

Title:

Using the Power of Client Testimonials to Grow Your Business

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806

Summary:

Client testimonials are one of the most powerful marketing tools you can use. Learn how they can help you attract new clients, increase customer confidence and generate a positive "buzz" about you and your business.

Keywords:

Testimonials, business, clients, marketing, sales, PR, website, increase income, promotion

Article Body:

Client testimonials are one of the most powerful marketing tools coaches can use. Did you know that they can help you attract new clients, increase customer confidence and generate a positive "buzz" about you and your services? (Actually, those are just a few of their marketing uses.)

Human nature gives testimonials such power because we love discovering what one person thinks of another - even when it's positive! It's the same dynamic that makes gossip so hard to resist. As a professional coach, you want the positive "gossip" that testimonials provide because you can use that information to promote yourself, your services and products, to call attention to your strengths and to distinguish yourself from your competitors.

Testimonials also are powerful because they are first-person accounts: when a client makes a positive statement about you and backs it up with his or her name and contact information, it enhances your credibility.

In addition, written testimonials are fabulously flexible. They can be used powerfully on your website, in printed and electronic promotional materials, following the signature line of your emails and in many other ways and places. Once you have obtained testimonials from your clients, you will think of a hundred ways to use them!

Now that we have established the value of client testimonials, here are a few dos and don'ts to guide you as you obtain and use them to grow your business.

DO let your clients know the benefits to them of providing testimonials that

will be used on your website(s), such as:

- increased exposure for their business, thanks to internet serendipity;
- increased website traffic and/or business for them, generated by a link from your website to theirs;
- enhanced standing among search engines, due to more internet exposure; and
- that genuinely warm feeling that comes from helping another "solopreneur"!

DO obtain your clients' permission to use their full name and email address because it will give their testimonials a great deal more credibility. (Let's assume I have written a glowing testimonial for someone whose services I use. Now compare the impact of these two testimonial signatures: "A.S., Coach" or Alicia Smith, Business Coach and DISC Ninja; Alicia@aliciasmith.com <mailto:Alicia@aliciasmith.com>. The second is far more powerful.)

DON'T (ever) use fictional testimonials because they can destroy your credibility.

DO utilize honest (verbatim) testimonials that speak to what your potential clients will most want to know about you, including (but not limited to!) why you are such a fantastic coach and why you, your services and your products are so special.

DO store your client testimonials in a Word document or Excel database so that you can find them easily. You may want to organize them by client name, service or product.

The next step is to obtain testimonials from your clients. Here are the basic steps and some questions to get you started.

Begin by sending your clients a friendly email stating that you are seeking a testimonial you can use in your marketing. Personalize your communication as much as possible. For example, your letter may begin, "Dear Jim: Last December, you participated in my teleclass, (name of class). I certainly hope you found the class to be helpful. Because I am revamping my marketing materials, I am writing to ask you a favor: I would deeply appreciate it if you would take a few minutes to answer the questions below." (Be sure to work into your letter the benefits to these clients of providing testimonials that will be used on your

website.)

You may want to ask your clients some or all of the following questions and to customize each email with the name of the product or service the client purchased. When a client has purchased more than one product or service, send a separate email request for each.

- What first attracted you to (name the teleclass, internet course, product or service the client purchased) and why did you decide to purchase it?
- What was the most beneficial tool, concept or idea that you gained from (the product or service)?
- How are you currently utilizing (the product or service in your business and/or life)?
- Has it saved you and your business time, money or energy? If so, in what way(s)?
- Why would you recommend (the product or service) to your associates, colleagues or clients?
- What would you like to say to someone who is considering purchasing (the product or service)?

You now have the basic information you need to obtain client testimonials that you can use to power up your business and Make Money Now! Here's a very important final tip: once you begin to receive testimonials from your clients, be absolutely sure to enjoy the wonderful things they say about you!

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