

# 4 EASY WAYS TO GENERATE REPEAT BUSINESS



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**W**hat is the number one reason some businesses fail while others prosper? They don't generate repeat business. The businesses that prosper are focused on building a client base of lifetime customers.

Repeat business equals profits. If it costs a business \$200 to acquire a customer but that customer only spends \$100 when they buy, when does that business show profit?

Obviously the second visit is the break even visit and each visit after is profit.

Without repeat business, any business is destined to fail. Businesses need to treat their customers in a way that keeps the customers coming back time and time again.

Most businesses actually lose money on the first sale or two to any customer. It is only through repeat business that businesses can generate real cashflow and profits.

So how do businesses keep customers coming back? Why don't customers come back to one business while they return over and over again to a different business that sells the same items?

It comes down to a few basic things: Having the correct market targeted in your advertising, outstanding customer service, literally asking customers to come back and asking those customers to tell their friends. There are things to do within each of those spheres, so let's take a closer look.

## 1. TARGETED MARKETING

**G**enerating repeat business is easier for companies that practice targeted marketing. Why?

Targeted marketing bring good customers to any business at a higher rate than broad-based marketing.

The reason is simple. Through targeted marketing, businesses should be able to find the perfect group of customers for them, not just random people that might buy once and not buy again.

Marketing should be like fishing with a pole rather than a net. You aren't looking to catch every fish, only a specific kind. It might be salmon, it might be tuna, but whatever the type, that is where the focus should be.

Targeted marketing brings good customers to any business at a higher rate than broad-based marketing.

Sure, fishing with a net will bring in far more fish, but there will be plenty of fish you don't want and there may even be an old boot or tire in your catch.

None of that extra stuff is what you wanted. You were fishing for tuna remember? So now you have to spend time picking all the garbage and unwanted fish out of your net. This is time consuming and can take you away from more important tasks, like properly taking care of the tuna you were fishing for in the first place.

Do you see how this applies to any business?

Customers are like fish. You want to catch a lot of them, but you want to catch the kind you are fishing for. That's where the money lies.

With a general marketing campaign, you are too concerned with casting a big net. If the marketing theory for your business is "everyone is a potential customer" you don't really have a plan.

By focusing on the people you know will be good, repeat customers you can create a far bigger niche.

But how do you know who will be good repeat customers? After all, they aren't wandering the streets with signs on their back pledging their business to you.

There are a number of ways to cultivate the groups you are looking for.

Radio and television advertising works as long as you target certain times and stations with your advertising. For instance, if you own a tattoo shop you probably don't want to advertise on the local classic music radio station, but a rock and roll station would work.

Most importantly you want to setup headlines in your advertising that speak to specific markets. For example, if your target market is women over the age of 35 you might have one campaign that focuses on married women, one that focuses on mothers, one that focuses on career minded women and so on.

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Back to the fishing analogy, you want to use a pole rather than a net, but actually, you want to use a number of poles.

If you've ever gone fishing you know that there is usually more than one line in the water and that is the way it should be with your marketing as well.

This means that marketing to a number of groups through specific advertisements, not one generic ad that you hope catches attention in the groups you wish to target.

Another great strategy is a Strategic Alliance.

This is when one business partners with another business that serves the coveted target group but sells a different product. This partnership helps direct customers to both businesses by making exclusive offers to them.

Our mythical tattoo shop mentioned earlier might offer a discount on the first tattoo to customers of a given restaurant or bar. That establishment might have a section in which it shows pictures of some satisfied customers of both establishments. Maybe it offers a free beer for customers who've just gotten tattoos.

For our tattoo shop, there are a number of businesses that would make sense in a host beneficiary relationship. Bars, pubs or taverns would work as would motorcycle repair shops and a host of other businesses. There are probably a number of businesses that your business could partner with and benefit all concerned. It's just a matter deciding what the best path is.

What businesses have the customers you want? How could you develop a strategic alliance with them?

These are just a few ways your business can develop a database of loyal, happy customers, but once you get them in the door, you have to keep them happy and coming back, which leads us to our next section.

## 2. OUTSTANDING CUSTOMER SERVICE

According to a recent report from American Express, Americans are willing to spend 9% more with companies that practice outstanding customer service and 61% of Americans said customer service is more important to them now, during the economic slump most Western nations have been in.

At the same time, only 37% of American consumers believe companies have improved their focus on providing quality customer service. In fact, 27% feel businesses have not changed their attitude toward customer service while 28% feel that businesses are actually spending less time focused on quality customer service. Even worse, 21% of American consumers believe that companies take their business for granted.

These numbers are startling because they so clearly define the importance of quality customer service and the fact that too many businesses still seem to not care about the customer service they provide.

Do you think you could use this information to exploit the weaknesses of your competition? Of course you can, but your attention has to be on customer service all the time.

So how do you focus on the quality of the experience each customer has with you to ensure they buy from you time and again?

The first step is to remember what business you are in.

No matter what you sell, no matter what your business does, you are in the customer service business.

Without customers there is no business.

Unfortunately many business owners don't realize this until it's too late. Too many think because they own their own business they are no longer accountable to anyone, but in reality they are always accountable to the marketplace and their customers.

Great customer service is how you build a database of raving fans for your business. Great customer service is the root from which profitability grows because it is through word of mouth that new customers find you.

Referrals are the key and who is going to refer a business to their friend that practices mediocre customer service? Would you tell a friend, "I went to XYZ restaurant for lunch the other day. I wasn't greeted by anyone, the food was really mediocre and the waitress barely noticed when I wanted her help. You have to try the place."

Of course you wouldn't unless you didn't want to be friends with that person for too much longer. What do you think your customers say about your business to their friends? Good customer service doesn't happen by accident. It is the product of team building and training. The power of customer service is accentuated by scripting and a company-wide mindset of keeping every customer informed, happy and coming back.

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Scripting is very useful because it breaks customer service down into systems. If a customer is looking to purchase an item for you, are your sales people trained to answer their questions in a company accepted way or are they just winging it?

Do you have them ask specific questions to drive customers to purchase specific items or does the customer set the tone?

If you don't script your customer service, your sales pitches and the way your team treats customers, you are leaving yourself open to the whims of your employees. If one has a bad day and takes it out on a customer, who pays? Your business does.

If your sales person doesn't know how to answer questions in the proper manner and confuses customers or loses them altogether, who pays? Your business does, as it should because you didn't take the time to remove all doubt and interpretation from the sales and customer service end of the business.

Here's a simple "Magic Phrase" that has been proven to increase retail sales 17%:

*"Hi there ... have you been here before?"*

Now ... how is this "magic"?

Because it allows you to open up a conversation with the customer and build a rapport with them.

If a customer has been to your shop before you can say, "Great! You know, I thought you looked familiar ... is there anything special you are looking for today?"

If a customer has never been to your shop before you can say, "Great! Welcome to (the name of your store) ... let me tell you a little bit about what we offer ..."

This simple (and seemingly "too easy") technique has been responsible for upwards of 17% increases in sales within VERY short periods of time in a variety of retail settings.

Scripting works and it is just one area within the larger topic of team building and training that is so important to outstanding customer service.

Most importantly, remember that great customer service comes down to basics. If the service was outstanding and the customer had a good time buying, you can be sure they will tell their friends all about it, and maybe even bring those friends with them the next time they stop in.

### 3. ASK THEM BACK

This is one part that many business owners simply forget or ignore because they don't think it can work, but simply asking customers to come back is a very powerful way of generating repeat business.

There are many ways businesses can ask their customers back, including simply asking them to come again after they've completed their purchase.

Saying "come again" is a good start, but there are so many ways to invite customers back, finding the best way for your business should be relatively easy and far more effective than niceties at the end of the sale.

The basic component of inviting your customers back is having a strong relationship with them. After all, to truly invite them back you need to know how to contact them and nobody wants to give contact information to strangers.

"ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO ASK YOUR CUSTOMERS BACK IS WRITING A REGULAR NEWSLETTER AND DISTRIBUTING IT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS."

One of the most effective ways to ask your customers back is writing a regular newsletter and distributing it to your customers.

Of course to do this, you'll need to have your customers give you their contact information. If you are writing a hard copy, you need to know where they live. If you are sending your newsletter over the internet, you'll need their email addresses.

A newsletter is a great way to keep your customers informed about what is going on in your establishment. You can make offers, talk about exciting developments, new team members or just provide insights and interesting facts about your business.

You'll want to keep the tone of the newsletter light and fun to read.

Give your customers incentives to read the newsletter as well. That might mean a discount with a coupon used in the newsletter or some other special offer. Whatever offer you choose, make sure it is cost effective and makes sense for your business.

Another way to invite customers back is by writing postcards thanking them for doing business with you in the past.

How do you feel when you get a thank you from someone? How often do businesses thank you for buying from them?

It probably doesn't happen as often as you'd like, which is strange because it is pretty clear that businesses that don't follow up with their customers have trouble generating repeat business.

Of course, if you've been able to develop strong relationships with your customers, generating repeat customers is a stepping stone to the real gold mine, referrals.

## 4. ASK FOR REFERRALS

**R**eferrals don't happen by accident. Your customer service should be good enough to bring customers back and get them to tell their friends, but a lot of the time that still isn't enough to build referrals to the point you want.

One of the best ways to generate referrals is simply to ask your customers for them. Ask them to tell their friends and reward them for doing it.

**"ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO GENERATE REFERRALS IS SIMPLY TO ASK YOUR CUSTOMERS FOR THEM. ASK THEM TO TELL THEIR FRIENDS AND REWARD THEM FOR DOING IT."**

You can follow the same type of plan you used for getting customers to come back. Place offers in your newsletter, give them rewards for each new customer they bring to your business, make it worth their while to help you.

Not only will you generate referrals, but this will help your customers develop a feeling of ownership about your business.

People like to think they've found something special. Think about that rock band you loved before everybody else had heard them. You felt like they belonged to you and because of that feeling you cared a lot about them.

That is how you want your customers to think of your business. When they feel ownership, they will tell everyone they know about how great your business is. And the best part about it is that people are far more likely to trust an opinion from a friend than they are to trust advertising.

When a friend tells another about something they really like, invariably that second friend just has to try it. It's human nature. Successful businesses take advantage of that element of human nature, using customer service and relationship building to generate both referrals and repeat business.

Do you?

## WRAPPING IT UP

**B**y following the steps above, you can grow a thriving business. So what are you waiting for?

Develop targeted marketing strategies to get the type of potential customer you are looking.

Practice outstanding customer service and ask customers to keep coming back based on your relationship.

Then, ask those customers to refer your business to their friends and your business is sure to see profitability rise.

**1. We Guarantee to get results, and that you'll be able to "Find our Fee" in your business within 17-weeks of ActionCOACH coaching your company ... or your coaching is FREE.**

Our coaching programs have been tested and proven all over the world, so when you hire an ActionCOACH, you WILL get results. Whether it is in terms of more time, a better team or more money ... if you are making a good-faith effort and doing the required work assigned to you; you attend all coaching sessions and agreed-upon events and workshops and you complete all of your committed decisions and homework assignments on agreed-upon dates ... and you are STILL not satisfied or seeing results by the 17th week, we will coach you FREE until you do ... no questions asked!



**2. We Guarantee to tell the truth about you and your business ... no matter how uncomfortable it may be, or how hard it is to share with you the realities of your business and the changes you need to make.**

When you hire an ActionCOACH, you will have the "unreasonable friend" and personal business mentor you and your business need to succeed. You will be held accountable for everything you say you will do, and your business will get the push it needs so you can get the results you really want in your business.

**3. We Guarantee you a "business re-education" about how your business really works and how to successfully grow your company ... as well as how to apply your new education and knowledge to any business situation.**

Your ActionCOACH will guide you with proven systems and strategies designed to give you a "business re-education" that will allow you to profit in terms of more time, better team and more money. Not only will you be able to unlock the true growth potential of your company, you'll be in the "driver's seat" of your own business, equipped with a "map" and a "license" to take it and drive it wherever you want to go, with ActionCOACH by your side.

**4. We Guarantee complete confidentiality ...**

Our working relationship will involve a level of trust and understanding about the proprietary nature of our coaching strategies and the proprietary aspects of the numbers and nature of your business. Because of this, we guarantee a confidential business relationship with you during the course of our work together.

**5. We Guarantee a personalized approach to your business ...**

You and your business are unique. Because you are relying on our experience in working with businesses of all kinds, you can be assured you will have a clear understanding of the nature of any program we recommend, and that your expectations will be properly managed as to anticipated outcomes and results.

**6. We Guarantee a proven system and methodology that is designed to multiply profits in your business, with complete access to our proprietary system of coaching strategies, systems, programs and services ...**

Not only will you be shown a number of systemized ways to successfully build your business, you will also have complete and exclusive access to more than 3,500 strategies and tactics that make up our entire proprietary business coaching system.

**7. We Guarantee to show you how ActionCOACH defines business success, and how to build a commercial, profitable enterprise that works without you.**

Even if you are an owner who loves business and who loves working "in" your business every day, ActionCOACH will show you how to build a company you can work "on" whether you show up every day or not. Regardless of your ultimate goals, you will learn the strategies, systems and advantages of the ActionCOACH definition of a successful business.

**ActionCOACH**  
business coaching

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