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Use Testimonials To Market Yourself

Testimonials are a wonderful way to market your company. They give you credibility—a third-party endorsement. It is no longer you alone saying that you and your company and products or services are phenomenal—it is someone else saying that they are phenomenal! When you place an ad, everyone knows that you have paid for it. It is you “tooting your own horn.” Much more believable and credible is someone else “tooting your horn!” Use testimonials in your marketing materials, use them on your web site, use them in advertisements, use them in your media kits, put them on business cards and make sure to use them in your sales presentations and/or on the telephone as success stories.

So, how do you get all of those glowing testimonials from satisfied customers? Ask. Get in the habit of asking every single satisfied customer for a testimonial. There are many ways to do this. Here are a few:

- 1. Ask your customers to fill out a brief customer satisfaction survey.** Leave space for comments at the end. Make sure to also ask at the end of the survey, “May we use your name and comments in our marketing materials?” Have a space for them to check “yes” or “no,” along with their signature. Most people are delighted to have you use their comments!
- 2. If you use public speaking to increase your visibility and generate leads for your business pass out an evaluation form to your audience.** Make sure to ask at the end of the evaluation form, “May we use your name and comments in our marketing materials?” Have a space for them to check “yes” or “no,” along with their signature. Again, most people are delighted to have you use their comments!
- 3. Using the satisfied customer’s name greatly increases your credibility.** It is far stronger to have an endorsement with a name than

without. Use the customer's name and the company name. Make sure to ask permission to use their name first.

4. Ask your customers to write testimonial letters. Say, "I was wondering if you could help me." (People love to help!) "Would you write a testimonial letter for me outlining how happy you are with our product/service?" (Only ask customers that you are sure are happy!)

5. Offer to write it for them, "I know that you are very busy. I'd be more than happy to draft something for you to edit." People do genuinely want to help, and people are also genuinely very busy. This makes it easy for them to help.

6. Every time you complete a project and/or a customer says something positive to you about your product/service, say to them, "Would you write that down on your letterhead? It would be a big help to me, and I would use it to market my product/service."

7. Use your testimonials as success stories when speaking with prospects or even customers. This enables you to tell others what you have accomplished for your customers without appearing to brag. The model of a success story is: Your customer had a problem. You fixed it. They are now very happy. Remember to always tell your success story from the customer or prospect's point of view. That means stick to the benefits that your customers received from your work.

8. And if you occasionally suffer from the "blahs," here's another tip. Post your favorite testimonial letters on a bulletin board or clear wall space near where you work. Put the rest into a three-ring binder. Anytime you start to feel "blah," read through your letters from all of the people saying how much you have helped them. It will perk you right up!

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