

## Guerrilla Marketing for the Home-Based Business

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Two biggest problems of Home-Based Businesses:

Giving up too soon. Pick your niche and stay there.

Not having a plan.

Ch. 1 Positioning: Carving a Niche in the Marketplace

Who exactly are you and where do you stand

Use pigeon holing to your advantage to choose your segment of the marketplace.

Decide your position, before someone else does it for you:

1. Marketplace is cluttered with competition
2. Need to cut through that clutter.

Don't assume your potential customers care as much about your business as you do. Be specific and pick your niche, no matter what your products actually are (nike sells t-shirts, but its niche is shoes for athletes)

1. Be first. You can invent your position.

- a. Just because you're first doesn't mean you can stay there forever.
- b. The first to get a product into the consumer's mind owns the position, even if others were there first.

2. If your category is filled with competitors

- a. Reposition your competition: put them out of their place by specializing yourself
- b. Reinvent the category: split the category or put two things together
- c. you can't be all things to all people, define your niche in thirteen words or less (or else how can your customers do so)
- d. steps
  1. do you research (ask your clients, what position do your competitors occupy?, is there a niche there?)
  2. make a positioning map/graph of your competitors: find out where your product is sold and how (using sex appeal, high quality, families)
    - a. list competitors (include everyone, eg. pretzel makers if you make beef jerky)
    - b. outline each brands product position (cheapest, imports, priciest)
    - c. plot each product or brand on a grid
    - d. another variable that plays to your strengths and everyone else's weaknesses
  3. once you've got your position, articulate it (describe it in 2 sentences), put it on all your stationary, business cards etc. words and visual tools
  4. business decisions must reflect your image (don't chase after markets outside your niche)

Ch. 2 Customer Service: An investment in word of mouth

Service counts: focus on service and capture and keep the best customers (80% of your sales are from 20% of your customers), wow each and every customer with the attention you give them,

Personal attention,

speed

quality (give the customer what they ask you and maybe a little bit more)

guarantees (have a decent payout, easy to collect, protect yourself from fraud, cost nothing extra)

personal service (nurture the human bond as well as the business bond)

flexibility (you can allow for special requests and make life-long customers)

service after the sale (create repeat customers, send a coupon to previous customers)

fire some customers that are impossible, but first get the facts, apologize for the problem, propose a solution write it down, do it, ask whether customer is satisfied

tip: the cost of keeping a customer is tiny compared to the cost of finding a new one, consider customer service and investment

### Ch. 3 Word of Mouth

Contact circle of friends, family, other contacts, give fliers, have them tell their friends

Dissatisfied customers tell 9 other people, satisfied will tell just 1

This is the most potent, effective form of marketing

Part 1: referrals, the best word of mouth

1. Over deliver: expedite delivery, provide personal attention (remember names, habits, birthdays), answer questions, handle complaints, solve problems, stay in touch (send your customers something when they least expect it), forego a sale if it is not right for the customer, community involvement, amaze your customers on a regular basis
2. Make it easy to refer: give business cards for others to give away, have reservations only for parties of 6 or more
3. Reward the zealots: offer discounts, services, etc., for giving you referrals, keep track of whom to reward by using a code on a brochure or ask who referred them to us
4. Ask for help: if you enjoyed your experience with us, please tell a friend, send it in writing asking them to do so, offer half-price or free gift certificates to your best customers to give to someone else, at the end of a sales call ask for three leads to those who might be interested

Part 2: testimonials, public endorsements:

1. gather letters from satisfied customers on their letterhead, put it in a binder to show to potential customers
2. conversation, jot them down when you receive them
3. surveys, look over the commentary and keep the gems as testimonials
4. ask for testimonials, "would you be willing to go on record as recommending us?" swap promotion or publicity for testimonial,
5. find the best person for testimonials: 6 degrees of separation, seek celebrities
6. be careful when you edit testimonials so you don't offend satisfied customers
7. work the influence pyramid, target people who influence others (PTA president, leaders in organizations)

Make the best use of testimonials:

1. use it freely, have customers sign a release for stating just how you will and will not use their testimonial
2. presentation counts: use letterhead, print a booklet, use them in ads (include pictures of the people), give individual customer profiles, list your clients, give telephone contacts with permission from past contacts, focus on testimonials (devote a page to them in your brochure), voice testimonials in radio commercials and on-hold messages, show your clients examples of good testimonials so they can write good ones,

### Ch. 4 Publicity: Free advertising for the home-based guerilla

A. Public relations vs. publicity: PR is shaping what people think of you, live and die by public's perception of you, one of the most direct ways to influence people's perception is publicity, generally people believe the media is fair and impartial, so getting your name in media goes a long way, can go farther than advertising or word of mouth

publicity is the process of getting your name to appear in the news media, study highly targeted media outlets, too little control over publicity to use it without anything else, cheaper and better at building credibility than advertising, offer something free or discount in articles, do a survey or run a contest and turn the results into a press release

news reports influence people: people remember news reports longer than ads, good way to leverage and impact your other marketing techniques, cut out any articles about your company and send them to any prospective customers, use them in brochures, etc. Offer to speak at trade shows, to students, etc.

B. Getting started, making your publicity plan:

1. What do you want and need to get from publicity? time consuming, highly effective at creating credibility, increasing name recognition, and building relationships
2. Who do you want to reach? target new media for your targeted demographic, decide where you want publicity
3. What kind of publicity do you want? need credentials, need to explain a complex product,

need name recognition, a personalized press release is more effective

4. What are your goals? several features in distinct outlets, single feature in your specific industry's field journal,

5. What is your time frame? start by engaging by regular and frequent communication with publisher of your choice, plan at least a year in advance, give two months notice for your story, every month send out a new press release, editors appreciate stories that are not time-bound, because they can file them away for emergencies when another story doesn't work out

6. Patience pays: make it a standard part of your business,

7. Where to focus your efforts: select a relatively small number of the outlets, use media directory at local library, then narrow it down as you make more acquaintances, make list of 10 types of people you'd most like to see your product, what do they read?, whom do they trust?, what's the most effective way to reach these people?, select 4-5 outlets to start, print more beneficial than TV

8. Read your targets, note which writers and reporters are best for your needs,

9. Keep in touch with your media contacts, take them to lunch to pitch new ideas or ask advice, send a note or potted plant, send letter to reporter's boss to say what a good job they did

#### C. Developing newsy ideas:

1. Mix of mundane and marvelous, brainstorming story ideas, give the ideas a new twist

2. Cut through the clutter

a. be topical, can you hook yourself into what's happening in the news

b. make something happen, dream up an interesting enough event, tie yourself into a newsworthy event and make yourself the feature

c. generate data, do a survey with questions that tie into current news, do one every 6 months or year

d. sell yourself as an expert, think of a topic of public interest, write up your analysis, come to some reasonably startling conclusion, approach media with ideas for an article you can write for them

e. form a group, have yourself designated as spokesperson/chairperson of a group

f. present an award, make it an annual affair, create a competition, notify appropriate media before, during and after the event

g. give something away, let media know about any community service you do, but be prepared to do it, because it's the right thing to do, not because of the publicity,

h. making the most of it, use the articles again and again (check with lawyer in case you need permission), use the phrases and headlines that are used in the articles that are catchy and good

i. be prepared, make sure your inventory can keep up with your increased publicity, or send rain checks, etc.

#### D. Press Release Primer: Creating a press package

Centered, 1/3 way down page: Headline, in 7 words or less it tells the press what's important

Upper left: Company's name and contact person

Upper right: date

Flush left: date material can be made public

start body with most important concepts who, what, where, when, why, how, as you progress get to less critical facts at end, include a few quotes in your own words, include a personal, possible handwritten note introducing yourself, do something outrageous to attract attention (e.g. deliver press release attached to a helium balloon)

#### Ch. 5 Printed Materials: Positioning yourself with print

it costs just as much to print nice materials as it does ugly ones, spend the money necessary,

1. The power of print: after sales call, brochures remain, don't stop with a handsome brochure, include printed materials in everything you send out (e.g. invoices, thank you's, referral cards)

2. Positioning: make sure every message you send conveys your positioning statement from the language to the typeface, tip: template software can be useful and inexpensive, looking good is more important than looking original

3. Business cards: probably the most important printed material you will create, use business cards to position yourself, list home number to communicate your accessibility, don't forget the back of the card, it can be like a mini brochure, don't skimp on price, consider having them professionally designed, please think twice about using laser print cards, because perforations aren't cut well, and look unprofessional, include: business name, your name, all contact info, your positioning statement, small map if you're hard to find, info that can be of service to your client (but that also has to do with your business) so they keep your card on hand (e.g. travel agent can put on numbers for local hotels and car rentals)

can afford to have several models made to test them out

where and how to distribute your cards: post on bulletin boards, give people more cards than they ask you for,

4. Letterhead: make it mirror the image of your company, it is the substitute for you, use the best paper you can afford, include a positioning statement, turn every sheet of letterhead into a mini brochure, list all services, don't forget the envelope, get them to open it!, any piece of paper that passes through you or your customers' hands can be letterhead, leave memo pads with you to visits with clients and leave them, fax cover sheets: blow up your logo and positioning statement, also, boxes you send, even send email messages on letterhead,

5. Brochure: can't close a sale for you all by yourself, detailed description of you and your business

a. a brochure is an introduction, an ice breaker, up to date, complete focused, avoid dating your brochure so it goes out of date

b. don't leave anything out that will describe critical benefits, but don't offer up information that will work against you either, the more you tell them the better, but be concise, bulleted lists

c. format, skimp on length, not on professional look, let your position in the marketplace decide how your printed materials look, homespun, executive, etc

d. contact, good headline (your positioning statement from letterhead is good), list benefits (live longer, look better, feel better) not features (half-inch drill press, accounting), include testimonials, include photos and illustrations,

e. mistakes: not enough photos, or lousy photography, poorly reproduced

f. distribution: good for people you already have a relationship with, do not use it unsolicited, use it to follow up on best prospects,

6. Flyers, single sheet of paper printed on one or both sides, keep cost down to pennies per copy, hand them out everywhere, not as detailed as a brochure, use bullets and list, positioning statement and/or headline, benefits to users, map, hours, details about how to contact you, request for action, use it as a first impression, two most important parts, headline and order form, make it easy for people to respond to you

7. Invoices and order forms: thank you on an invoice, reminder to order early for Christmas delivery on order form, should contain all contact info, hours of operation, your positioning statement, remember that they need to be functional and easy to use, devote part of them to coupons or frequent buyer points

8. Envelope stuffer: flyers

9. Cutting through the clutter: make it mirror your business and yourself, repeat yourself a lot, be consistent, maybe have experts design or print your designs, use pre-printed papers, use template software (Paper Direct 800-272-7377, Pueblo 800-523-9080, Beaver Prints 800-847-7237), subtle papers have better effect than flashy ones, avoid printing business cards yourself

## Ch. 6 Direct Mail: Leveling the guerilla playing field

A. Can grab their attention and hold it until they become customers

Guerilla direct mail vs. regular direct mail: regular, sift through clutter like panning for gold, guerilla, focus on generating highest hit rate (up to like 75%), need to add only a few customers to make it a profitable year, pick 50 people, learn their habits and needs, focus on individuals, ask current customers to suggest people who might be interested in your product, send them two brochures, and ask them to pass one on to a friend,

B. Nine Secrets to test on your customers:

1. Get their attention: do something different than the big name ads you get, hand write addresses, use regular stamps (can buy stamps at collector's store for near face value, these are still valid, so use a few), do not use "occupant", tag line on envelope (open immediately, etc), use a postcard
2. Be conversational: talk to your prospect directly as if you were friends, don't use a sale voice, dictate you message into a tape recorder, transcribe and edit it, always include a postscript it is the most read part of any letter,
3. Don't be brief: if they're interested they'll want to know a lot, if they're not interested, they will not read any of it, the longer the better, no exceptions (even 3-5 pages), discuss the needs of your prospect, show knowledge of your customer
4. Make it easy to say yes: use toll free 800 number, include a self-addressed stamped envelope, don't make them fill out their own name, do it for them, give a bonus for prompt replies, test your response mechanism, discover what works best and stick with it
5. Start the relationship, don't close the sale: ask for permission to send a free sample, or call again, make clear the reason for sending the letter (e.g. set up a meeting), make a big deal of your guarantee,
6. Follow up: don't give up on the first letter, one contact every week for three months is good, treat all outgoing mail as if it were direct mail marketing pieces, send coupons, variety gives you excuses to send more mail, pick your 50 people to mail to well, send a few letters or call as follow up,
7. Target: the list you choose is the most important in direct mail, more is not always better, you will get a much higher response rate, get a personal name to mail to, personal, focused, persistent
8. Do your homework: annual report of public companies (call their investor relations department), trade magazines, shouldn't cost you anything,

C. Anatomy of the letter:

General: better if hand-written, if typed, at least include a hand-written note, avoid the formal, all-business tone, put today's date, put someone's name and spell it right, title and address have everything correct, call to check if you are in doubt, "Dear First Name," (unless the person is unusually stuffy)

1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph: mention how you got their name, from whom, where, let people know in the first 8-10 lines what you are selling, details,

Body: what's your customer's biggest problem, how can you solve them, include testimonials, stories of how you helped others

Bonus: offer something for nothing, to get them to become customers

Guarantee: state it, make it good, eliminate risk

Incentive to act: a solid reason to act immediately

Ask for action: what do you want them to do right now, explain why they need to do it now, make it easy for them to do

P.S.: most read part, put something that will encourage them to read the rest of the letter, personalize a letter in the P.S., e.g. handwritten, "paragraph three of our brochure might be particularly interesting to you."

Enclosures: brochure, business card, be careful, don't make them skip the letter, always test your direct mail letters, hunches and intuition don't cut it

D. You mailing list:

Renting list: SRDS mailing list directory at your library to call brokers to rent mailing lists, demand precision,

Types of list: compiled (from phone books or other sources), response (those who have responded to previous mailings), business (created by other business to business marketers), house (put together by marketers, offer to trade them with other small businesses)

Get lists: have people give their business card for a chance to win something, have them fill out their address on suggestion cards, have them fill out their address on pamphlets

E. Variety: Postcards, thank you's, birthday/holiday cards, keep constant and regular contact, coupons  
Always test: color vs. black and white, price, mailing list, tone, free bonuses, deadlines, type of stamp used, always change one variable at a time, send half of current style, half with new style and keep track of which does better, use the better one and try something else that's new,  
Bypass ordinary mail, use overnight, something else, to stand out

Ch. 7 Newsletters: A great guerilla communication tool

A. You are the whole operation, you are the expert, publish your own newsletter, small, focused, low-cost, keeps your name and personality in front of your key people, if you are targeting a select group and sell a product with a big price tag, a newsletter may be what you need, you have the expertise in your field, so share your advice

B. Anatomy of a newsletter:

1. Comes out regularly, has a standard format, usually 2, 4, 8 pages, easy to look at, not expensive to produce, less than \$0.50 per copy, portrays your personality
2. Different from direct mail letter: predictability, newsletters are read first, not last, motivation is to tell, not sell, but it will build strong relationships that will become customers
3. Act objectively, advise subscribers to use competitor's services when they are good, be succinct

C. What a newsletter can do for you:

1. Credibility: trust is the key, publish a newsletter on a subject and you become an expert on that subject, can lead to public speaking opportunities
2. Reaching decision makers: Direct Mail gets opened by secretaries, etc., but newsletters get treated like magazines and get forwarded to higher-ups
3. Building relationships:

D. What to focus on:

Why should customers read my newsletter? What's in it for them?

Ask your customers and clients, what interests them, what would they like to see, ask them to write articles, recruit readers as writers, reader surveys, letters to the editor,

E. Content:

Photos, of new products, how-to stories, customers, your own picture, employees pictures,

Don't make your design too fancy, the most important is readability

Put a box in to ask for letters from customers

Have a contest, with small prizes,

Profiles, let your subscribers tell about their families, themselves, their business

Statistics, select the most relevant stats, put them in easy form to read

Predictions, demonstrate your knowledge to follow the market

Editorials, express your passion for your customers, give your opinion on some subject

Interviews, get readers to give you an interview, don't use them as a sales call in disguise, ask their opinion

Soft Sell, use a subtle approach, offer free sample, include testimonials, make it easy for them to get a hold of you for more info

Who writes it? ideally the guerilla, can hire a professional editor and writer, but they aren't cheap, print six copies of your first newsletter and show them to a few people to get their opinions

F. The guerilla solution, choose a newsletter you love in another market or industry, get some opinions on your selection from a desktop publisher, have them make you a template from that, you can then create future issues yourself, keep your template consistent to make it seem familiar to your readers,

G. Making it sound good:

1. needs a good name, short and simple, not too cute, expresses the main idea, resist using it as an advertisement, promise customers something useful to them,
2. each article should be less than a page, short articles
3. accuracy, higher an editor to catch typos, etc.

H. Get it opened: same as direct mailers, fancy, unique envelopes, postage, labels, address, envelope copy with well written line about its content,

I. Who gets your newsletter: same as direct mailing, build prospect lists, have a database, be a name packrat,

Should you charge for your newsletter: most likely, you should give it away at first, if you get a strong following of your newsletter, you can charge a small fee, you'll lose some readers when you charge, but those who stay will be more committed,

J. Alternatives, electronic delivery (fax or email), know the limitations, faxes considered more disposable than print, need a better layout, email is almost free, lose impact of good design, make sure contact is strong, not everyone has access to email, if your customers want up to the minute info, email is good, save time and money by making your newsletter a self-mailer (i.e. no envelope needed)

## Ch. 8 Classified Ads: Targeted, Cheap, Effective

A. Four reasons to use them

1. Unbelievably inexpensive: advertise to two million readers for \$200, can test a business idea, because it's so inexpensive,
2. Goal is action: the reader knows he has to act
3. High target ability: only those who you want to send your message to will get it, precision targeting, there is bound to be a publication that targets your group of consumers
4. Classifieds hit motivated consumers: anyone patient enough to check out the classifieds is ready to buy, you couldn't ask for a better audience

B. Use them a brochure, a free trial, etc, add all those who call to your database of names, then follow up immediately, "two-step selling process," by the time you try to sell to these people, they are ready to buy,

C. Where to run your classified ad: magazine, newspapers, online?, it depends only on your target, there will be a very exact matched publication for your niche, Bacon's Magazine Newspaper Directory (categorizes 9500+ business and consumer periodicals in US and Canada, has editor's names phone numbers, addresses, fax numbers, etc., brief description of each publication) 312-922-2400,

D. Types:

Newspaper ads: least expensive, easy to do local stuff, special interest papers, some do only ads, you can change your add weekly or even daily

Magazine: national reach, people keep magazines, so you will continue to receive responses, not as timely as newspapers

Online: rapid response, easy to update and test, addresses you collect are already in computerized form, ready for your database, hit higher classes, but that is changing, but some are free (AOL, bulletin boards)

E. Considerations

1. You want your add near competitors, find out what your customer needs, clone your best customers by marketing those who are just like your current ones, look for exactly the right category, run in similar sections simultaneously,
2. testing, ads appear quickly, makes it easy to see what's working best, use a code on your ad to distinguish it from your other ones, test one thing at a time (typeset, pitch, color, etc), test multiple ads at the same time (use codes to distinguish them), test your ad copy (wording and concept)
3. things to try changing: 40 bucks vs. \$39.99, move punctuation marks, make different things bold, emphasize different things (entirely free vs. free info), call for more info vs. call for brochure, the action (do you want them to send a self addressed, stamped envelope, write for more info, call), benefits, price, terms, delivery, guarantees,
4. Be persistent, cost will be lowered if you run the ad for a long time, customers will start to notice you
5. Follow up, those who contact you are interested, check to see if you can keep up with demand by advertising locally before going national, make a somewhat less attractive offer, if you can't follow through, change the offer
6. Measure results, sales count for more than responses do, which of your leads are actually qualified ones, make the initial hurdle (i.e. the action) just high enough to separate those interested from the freeloaders, set a budget and track your returns, to see if its meeting your

goals, negotiate a lower rate for an ad up front if you know you're going to run it for a long time,

#### F. Setting a budget

1. how much will your add campaign cost, how many sales will you need to break even,
2. plan alternates, turn up the heat, drop an ad that's not doing well, whatever you need

#### G. Designing your ad

1. accurate language, look, study ads yourself, look in year-old classifieds from library to see which ones have stuck around, headline style, key phrases,
2. include: way to contact you, easy complete instructions, headline (short, simple, catchy), "free", "new", "guaranteed", describe benefits,
3. leave out: acronyms, odd abbreviations, obscure terms, stick to everyday language
4. don't try to be different, just to be different
5. write the ad as if you were speaking directly to the prospect
6. rent a P.O. Box to save on cost of address length, since you pay for the length of your ad
7. don't be afraid to test a long ad, cost is measured only in terms of the cost it generates
8. leave something out that the customer would need to make a buying decision, give enough info to generate interest, leave enough out to spur action, make every word count, to make sure every word is understandable

### Ch. 9 Networking: generating business through personal contact

A. Keep in mind: Trust created by networking, can build relationships, customers know you care about them, it cannot be transparently an attempt to make a sale, approach each prospect as a chance to make a relationship, not a sale,

B. You can get anything in life if you just help enough people get what they want, don't wait for someone to help you, do for others, because you can and you want to, one of your best source of networking are your competitors, when others have too much business they'll send overflow to you and vice versa, the people you're trying to contact probably want to make contact with you too,

C. What networking can do for you:

1. Establish your reputation in the community, will increase people's trust in you, your community is not geographic it's in your industry, establish yourself as an expert
2. Be patient, invest at least six months of effort to show results, follow up, don't necessarily try to sell right away, call and ask about something
3. Newsletter, brochure, media kit, ask them questions when you are with them, do not just give them info from your brochure, send them this info later
4. Email, easy to send,
5. Target your contacts with people who have influence in your industry, give contacts two business cards, give free samples, free services, etc.

D. start an organization if there is not one yet for you to join, offer your services as a speaker to schools, organizations, have to speak for free at first, then can charge a fee, teach a class, bring along plenty of business cards, or print the syllabus on your letterhead, collect cards from others and make a note of what you talked about with them, community involvement, do not use a charitable event to self-promote, you will generate ill feelings towards you

E. online, do for others without reward, use online forums, give speeches, write articles, go slow and watch what others are doing,

F. stay in touch, "Hi, just checking in", write notes to colleagues every day, clip articles about people and their businesses to others, refer people to your contacts, take advantage of holidays, birthdays, anniversaries to send stuff, don't forget former employers,

### Ch. 10 Telephone: A powerful home-based guerilla tool

A. Most important thing you can do on the phone is to ask questions, can be a burden if you are interrupting people, you can make the calls or answer them yourself, unlike the big guys, you must use it differently than the big guys, don't bother random people, target your calls like a laser beam, try to make sure you are talking to the decision maker of the company, record yourself on the phone and review yourself to be better

## B. Incoming calls

1. make it easy: 800 numbers
2. consider a number that spells something
3. make your number a fixture (magnet, desk decorations, stickers, etc.)
4. offer a benefit for calling early
5. repeat yourself, persist
6. Whom to target and how, increase your success by focusing, follow up direct mail letters with a phone call and increase your success from 6% to 22%, never call someone without a referral (mutual friend, organization, etc), be prepared when the phone rings, use a script and a process, your company's image is on the line the minute you answer the phone, can they figure out whom they've called, are they encouraged by a clear friendly voice, do they feel they have interrupted an important meeting
  - a. consistency, always answer your phone the same way (wording and voice inflection)
  - b. name your business clearly, name yourself
  - c. include a brief benefit in your opening, (e.g. "Barton's limo, all cars smoke free.")
  - d. friendliness, relaxed air, good example of guerilla phone answer 214-383-3221
7. Be goal oriented
  - a. gather information, "in case we get disconnected, can I have your name..."
  - b. ask increasingly detailed questions about your callers problem, shows you're knowledgeable,
  - c. continue the relationship: schedule a meeting, send out a brochure, close the sale, have well-rehearsed scripts, move gradually up to a commitment, establish a need for you product or a service, don't ask questions that will get a no, get a yes or offer choices, don't stop if you're on a roll
  - d. if you can't help a caller, don't be hesitant to refer them to a competitor, don't leave the next step up to the prospect (say you will call them in 10 days)
  - e. resist the temptation to interrupt, hear him out, then talk to him
  - f. if you have trouble getting through a gate-keeper call at odd hours

C. Your phone technology: Have a hold button, think twice about using call waiting, take advantage of your answering message as a marketing tool, mention a recent ad on your company, talk about a special event/contest you are in/holding, tell a success story, offer a piece of business information that might be useful,

1. a short blurb about your product or service
2. your fax number
3. announcements and upcoming events
4. special discounts you are offering

Higher a local actor or actress to deliver your answering messages

## D. Outgoing calls: use it as a highly focused tool,

1. be picky: choose a small number of prospect, learn about them, find someone who knows them, send a letter
2. use your referral: if you can't mention a person, colleague, or organization don't call
3. be slow and steady: try making 10 calls a day, but no more
4. don't feel as though every time you pick up the phone you have to sell something, call recent customers to thank them for their recent business, make 2 thank you calls a day
5. how to get though: people have become more defensive, be specific, must know the name and number of the person you want to talk to, use your referrals ("Is John Mathers there? Bob Jones just asked me to call him"), warn the prospect in advance, send a letter on Monday, call on Friday, call at odd times (8am and 6pm), give a little attention to the gate keeper, try to get the gate keepers name and use it often in your conversation
6. be clear about how long you want to speak and make sure you're not interrupting, be clear about the reason you're calling and the benefits you offer, focus on setting a meeting or sending a brochure, use a script, write one out and try to think up all possible questions and objections,

and have an answer and follow up question for them all, tape yourself, listen to yourself and practice, ask the right questions and then listen to the answers,

7. tips and examples for the script: rephrase objections so they turn into opportunities, say your prospects name often, identify yourself and your business clearly, use your referral, ask how the prospect knows your referral, build on previous relationship-building efforts, qualify your prospect and get name of the person who makes decisions about your products/services, then use your first contact as the referral, ask questions that can't be answered yes or no, benefits, benefits, benefits, if you do ask yes/no questions make sure you know the answer in advance, rephrase objections to diffuse them and set them up as an opportunity for yourself, set up your next point, go for an appointment, not necessarily a close, don't waste people's time, let them go when you're through, drop success stories and references as you can, pack your speech with as much reassurance as you can

8. voice: lower your voice pitch for a more professional sound, speak slowly, smile it comes through in your voice, be enthusiastic, speak clearly and concisely, welcome objections, speak directly into the mouth piece, speak in terms of benefits not features, ask rather than tell, thank the listener for his time, follow up in writing,

9. try running a survey instead of a direct sales call, never lie to a gate keeper, most sales are made after the 5th call, most salespeople give up after the 2nd

## Ch. 11 Closing the Sale: Signing on the dotted line

A. Six steps to closing the sale: it's easier if you take it one step at a time

1. qualify the prospect: find people who really truly, need your product

2. contact the prospect, make a good first impression,

3. ask questions, discover what your prospect needs, even if they are not truthful or upfront

4. ask for objections, have prospect outline their objections with your offer, don't be in a hurry to answer them, just get them out in the open

5. ask the obligating question, if I can show you that our product overcomes objections one, two and three, are you prepared to order today? if no, find out why. if yes, respond to those objections, and ask for the sale, ask current customers why they bought from you, you'll learn how they perceive you and how you can improve

6. get the order, get it in writing, so it today, fill out order form while you talk

B. Step 3: ask questions, you might be wrong if you think you know what your customers are thinking

Why did you get into this business? How did you find us? What's the best product of this type you have ever used? What did you like about it? What's the worst experience you've had using this type of product? What did you like about it? (use whenever your prospect is enthusiastic about anything), What was it that bothered you? (use whenever your prospect complains about anything, first agree with his answer), What's more important, speedy delivery or low price? Who has to approve this purchase? (don't offend the person about his non-authority, but you can't waste time with people who don't make the decisions), When can this purchase be made? Why? (used with everything, rephrase it),

don't go overboard with questions: listen for content, factual information, home in on key phrases, be obvious about writing down important facts, listen for emotional tone, even more important than the facts, voice inflections, non-verbal cues,

answer questions concisely, resist talking too much, don't try to answer questions that weren't asked

C. Step 4: ask for objections, they are telling you their real concerns and that they are interested, e.g. if you were selling something for which they had no possible use, would they say the price was too high, or delivery was too slow? You only raise specific objections, because you really want it, but have reservations

Three categories:

1. request for information: be prepared to give it, here are requests for information in disguise, "I've got to have it, before I pay for it." = Are better delivery terms available?, "I can't use this color" = Are other colors available, etc.

2. stall: "I need to sleep on it.", "I need to speak my husband/boss, etc.", "I can't do anything until after payday." these are often hiding other concerns, ask something like "if today were the

day after payday, what would keep you from signing the contract?"

3. the far fetched objection: when customers feel they have lost control, let them have control and maybe they'll settle down, say "maybe you're not ready to buy, in fact maybe this isn't even the right product for you."

Seek out at least one objection, take notes and write down main points of the objection, restate an objection in your own words, use a notepad to write down key ideas and give them the paper, Don't rush the sales process, build a strong relationship, if you don't believe you have exactly what your prospect needs, neither will they, talk about your past successes,

D. Step 5: Ask the obligating question

not asking for the order yet, just asking for permission for the order later, if we if I can show you that our product overcomes objections one, two and three, are you prepared to order today? Can't trick someone into buying something from you, focus on benefits, find out what they need and deliver it

E. Closing the sale

1. offer a free gift with the product, gift that is not widely available anywhere else, not expensive but sounds like it, doesn't have to be related to your products or services, has to be related to your prospects' desires

2. offer a limited time offer: provides subtle pressure, never lie about it being a limited time, a sale delayed is a sale lost

3. stress your testimonials, if everyone else is doing it, it seems safer

4. focus on word of mouth, prospects who come to you are far easier to close, ask "how did you hear about us?"

5. offer a guarantee and mean it, meaningful, simple to collect, make sure they hear about it in your sales pitch

6. never push too hard, never argue, sales is not a contest of power and manipulation,

7. don't be afraid to agree with an objection

8. don't ask for a yes, do you want it in black or in red?, do you want it delivered or do you want to pick it up?

9. don't wait too long, ask for the order often, plan to ask least three times for the order, make it clear from the start that you are trying to sell something, don't stop selling until they sign on the dotted line

10. don't fail to close on selling yourself

Tips: realize you won't close every sale and know when to give up, send a thank you note with a written guarantee to every new client, selling process doesn't end after closing the sale, repeat business is even more profitable