



## THE NEW CUSTOMER RETENTION PROGRAM

I can't promise you that every marketing message will hit a homerun – but I can guarantee you that if you use the magic key, your business will have an exponentially greater shot at success in any economy.

### **The magic key? It's customer retention.**

Existing relationships can be leveraged through social media to shorten the sales cycle and create new customer relationships through word of mouth in a way never before possible. Word of mouth has always been the most effective marketing in the world: now it's on steroids and it's power can be harnessed.

And if the short term benefits weren't enough: think about the lifetime value of the customer.

One \$50 sale per month x 12 months per year x 5 years = \$3000

### **About Customers**

#### **1. Customers demand respect.**

Customers will not tolerate interruption marketing and billboard style messages any longer. Traditional media and their related "traditional messages" are dead in the water and they will prove increasingly ineffective in the weeks and months to come. This will be the year that traditional marketing messages backfire. Instead, look for ways to show your customers a little R-E-S-P-E-C-T.

#### **2. Customers want to do business with people they trust.**

#### **3. Customers have a voice.**

Customers already have a voice. They didn't need your permission to get it. They're already talking about you. Gone are the days when standard marketing rules applied: For every one complaint you hear, there are 40 you don't hear. In today's marketplace, you can hear a LOT of them – the problem is, so can several hundred (or thousands) of the other customers out there.

#### **4. Customers really do want to be loyal.**

But the relationship must be mutually beneficial. They expect that you will value them in return. Show your customers how much you love them. Help give them infinite reasons to remain loyal and to remember you for their every need.

## HOW DO WE RETAIN CUSTOMERS?

Here are a few ideas. This isn't an exhaustive list. Please share YOUR ideas with me at [www.facebook.com/teamhalo](http://www.facebook.com/teamhalo). We'll talk about it.

1. Monitor and closely manage your customer experience for consistency. This is the experience a customer has when you answer the phone, when they walk through your door, when they place an on-line order, etc. Make sure that time after time after time, the experience is consistent.
2. Keep customers in the loop. (See e-mail newsletter archive from September 15, 2009 for more on this. [www.halobusiness.com/wp-site/newsletter-archives/](http://www.halobusiness.com/wp-site/newsletter-archives/).)
3. Be where your customers are. On-line and off-line, be a real person and be involved in the things they care about. Don't be present with your back to the crowd either – it's rude.
4. Market in the currency you have.
5. Create special offers only on Twitter or Facebook.
6. Use e-mail marketing – but use it to provide insider information, build relationships, inform and education – not push a billboard-style message to your customer.
7. Create a customer advisory council.

## WARNING

Avoid customer loyalty “systems.” They are old school and reek of gimmicky, traditional marketing.

Instead, focus on the pursuit of REAL relationships and leveraging new tools to develop more of those “real” relationships than ever before possible. Focus on giving – knowing that it will return to you abundantly.

Today's Customer Retention Program looks like the STRATEGIC use of Facebook Fan lists and Twitter followers. It's e-mail marketing campaigns and blog comments. It's intimate, niche special events and random acts of kindness.