

GEEWIZ NEWS

MAY/JUNE 2003

Greetings

A great big thanks to all of those Geewiz E-news supporters who sent me emails and cards after my vehicle accident - some 400 communications certainly overwhelmed and motivated me. Thanks to the seatbelts and the Geewiz tenacity, everything is up and going again, and business as normal - well, sort of !

Successful Events breakfast and morning event seminars have been postponed this year, as I'm having difficulty getting the calibre of speakers that I want to get from the top New Zealand businesses, so I will launch this at a later date.

This raises an interesting marketing strategy, if you can't get everything right, should you go ahead?

Too often, marketing managers say "near enough is good enough", "close enough is good enough", even though all of the standards or quality or processes, or necessary sales skills and distribution needs are maybe not in place, yet they have a blind faith that the product or service will still sell.

A good marketing strategist makes sure that what the customers want is going to be able to be delivered. With a failure rate of 9 out of 10 new products or services being launched, obviously there's a lot of marketing managers and sales managers who are launching products on a hope and a prayer instead of ensuring that all the strategies planned are going to be in place.

Can you be certain that your next new product or service launch has everything heading its way before you launch it?

To train or not to train? - and how to select training resources

Over the next few months many sales managers and company owners will be making decisions to invest in training for their staff as a way of adding to skills, correcting deficiencies, and rewarding loyalty and team members.

While much training can be done internally, such as product or service knowledge, systems, or upskilling, most skill development and attitude change has to be undertaken by professional seminars or in-company training.

There are over 900 organisations in New Zealand calling themselves, in various forms, "training organisations" and all with different levels of skill, practical experience, and presentation ability. In addition of course, there are online courses, there are self-study courses, there are Polytech courses, and there are plenty of books to read.

When it comes to choosing a training provider, do more than just check out their website and check out their testimonial books – get on the phone and talk to other companies that have used the seminar presenter, check out participants' comments, and even if they are presented by a reputable partner organisation, see how many seminars they have presented in New Zealand relative to the New Zealand culture, and what the change results were as a result of their seminars and workshops.

As many Geewiz readers know, I partner with the Chambers of Commerce and the Employers & Manufacturers Association, as good, valid administration partners and having presented for these organisations for over 20 years, I have a strong knowledge of many of the trainers and professional seminar presenters in both my own sales and marketing field and also in many other fields.

A good membership organisation to check out is the NZATD (NZ Association of Training and Developers), which many good quality seminar and training presenters belong to.

I'm only willing, if you send me an email questioning whether I know the presenter you are planning to use, to let you know of any details that I have.

For many organisations, attendance at a public seminar is an ideal way to get 1, 2, or 3 participants upskilled, providing the course objectives are going to meet your needs. However, don't overlook the value of doing some personalised in-company training for at least a half day, or preferably a one day, where you can focus on the exact needs of your own organisation.

Sending sales reps and customer service people to attend conferences where there will be a host of guest speakers is not training. That may be suitable for management input of new ideas, but it does very little to actually upskill.

There is an article that is free to download at my website (www.geewiz.co.nz) , called *Choosing a Training Provider*, which lists many of the details and current prices for major sales and marketing training providers that I know of in New Zealand.

There are alternatives to training courses, that is the use of training resources available through somewhere like TrainingPoint.net, where you can get books, games, activities, for adding to your sales meetings, and interactive exercises that focus on the basics.

Please make sure, if you're going to have a conference whether it is one day or two days, that you include some training or upskilling as part of your conference program. You've got all your team together, you need to add to their skills as well as their product or administration knowledge.

Whatever training, encourage your participants to check out the presenter's website before attending the seminar, and also to do the followup exercises that will generally be provided, plus sit down and do a review session after the training detailing what they are going to put into action over the next 90 days.

Obviously, it's important that you as a sales manager do the followup. All the best promises in the world from participants who say that they will send information back, complete assignments, is wasted unless the sales manager actively participates in encouraging your sales team members to put the skills into practice. Don't "do as a I say, not as I do" !

Marketing of services

One of the often overlooked activities in the marketing of services, because of the fact that they are so intangible, is the easy way to make them tangible in the prospective buyer's mind by promoting and marketing the people who will perform the service.

People do business with people, and nowhere is this more important than in the marketing of services. The friendly personality of the people, the experience and the skills of the people, the attitude, aptitude, and demonstration of action by the people, are the most impressive stories that you can use to bring life to your service.

People involved in marketing of services should make sure that their websites feature the people who are going to perform the service, make sure the brochure photographs have people in them. Make sure your presentations, be they Powerpoint, flipchart or paper based presentations, also feature plenty of stories about the people and their expertise.

PR articles should create stories about the people, and particularly how they have helped other people look good in their business environments, boost their businesses through the people interaction.

In service marketing the greatest intangible value is the skill of the people who perform the service. A focus in your USP on the people, and their imagery, will substantially differentiate yourself and your service company, from others in the marketplace.

Another often overlooked strategy in service marketing is the power of testimonials, be they testimonials from satisfied clients, users within those clients, influences, suppliers, or just good business associates, testimonials included on your website and put in the paper based catalogue booklet are very powerful in that they endorse your performance from what others will say about you.

To get a testimonial there is one simple formula, it is called ASK ! The best time is when the client is telling you how greatly satisfied they were with the work that you did, so ask them then to provide you with a testimonial (even if you have to draft the basic elements as a guideline for them to follow).

Testimonials should be put on the website, put in your testimonial book, and a selected number of testimonials included with your quotations and powerpack presentations.

Geewiz notices trend first !

You may remember in our last Geewiz the emphasis that I put on the collecting in your database of details about text capable phones and emails, and now you will have noticed the extensive promotion now in publications such as Marketing Magazine, Management Magazine, and the business media, are all focusing on what they call "short message services" – this is text messaging and also emails to cellphones.

Start collecting those contact details now !

And yes, both my cellphones are text capable, you can text to 0274 720 410, or 021 720 410. My cellphone email is cellphone@geewiz.co.nz.

It's a pity the telecom providers haven't woken up to the fact that clients do want to retain their website addresses as part of their major marketing branding and are not really interested in having email addresses at xtra.co.nz or other providers. In my case, by sending an email to cellphone@geewiz.co.nz, it is diverted through my master server onto my cellphone, yet still allows me to keep up my simple branding. Ask your ISP how to do this.

Reward your clients with business development seminars

An ideal strategy for A category and B category clients, to grow their business, build relationships with you, and for you to be seen to be interested in the profitability of your customers rather than price selling, is to provide a business development seminar by a professional presenter, seminar leader or speaker who focuses on ideas, strategies and skills to better operate the business, manage people, or undertake marketing (as an example of a few topics). This seminar can take the focus of a keynote speaker address of approximately 60 to 90 minutes, or a longer 2-3 hour seminar which you offer your clients and your clients' staff to attend.

Always start off the presentation with a welcome to your clients, and finish the presentation with thanks to your clients, also encouraging them to put into practice the lessons learnt so their businesses may be better and ultimately they will purchase more from you.

There is a wide variety of good presenters and speakers available at :

www.nzatd.co.nz

www.nsa.org.nz

www.celebrityspeakers.co.nz

speakerlink etc

Or of course, if you're interested in some of my skills, contact us on www.geewiz.co.nz .

If you have a speaker that you don't know very much about, please feel free to email me and I can let you know if either myself or any of my associates can give you some feedback on the quality and style of the presentation the speaker is likely to give you.

Networking

The oncoming winter season seems to be the time when many business owners and operators decide that it's time to network to meet other clients, potential clients, and other business owners and operators.

Networking is an ideal activity to engage in to meet other people in similar business situations as yourself, and also to gain new business, as long as you don't treat it as just a card swapping exercise.

Remember the secret to networking, if you've attended any of my networking seminars, is the first question should always be addressed to the prospect, and that is "what is the business that you're in?" and then your questions should be aimed at finding out what the business the person you are talking to is in, before you then introduce your business in descriptions of interest that will appeal to them.

Ideal business associations to network are events put on by the Chambers of Commerce around New Zealand, the Employers & Manufacturers Associations, and also specialty organisations such as BNI (Business Networking International), or Networking For Business, SWAP (Salespeople With A Purpose), the Export Institute, and don't overlook the specialty women's CEO groups and professional women organisations that can lead you into contact with some very powerful women managers.

Get on the web and search out the contact details for these organisations, or if you are at a loss send me an email and I'll give you the contact details.

Of particular note, recently there have been activities by EMA in Auckland and the Auckland Chamber, to introduce young professional networking functions under some very ingenious titles, and it is attracting young professional executives and up and coming managers to learn the art of networking and building contacts. Well worthwhile going along to a "Schmooze" (if you're young enough).

Marketing projects and marketing clients wanted

I currently have some time available, and a desire to take on some of those difficult marketing strategy projects that you may have been putting in the “too hard” basket, or a business associate that you know that needs some marketing direction or problems solved. So if you’ve got a challenge out there that involves some strategic marketing lateral thinking, please get in contact with us, and I’ll see what I can provide for you. Phone 0800 GEEWIZ, or email me at Richard@geewiz.co.nz. And yes, I don’t mind how hard they are – give me your challenges!

Seminars

The following schedule details the seminars I’ve got coming up with my partners around New Zealand at the Chambers of Commerce, the EMA, and Business Development Hamilton.

Of particular note, you may like to check out the Powerful Presentations, a new seminar which is getting great reviews from participants for the confidence it brings in to help with doing both sales and internal communication management communications.

In addition, the 3-day Sales Certificate is probably one of the most thorough sales skills seminars around, focusing from the basics of selling right through to major corporate presentations, as well as giving people homework every night, assignments, followup, and plenty of interaction. Full details of the content are on my website, but it is certainly one of my most successful seminars, and well worth investing in your new and existing sales team members with this 3-day course which can either be taken as one block or can be taken as 3 individual days at different times it operates during the year.

Because it is partnered with the Chambers of Commerce in Auckland and Wellington, it is an exceptionally attractive investment.

I look forward to working with some of your team on these seminars, and helping both you and your team members to improve their skills and be Better Than Yesterday!

MAY		
28,29,30 May	3-day Sales Certificate	Geewiz Seminars Wellington
JUNE		
3 June	Marketing Myths for Speakers	Wellington NSA
17 June	1-day Sales Basics	Auckland Chamber
17,18,19 June	3-day Sales Certificate	Auckland Chamber
24 June	SMEI Sales Breakfast	Auckland
25 June	Awkward and Difficult Customers – ½ day	Wellington EMA
25 June	[Managing your Sales Force – ½ day	Wellington EMA
26 June	Sales Basics 1 (morning)	CECC
26 June	Managing your Sales Force – (afternoon)	CECC
26 June	Motivation & Attitudes (Evening – 2hrs)	CECC
27 June	Emails/Enews/Ecommerce (morning)	CECC
JULY		
9 July	Sales Basics	Auckland Chamber
24 July	Sales Basics 1 & 2	Geewiz Seminars Wellington

25 July	Prospecting ½ day	Geewiz Seminars Wellington
29 July	SMEI Sales Breakfast	Auckland

Once again, my sincerest thanks to all of those people who passed on their messages of goodwill and motivation following my accident, and I look forward to seeing you at one of the seminars or conferences coming up.

Welcome to new Geewiz clients

Pirtek, Australia

WS Medical, Auckland

NZ Bus & Coach Association

NZ Taxi Federation

Larsen's Computers, Warkworth

Work & Income, New Plymouth

And the many new friends who have been participants on my seminars.

Kind regards, and looking forward to hearing of your successes during 2003,

Richard P. Gee

richard@geewiz.co.nz

richard@richardgeewiz.com

richard@richardgeewiz.biz

As a recipient of this newsletter you can rest assured that your email contacts in my database are not passed on to any other organisation, and remain confidential to Geewiz News. If at any time you wish to change details, or stop receiving Geewiz News, send me a reply email.