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Business Support**



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Tips on Getting and Creating Compelling Customer Testimonials

People do business with people that they know, like and trust. Testimonials are a way to show that your company is known, liked and trusted by other people. How can you get truthful, sales-enhancing testimonials that include all the elements that a top-notch testimonial requires? All you have to do is ask for them. More importantly is 'how' you ask for your testimonials. You will be surprised that people are more than willing to tell you their story or talk about how they like your product if you ask them in the right way. Here are a few guidelines on what you can do to create great testimonials.

Step 1: Determine which customers you would like testimonials from.

Step 2: Send an email explaining what you are doing, how you need their help and the process.

Sample email and process:

Customer,

Thank you for purchasing your "product/service" with "company name". We know you had several choices from which to buy your "product/service" and we were flattered and grateful that you chose to buy from us.

From time to time we ask a few of our special customers for their feedback. We often use this feedback as a testimonial in our marketing material. Would you be willing to provide some feedback?

All you need to do is answer the following 5 questions and email them back to me (or call if it's more convenient). We will then draft two testimonials for you, for you to review and approve.

- Why did you decide to buy with us?
- How has the product improved your business?
- Were your needs met sufficiently?
- What words would you use to describe our products and services?
- Would you recommend our products and services to others?

Thank you so much for your help and for being a great customer. I look forward to learning what you like about our products and services, however, I also welcome any suggestions or improvements, too.

Asking specific questions helps you get clearer benefits and comments for your testimonials. By offering to do the draft testimonials, you help very busy customers save some time and increase participation.

Step 3: Turn the answers to the questions into quotes from the buyer and draft two testimonials. Include the buyer's name and title if applicable. Include clearly defined benefits. With any testimonial, the reader must see a clear benefit to be gained from what your company offers. It's not enough for a testimonial to just say: "They really know their stuff." A more powerful one is "ABC's service helped us launch two new initiatives and saved two week's worth of management time."

Step 4: Send the two testimonials to the customer. Ask them to choose which one they like or encourage them to write a better one than the choices made available. Have a section at the bottom of the email titled: "I can do Better than that: _____".

Request their permission in writing to use the testimonial. It's very important to get your customer's permission to use his/her name, city/province, or website address in your own marketing.

Step 5: Thank the customer for their testimonial. You can do it by email, however, when was the last time you got a nice hand written note?

Step 6: Use your testimonials in all of your marketing materials. Give testimonials their own page on your website. You'll be surprised how many people will visit that page before any other. Also, you can add testimonials in the middle of your sales copy to break it up, or place it along the sides of each page.

Testimonials are one of the most powerful tools in your marketing toolkit. Use them when you want to establish credibility, gain trust or generate word of mouth referrals for your business. The right testimonials, placed strategically will go a long way in doing that.