

Do You Reward Your Customers for Paying Attention?

written by Lori Jo Vest

I'm a huge fan of social media and love to connect with all kinds of people on Facebook and Twitter. On Facebook, I communicate with friends from high school, customers, family, college pals, vendors, prospects...everybody.

I "like" my vendors' and clients' companies and am an active participant, commenting and engaging in fun conversation. (Okay, so I'm borderline addicted, but it's working for me, so who's to question my enthusiasm?)

Last week, I received a Facebook message from a representative of Quality Logo Products, the vendor from whom we'd purchased some squeeze toy questions marks to promote our book, "Who's Your Gladys?" When we originally worked with them, we had a great experience. Their customer service was stellar and the product was high quality and affordable.

The Facebook message read:

I'm so happy to be contacting you today – it's your lucky day! My name is Jill and I manage the Quality Logo Products Facebook page. First of all, let me say CONGRATULATIONS! I'm contacting you because your name was randomly selected for our contest this week!

As I'm pretty sure you already know, we've started a "Featured Facebook Fan of the Week" giveaway, so we'll be picking one fan every Friday and sending a couple of cool prizes with our logo. You can see the details on our blog.

Thanks so much for being our customer! We truly appreciate your business and your support on Facebook.

It was a small, but meaningful gesture and reminded me to think of them again when I need specialty items. I wrote back and confirmed my address and a few days later, I received a package with a squeeze toy, a nightlight and a small container of mints. My twelve year old son promptly ran off with the squeeze toy and loves the way the nightlight makes a pattern like an aurora borealis on his ceiling.

I was selected to be "Featured Facebook Fan of the Week" as someone who pays attention to Quality Logo Products on social media. They rewarded me for being a fan, which, in turn, will keep them on my radar.

Here are a few ways you can reward your customers for paying attention to your company:

Publish a monthly e-newsletter. Make it a quick, easy read and at the bottom, offer a small relevant gift to the first five people who call in with the answer to a light question. For example, in October, give away store gift cards to the first five customers who tell you what they're going to be for Halloween. In January, ask them to tell you their New Year's resolution.

Offer an incentive for a survey response. You get what you measure and sometimes, it's hard to get customers to take a few minutes to respond to a survey. Offer a token gift, perhaps a \$10 coffee store gift card, to those who take time to fill it out.

Respond personally to customers who send you a positive testimonial. When a customer sends you an unsolicited testimonial, send them a handwritten thank you note. While it's not a tangible gift, everyone likes to be appreciated. Taking just a few minutes to express your gratitude personally helps cement a positive, connected relationship.

***What do you think?** How could you reward customers who are actively engaging with your company?*

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Co-author of the customer service bestseller, "Who's your Gladys? How to Turn Even the Most Difficult Customer into Your Biggest Fan," Lori Jo Vest has been involved in relationship-based sales and customer service for over 20 years. She has developed extensive marketing, sales and customer service expertise through her work in business-to-business sales and marketing positions. She consults with mid-sized and second stage businesses on methods to enhance their sales and customer service efforts through one-on-one awareness campaigns, methods for developing personal connection and custom strategies for long-term relationship building. You can reach Lori at lori@lorijovest.com.

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