

principle 8

The Irresistible Customer Relationship Model

*Understand your customers
changing needs*

People's needs and wants change constantly... Almost minute by minute and therefore what they say 'no' to today could be 'yes' next month, next week, tomorrow or even in a minute.

Marketing research lets you know what people want, who they are, what they need, and so on, it can provide a baseline. But there are subtleties to interpreting marketing research you should be aware of. For one thing, marketing research gives you a "snapshot" of where people are at the moment.

No one ever stays frozen in one place. That means their needs and situations constantly change - sometimes just 15 minutes after they described their needs to a marketing research or telemarketers query! If someone doesn't need your product or service today, that doesn't mean they won't need it tomorrow, or next week.

Or maybe they need it, but can't buy until two weeks from now when they get their next paycheque. Often, all this means is that the time is not exactly right for them to buy.



**Persistence pays off,
so don't give up**

Experienced and smart marketers know that taking just one shot – a single letter, ad, phone call, face to face contact - at a prospect is rarely sufficient. Smart marketers know that people buy more often on the second, third, fourth or fifth time you contact them. It's called 'the irresistible customer relationship model'. It is well documented that the persistent salesperson that doesn't give up on the first 'no' can often move on to get the sale. Furthermore, experience shows that people will often respond after they've received 6, 7 or more contacts. The point is, by sequentially and systematically making the extra efforts you can very often get a pay off where many before you have failed. That's where the 'irresistible customer relationship model' comes in.

When a prospect says 'No', they often don't mean 'No' in the sense that they don't want to take you up on your offer. It may mean that they don't "Know" enough to make an informed decision. So you have to give them more information, more value. Add more benefit, more advantage, more use, enhancement, lifestyle, profit... whatever is their hot button, so the eventual outcome is that the value you've presented far and away exceeds any price or other reason they may have for saying "No" or not going ahead with your proposition.

Let me give you an example: An acquaintance, Mike, is an expert at helping people get private foundation or government grants for a variety of projects. Because Mike frequently got more calls from prospects than he could deal with personally, he decided to write a booklet on grant writing which told people how they could get a grant on their own, and without the help of a professional.

Mike put together a nifty sales letter which extolled the virtues of his booklet, and sent it to the dozens of people who called him each week. Even though the people calling him were obviously interested in grant writing information, Mike almost never got a sale of his booklet after sending his sales letter. He was selling the information for a reasonable £11.95. Mike asked me to take a look at his sales letter to see if anything was wrong with it - but I found it to be excellent. I told Mike:

"Don't change a thing. Keep sending the same sales letter. If you don't get a response, send a second mailing in 10 days - this time just a post card advertising the same report, but with a £2 discount, and have a time limit of 7-days to get the report at the cheaper price."



Mike did so, and suddenly began to sell almost 6 out of 10 people who got the postcard after the initial sales letter.

Why did it work? Many times people are almost ready to buy, but decide to pass for a variety of reasons. Again, maybe it wasn't

pay day, or maybe they just wanted time to think it over. Whatever the case, things change, situations change, needs change - everything changes constantly. The bottom line for those of us who want to sell is:

The other profitable idea to remember is that your current customers need to be regularly communicated with too. If they've bought once, they'll probably buy again – maybe a bigger, better or more expensive one, or perhaps some additional products and services.

Use the 'irresistible customer relationship model' in all your marketing - it pays to make more than one approach and one attempt to sell.

The 'irresistible customer relationship model' is simply an organised combination of mailing, faxing and phone calls to make an offer (sell a product or service) to a prospect. It is an offer that is repeated over and over again with variations that relate and build upon the previous mailing piece or contact.

Such sequential mailings and contacts will outperform single one-off mailings or calls by astronomical and exponential amounts. This is also because the target is exposed to the offer again and again and tells the prospect that you mean business, and are concerned that he/she has the opportunity to take advantage of the offer you're presenting to them.

With high value products and services, mailings are reinforced and supplemented by a number of combinations of faxes, phone calls, post cards and/or personal sales visits. Experience proves that the best results are gained by the use of such multiple approaches.

Vary your pitch, your method, your media or your price and keep plugging away.