock question is something like "What is your customer service policy?" the temptation might be to launch into how great your service is (just like everyone else), but a more valuable step might be to find out what good service is to them or what bad experience they may have had.

If you really want to make massive improvements in your sales, service and communications technique, you might want to buy a little mini digital recorder and record several sales calls. Some clients and prospects will be a little nervous about this practice so you will need to choose wisely and respect boundaries, but do this once or twice and you may make some pretty interesting discoveries.

Another great thing about gathering your list of questions is that it arms you with the questions and answers that your prospects may not ask but are thinking. I think every organization should create a marketing page and web page that is titled something like "Questions you should ask." In some cases your prospect may not really know how to analyze a purchase from you. If you educate them on the best way to think about your product or service, give them the questions to pose to competitors, you get to frame the buying decision, hopefully, in a way that plays to your strengths.