

Working with a Customer Lifecycle

SMALL BUSINESS GUIDES

Using the Customer Lifecycle model, you can create a marketing plan designed to measurably grow your professional practice or business through targeted communication and smarter lead management, leading to better lead conversion rates, increased sales and greater profits. .

STEP 1: Attract Interest in your Services

Content is king no matter how busy your business customers are. Content can mean many things to many people, but really it's any valuable piece of information or entertainment that attracts leads to your site.

For example, if you have skills in excel and producing cash flow projections, you could write a report and name it *5 Ways to Improve Your Cash Flow*. By offering content you'll start to develop a trusted relationship with your visitors.

Get Social

Social media doesn't have to be daunting. And since 75% of consumers use social media in some format to learn about products and services, you can't afford to not be in the social sphere. Start a blog to talk about your experiences; joining other groups with like-minded professionals or vendors to monitor industry news or company updates.

Reward Twitter followers or customers who "Like" you on Facebook with exclusive offers and specials. All of these services are free and easy to manage with only a little effort. The keys to successful social engagement are being consistent and being real.

STEP 2: Nurture Prospects

The truth is, most customer sand clients don't immediately purchase your offer over and above the basic work they are paying you fees on. Higher value services need a customer who you have nurtured. They buy when they are ready to buy. Consistent, valuable follow-up offers can prove to be a huge competitive edge, as long as you approach the nurturing process with a clear communications plan in mind.

Winning lifelong customers requires the ability to not only get a prospect to buy again and again, but to do so happily. The benefits go far beyond inspiring loyalty and repeat business; happy customers become advocates for your brand, driving referrals by sharing their experiences with friends, colleagues and social networks.

A warm, friendly, accommodating approach you take to nurture a customer should be continued for the duration of the relationship. Positive experiences lead to repeat business and referrals. Service as a strategy has to come from the top and be truly ingrained in your core values. Every process, every decision, every employee must act in alignment with this strategy in order to be successful.

STEP 3: Upsell Customers

One of the very first statistics business owners learn is this: 80% of your profits come from the top 20% of your customers. Yet so many professionals and small business owners spend all their time focusing on attracting and converting new leads and customers that upsell and cross-sell efforts directed at existing customers completely fall off the radar.

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Continue to develop relationships through lead nurturing, like letting customers know about complementary products and services they might enjoy.

The best way to accomplish this is to create automated follow-up campaigns based on a scheduled sequence that continues to communicate with customers in the form of emails or direct mail and other offline methods. You could even target these communications to feature new services or promotions that your association or membership site might have in their benefits program; ensuring you're always delivering something of value.

STEP 4: Get Referrals

People are more likely to do business with someone when they're introduced by a mutual acquaintance. Based on that idea, customer referral programs are a fantastic way to generate highly qualified leads. The key to getting referrals from happy customers is simple—just ask. And don't forget to reward customers for their referrals with a thank you gift, account credit or heartfelt thank you card.

Achieve Your Goals

Professionals and small business owners dream of striking the perfect balance between running a successful practice or business and spending time doing the things they love. The steps in the Perfect Customer

Lifecycle are designed specifically to you realise this dream.