

Never forget

that customers are by far the most important assets at the balance sheet

| by Joseph H.A.M. Rodenberg RM |

In business there seems to be an epidemic failure of customer analysis. Result of this is a lack of a disciplined systematic process for maintaining awareness of customer needs, interests, purchase decision behaviours, perception of suppliers and the current status of relationships. If you have your CRM-tools in place, don't rely on them to get the customer voice really inside your organisation. Starting to understand customer opportunities and threats and focusing on the most appropriate opportunities, management must try to get customer involvement inside in order to maintain the company's promises to customers.

How to maintain customer awareness at your company?

It is important to conduct a regular review or check-up with all of your customers. Traditional market research can't fulfil this anymore. Your company should be able to conduct these customer assessment itself by identifying your perceived image, the key critical success factors from the perspective of your customers purchase decision process and loyalty. Because loyalty is the most important indicator whether or not your company still meets customer needs. Nobody has to explain to you the maintenance of good connections with customers.

Very few companies have an ongoing process in place to identify the opportunities to serve customers in a continuous and consistent way. Companies who are able to realise this get the actionable customer intelligence to act at the market place. Is your management able to give the answers to the following five key questions:

1. Is our company still targeting the right customers at the right customer segments?
2. Does the company have the right mix of strengths for its target customers or does it need to develop new competencies?
3. Does your company have the right mix of strengths compared to competitors?
4. Does your company offer the customers the right mix of products and services?
5. What does your company have to do differently to ensure the relationships with its customers in one to two years from now?

By doing this you keep the customer awareness at your company and this enables you in addition to build long lasting customer relations with the ultimate aim to get the voice of the customer inside.

Change to pro-actively searching for new opportunities

Surprisingly few companies pro-actively search for possibilities to improve their product and service offerings to customers. By doing this you create real customer values and especially loyalty. Loyalty means increased revenues and growth of your share of market. Asking customers to elaborate how to better meet their requirements and expectations means strengthening long term customer loyalty.

We live in a world of change: purchasing decisions change,


competitors offerings change, competitors strategies change, marketing conditions change, dynamics evolve and selecting customers change. Your company has to leave the traditional borders, you have to think out of the box and so you are facing new challenges to get the voice of the customer inside.

Dialogue marketing ascends from database marketing to relationship marketing to one-to-one

Dialogue marketing is, to date, the highest rung on the evolutionary ladder that ascends from database marketing to relationship marketing to one-to-one marketing, according to a recent publication in November 2005 in HBR. It is completely interactive and is relationship aware. Dialogue marketing responds to each transition in that relationship as it occurs, at the moment the customer requires a particular type of attention. A dialogue is very simply a series of outreaches and responses between a company and a customer, ideally leading to some action on the part of the customer.

The solution of customer intelligence based dialogue marketing

ClientIndicator is the brand new solution to establish your company's one-to-one dialogue with all your customers. By using ClientIndicator your customers keep telling you if you still meet their image and key critical selecting criteria of your products and services. ClientIndicator, and nobody else, will measure and monitor your customer image and your customer satisfaction as part of your quality management programme year round. ClientIndicator combines the measuring, the analyses and the reporting all together. And all of it is real time in addition with response rates of 70-80 percent. In addition ClientIndicator is a low cost solution and operates as an ASP service with no interference in your current IT systems.

Will your company be one of the first ones leaving the traditional barriers of the industry sector? Will your company be one of the premier firms who will meet new customer needs? Will your company make it happen or is your company one who watch things happen or who wondered what happened? We challenge you to share our new vision on customer intelligence based dialogue marketing. 

About the author:

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