

GEEWIZ NEWS

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2003

Greetings Friend of Geewiz

Key content in this Geewiz News is:

- Humour & Testimonials
- Email Communication
- Branding
- Mentors
- Seminars

In my seminars and consulting work I'm often reminded that we don't smile enough or see enough humour in some of the situations.

Humour is about demonstrating that you're a warm, responsive, intelligent, considerate person. In business it's about creating a positive, receptive and cheerful mood with successful communication the end product. Humour can expand your perceptions and boost creativity. Humour will lift morale, enhance decision making, and improve problem solving.

A very important ingredient in sales relationships is the philosophy of including customer comments to let potential customers feel at ease knowing that other people have purchased your product or service already. Simply put, a few good customer testimonials can increase sales literally overnight, but you've got to do it right.

The best place to have your customer testimonials is on your website, and you need to:

- Make sure that the testimonials are specific to your services or your products and not generic.
- Be sure to get permission from your customers to use the testimonials.
- Include the customer's full name and contact information of email if people want to take the questions further.
- Use customer comments on every single web page.
- If you consider the top 3 or 4 reasons your potential customer may be hesitant to place an order with you, get customer comments to address those issues.

Looking at the power of customer comments and testimonials, I'm reminded of a fellow National Speakers' presenter, Genevieve Westcott, and her rules for good PR. These are:

1. Don't bury your head in the sand.
2. Move quickly.
3. Tell the truth.
4. Here comes the cavalry, it's not going to stop.
5. Don't touch the paper shredder.
6. Nothing is ever 'off the record'.
7. Tough questions aren't usually the problem.
8. "Gee that's a good question, I don't know, but I'll find out and get back to you before the deadline," is a smarter thing to say to a reporter than making up an answer as you go along.

If you want to help journalists write a good PR article about your company, put the time into preparing your material, and give the journalist opportunities to learn more, don't leave it up to them to ask what something means, and don't get frustrated if a journalist only wants to follow one line of enquiry.

Email communication

In using communications such as email, the wonderful communication formula A.I.D.A. is still very powerful.

A for Attention, is the subject line on the email, and the contents of the first paragraph.

I for Interest, is the questions that you need to ask to get the person reading the email thinking about their problems and challenges.

D for Desire, is the benefits of what you're going to offer, and why they exceed the specifications.

A for Action is what further contact and communication you're going to make with the customer in the body of your email, and also your signature with your marketing contact details.

Our relationships with our email communication can be improved if you follow some guidelines.

- Don't use CAPITAL LETTERS.
- Use Blind Carbon Copy (BCC).
- Reply within a maximum of 24 hours, preferably whatever you promised on your website.
- Use the 'Out of Office' facility for when you are away.
- Don't 'copy' to everyone on the email, only send to relevant people.
- Create a marketing signature.
- Write, and think, in bullet points.
- Always use a personalised greeting.
- Limit attachments and file sizes.

If you follow those ideas you have an incredibly awesome responsibility for improving the relationships from your email communication.

When it comes to building relationships with key clients and major corporates, what effort do you make to understand the client's business? It's more important to understand the client's business than what it is that you can sell them. Focus should be on the client's requirements for profit, return on investment, market share, particular key drivers that they have in their business, and understanding the decision tree of who reports to whom.

A maxim for major accounts and corporates is, '*make the contact you have look good to the person they report to.*'

Branding

Have you ever noticed how little care the ISPs have for their hosts of customers, probably caused by the fact that they have hundreds of thousands of customers, each paying small amounts per month to access the web through their porthole. This then means that if you have a customer who is upset with the service, it doesn't matter if you lose the customer, because you're adding and subtracting all the time.

The unfortunate thing is, look at what the damage this does to the brand. Brands are built on publicity, brands are built on perceptions, brands are built on people interaction with customer service and sales functions. Brands are not built on advertising power.

Due out very shortly is the Reader's Digest survey of brands in New Zealand, and this will rank the most trusted brand through to the most well known, liked brand of various different categories. Last year The Warehouse was the most trusted brand, previous selections by research have been Fisher & Paykel, and Air New Zealand. Compare the publicity that these brands generate about the activities, and in some cases they have a high advertising power, but it is the publicity that wins the favour for the brand.

Mentors

It's always interesting to look at lists assembled by various business media of successful people, and recently there were two people lists that were compiled that would be great if you're looking for a mentor or coach, or just want to look at a company that appears to have its vision right.

The first of these was the Most Admired New Zealand Marketers, and these included:

- Judith Tabron, Restaurateur
- Ann-Marie Duff, TVNZ
- Pieter Stewart, Orion NZ
- Barbara Chatman, ASB Bank
- Murray Thom, Music & Personalised Plates
- Ross Monroe, Line 7
- Hamish Miller, NZ Soccer
- Kim Crawford, Kim Crawford Wines
- Ian Cox, Guide Dog Services

And the interesting second list, which is great for looking at who are the future business leaders in New Zealand. It came up with the following business leaders:

- Craig Norgate, ex Fonterra
- Theresa Gattung, Telecom
- Ralph Waters, Fletcher Building
- Chris Lobell, Carter Holt Harvey
- Gill Simpson, Jade Corporation
- Kevin Remington Ross Smith, TSB and Southland Banks
- Jon Mason, Port of Tauranga
- Gary Paykel, Fisher & Paykel
- Peter Hughes, Ministry of Social Development
- Ralph Norris, Air New Zealand
- Dick Hubbard, Hubbard Foods
- Keith McLachlan, ex Baycorp
- Gilbert Ullrich, Ullrich Aluminium
- Wendy Pye, Wendy Pye Books
- Graeme Marsh, Scott Technology
- Mark Waller, Ebos Group
- John Marsh, Cooke Hollison & Blackwell Motors Group
- Rod Duke, Briscoe Corp
- Jane Freeman, Air NZ
- John Gaulter, Auckland International Airport
- Evan Davies, Sky City
- Kevin Ricketts, Regency Duty Free
- Murray Sherwin, MAF
- David Holdsworth, Hellaby Holdings
- Tsang Jat Meng, CDL Hotel Group
- Heather Simpson, Chief of Staff to Helen Clark
- Grant Baker, Empower
- Lloyd Morrison, HRL Morrison & Co
- Mick Watson, The Warriors
- Brett King, Dorchester Pacific Finance
- Tony Sinclair, Federated Farmers
- Rosemary Howard, Telstra Clear
- Alan Freeth, Wrightsons
- Elmar Tome, NZ Post

Why don't you check out the websites of some of these leaders' companies to see what their vision is, and see whether you can beg, borrow and steal some of that vision for focusing your own marketing effort, focusing your team, and providing inspiration. Better still, go along to a networking function and have lunch with one of these leaders, and pick their brains to see what works for them.

Remember, people do business with people, and the greatest thing we have in New Zealand is the ability to network with peers and mentors and share ideas for the mutual growth and success of all of our companies.

If you've got a new product or a new service to release, you'd better hurry up and get it out into the marketplace fast, because an awful lot of decision makers will be refusing to accept new lines after either early or late October because it interferes with their busy consumer selling period of November/December.

Seminars – October, November, December

Here is a schedule of my seminars that are coming up, that you may like to attend or encourage your staff or team members to attend.

OCTOBER

7 Oct Development	Principles of Marketing (5.30pm to 8.30pm)	Taupo Business
8 Oct Chamber	Selling your Professional Services	Auckland
10 Oct	Creating Strategic Marketing Plan	EMA Northern
14 Oct Chamber	Powerful Presentations	Auckland
21 Oct	SMEI Sales Breakfast	Auckland
22 Oct	Motivating/Attitude for Sales Teams & Customer Service (morning) CECC	CECC
22 Oct	Prospecting (afternoon)	CECC
23 Oct	Marketing for Non-marketing Managers (morning)	CECC
23 Oct	Creating a Strategic Marketing Plan (afternoon)	CECC
23 Oct	Making E-Commerce Work (5.30pm-7.30pm)	CECC
29 Oct Seminars Wellington	1-day Sales Basics	Geewiz
29,30,31 Oct Seminars Wellington	3-day Essential Selling	Geewiz

NOVEMBER

4 Nov Chamber	1-day Sales Basics	Auckland
4,5,6 Nov Chamber	3-day Sales Certificate	Auckland
18 Nov Chamber	Time Management (4-6pm)	Tauranga
19 Nov Chamber	Dealing with Awkward and Difficult Customers (afternoon)	Tauranga
19 Nov Chamber	Collect Your Debts Without Losing Clients (morning)	Tauranga
20 Nov Chamber	Sales Basics, Selling with Confidence (morning)	Tauranga
27 Nov	Using Emarketing as a Marketing Tool (morning)	CECC
27 Nov	Selling to Major Corporates (afternoon)	CECC
27 Nov	Taking Pride in New Zealand – Evening 2 hrs	CECC
28 Nov	Awkward Customers (morning)	CECC

DECEMBER

2 Dec	Strategic Selling for experienced sales reps	Wellington
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Interesting organisations to belong to and attend lunches and breakfasts, you might like to consider **SMEI (Sales & Marketing Executives)**, www.smei.org.nz

or encourage your sales people to go along to their local **SWAP club**, there's one in South Auckland, a very good one in Rotorua, *and* if you're looking for personalised direct marketing the **DMA** runs very good, focused industry lunches and events.

Thank you Friend of Geewiz, I really appreciated bringing you Geewiz News, I hope you enjoy it, and feel free to pass it on to your friends. Some approximately 15,000 people, companies, and business associates share every 2 months in Geewiz News.

Kind regards, and looking forward to hearing of your successes !

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