

Why YOU Need To Follow-up *With* Your Customers



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You create a digital information product, and work hard towards your product launch. You announce it to your list. You've even done quite a bit of legwork in advance and promoted it via email, Twitter, Facebook, article marketing and guest blogging... and maybe even a guest interview on a web radio show.

The big day comes. You're quite pleased with the sales. But they trickle off within the first month - perhaps even the first week or two - and after that, you're lucky if you make \$100 a month on your product.

There's something wrong with the scenario here: Most likely the lack of a follow up plan.

Your Follow Up Plan

It's actually amazing how many people don't realize the importance of contact or sales follow up - let alone having an actual follow up plan for every campaign. Yet this happens with a huge percentage of online entrepreneurs. They put all their emotion and energy into creating the product and launching it... and leave the sales to take care of themselves.

The truth is, even if your sales are good, there are so many more ways to maximize them, and it should all be done at the planning stage.

Here's an example of proactive launch follow up (names changed to protect the unauthorized).

Derek has his big product launch. A couple of days later, he sends out an email to his list. The subject line reads: "Hey, It's Not Too Late!" After greeting his list member by her first name, goes on to say:

"I know how busy life is, online. So if you meant to pick up a copy of my new eBook, "54 Ways to Love Your Car Without Being a Mechanic", but got distracted or even just plain forgot, here's your chance to still sneak in under the gate. For the next 3 days only (till midnight on Friday, May 13) if you click on the special link below will be able to buy it for only \$14.75 - less than half of its regular \$27.75 retail price.

"So if you'd love to know everything you need to about maintaining your car in perfect condition (and pay less to learn it), download "54 Ways to Love Your Car Without Being a Mechanic" right now - and get it at my special less-than-half price..."

Derek sent out that email on the advice of his copywriter - and, being a new marketer, was absolutely stunned when this follow up letter produced more sales than his initial pre-launch efforts and launch day combined!

In fact, when the dust settled, Derek was able to ascertain that this one, single follow up letter had produced 64.9% of his total sales!

The Power of Follow Up

By now you've probably become aware that the biggest crime of internet marketing is "leaving money on the table". What this phrase means is simply "not making the most of every single opportunity to exploit this one product". Not having a well-thought-out and implemented follow up plan is doing just that - missing opportunities for further sales, right, left and center! When you consider how many sales Derek made that were generated by that single follow up letter, it puts the power of following up into strong perspective.

Just consider these statistics, reported by the 21centurysales.com blog:

"According to the National Sales Executive Association

- 2% of sales are made on the 1st contact
- 3% of sales are made on the 2nd contact
- 5% of sales are made on the 3rd contact
- 10% of sales are made on the 4th contact
- 80% of sales are made on the 5th-12th contact"

What that really says is... anyone who expects all sales to happen based only on a couple of initial contacts is neglecting further opportunities for profit.

3 Key Ways Following Up Benefits Your Business

Taking as much care with your follow up as you do with your product creation and launch prep should be a consistent part of your marketing process. We've already taken a look at the sales stats in the previous section; and if that's not enough to really drive the point home, here are 3 more powerful benefits to consistently using well-thought-out follow up process...

1. **Following up builds trust** - one of the key questions we ask ourselves, when preparing a new product launch (and especially in affiliate marketing) is: "Why should Josephine Customer buy from me?"

When asked why they choose one particular marketer over another, customers frequently answer: "Because I trust so-and-so".

I'm sure you know about building up trust through solving problems - and not always through paid products. But your follow up process also helps to build trust too.

It's like being introduced to someone at a convention. You may like them, but if the contact is brief, you may also forget them. And it's not until you've met each other at least 3 times, and had a couple of conversations about your shared interests that it naturally occurs to you that your new conference buddy is the very person you should speak to about the subject you're both passionate about.

So it is with internet marketing: Your perfect potential customer "meets" you... but if all she hears is one sales pitch, with a couple of sporadic letters that don't do anything towards building up a relationship, she is likely to go elsewhere to buy a similar product - even though yours is actually far more in tune with what she originally wants!

2. Follow up builds consistency - If your follow up plan follows the same pattern with every product, your perfect potential customer subconsciously falls into a rhythm with you. Consistency creates a reassuring air of professionalism, letting the reader know that you are not going to disappear off into the ether again next week - which she can depend on you. Contrast that with the pattern many inexperienced marketers develop: Of wildly blitzing their list with 2 or 3 emails; then disappearing for 6 or 7 months - during which time they actually forget who the marketer is.

3. Follow Up Sets you ahead of the competition - The simple truth is, for every one marketer who follows up, there are often hundreds of would-be competitors who don't. And it's the rare few people in life who take the time to thank you, follow through on their word, take responsibility for their actions and who apologize unhesitatingly if they make a mistake who stick in our minds as top-drawer people.

It also tells your potential fan or customer that you are not the sort of person who's in it for the quick buck: That you respect them and care about their needs.

Making Your Reputation

We've mentioned how consistent follow up can build trust... but the truth is, follow up can do more than that: It can make or break your reputation: Be inconsistent, or forget to keep your word, and you will lose customers for life.

Be reliable every time – and you will keep them.

It all boils down to habits – yours, in always being reliable, presenting follow up opportunities at every stage: Your customer's, in getting into the habit of buying from you... and looking for your offers.

You want to get them to the place where they welcome your emails, and write to tell you, "Yours are the emails I never skip!"

Ignoring the Obvious

So where can you add a follow up?

Everywhere! There are so many opportunities. Do it after your new list member has downloaded their free report, video, template or audio file. ("Did you have a chance to download "5 Easy Pieces" yet? If so, you may have noticed...")

Do it during your free email mini-course. Do it at the end.

Do it before the sale, and at every step of the process.

And especially do it after the sale or the initial offer "expiration".

But no matter where you position your power-packing follow ups, there's one other action you need to take. And that is... **“Just ask”**.

The One Follow Up Step that's Easy to Miss

Follow up emails, recordings or articles are the ridiculously obvious place to include a call to action, yet it's surprising how many people fail to remember this!

Your readers and fans are not mind readers. As one colleague recently said to me, “You know, when someone wants me to mind read, I tell them I took ESP 101 nine times... and I still failed the course every time.” Help your potential list members and customers out by inviting them to take the next logical step – your particular call to action for particular follow up contact.

Help them eagerly ask you the ultimate question: “So where do I click to buy?”

If they've already bought, don't be afraid to follow up with suggestions at how they might want to augment their new product, take advantage of a special OTO (one time offer) or upgrade to the next level.

And you'll be making the most of every opportunity to:

- A. Make that sale
- B. Not leave “money on the table”

Make follow ups work for you. Keep them consistent, and you'll become known for your reliability and delivery – every time.