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IS IT HARD TO BUY WHAT YOU ARE SELLING?

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Are you in a business where you have numerous competitors? If your answer is “yes” here is something to consider: How difficult is the buying process from your customer’s perspective? It surprises me how some companies make it challenging for a prospect to buy their product or service. What’s more, the situation might be that when the prospect asks questions during the buying process, he encounters more than a few hard “no” answers. Perhaps these impediments may be there for justifiable reasons, but to unnecessarily make it difficult for a prospect to buy your product or service is a big mistake.

Let’s say, for example, that to finalize a transaction there happens to be various steps that your potential customer must go along with to buy from you. Is there any way to simplify the process? If a customer starts to feel as if he is “put through the wringer” by a series of seemingly unnecessary demands and procedures, he may ultimately be discouraged from finalizing the deal and back out. So, what your company ends up with is nothing – no sale and no customer – because you made the product or service too difficult to buy. Does it make sense to have so many obstacles, real or perceived, facing a potential customer to the point that they become frustrated and decide not to buy? If the buying process does not go smoothly for your prospective customer, there is a problem to address.

Recently I decided to purchase a condo in Florida in an area my wife, and I love to visit and where we have many friends. We narrowed down our choice to a unit and had our realtor draw up a contract with a full price offer on the condo. The seller responded with arbitrary requirements as a condition of the sale. We were taken aback by the seller’s mandates so what do you think we did? We said, “no thanks” and found a second condo and made another full price offer on this condo. This seller’s agent did not consult his client and stated that his client would not accept our offer as written. Again, we were surprised by the response and immediately withdrew our proposal. We began to wonder if every seller was going to be this difficult to buy from, but we pressed on and found a third property, and everything went according to plan,

there were no unusual demands, and we quickly closed the deal. Incidentally, the second condo that we offered to purchase, where the realtor spoke out of turn on behalf of his client, the agent called back after we walked away from the deal and said that his client would gladly accept our offer. The moral of the story is that unless you have unlimited demand for your product or service, it is not a good idea to make the buying process difficult.

A notable example of a company that has honed the art of being easy to buy from is Amazon. Even though they are in retail, a highly competitive environment, they have mastered the art of the easy sale. How did they do it? In 1999 Amazon patented a “1-Click” button for ordering. The

answer might legitimately be “no,” but you should avoid saying “no” to your prospect if possible. It would be best if you tried to always say “yes” to your prospects.

Let’s look at an example of a conversation where the prospect asks the boat salesperson some questions and the salesperson’s appropriate responses. The prospect asks, “Do you have any boats in stock?” The salesperson responds, “Yes, what did you have in mind?” The prospect continues, “Do you have a four-passenger boat with one outboard engine?” The salesperson replies, “Yes, we do. Is that what you’re interested in seeing?” The prospect asks, “Could I take delivery by this weekend?” The salesperson says, “Yes, you can. Would that work for you?”



Now back to the first question where the salesperson said “no.” The prospect asked the question, “Do you have any blue boats?” Now, the salesperson knows that they do not have a blue boat; he only has white or red ones. However, instead of saying “No, I don’t have a blue boat,” he says “Why are you are considering a blue boat? Have you ever thought of a white or red boat? These colors are much more visible when you are out on the water.”

Can you see the difference in these two responses? Always attempt to avoid saying “no.” In the first example, the salesperson said, “No I do not have a blue boat” - this is a mistake since it is effectively saying to the prospect, on a conscious and subconscious

level, stop considering my product or service. It is much better to say “yes” if the answer is yes. If that is not possible, then ask questions to avoid using the firm no.

consumer could enter their billing, shipping and payment information just once and then click a button to buy something - a breakthrough for online shopping. Amazon has perfected the easy sale. So, if you think there is a sticking point for your company with its buying process, perhaps it is convoluted and could be discouraging buyers, take a page out of Amazon’s playbook and take the initiative to streamline the sales process.

Another component of being easy to buy from is saying “yes” to your prospects. Unfortunately, I have at times overheard the salesperson say “no” to a potential customer during the sales presentation. For example, the prospect asks, “Can I get this boat in blue?” The salesman says, “No it only comes in white or red.” Now the

We always want to be honest with prospects. Never would we want to misrepresent the product or service that we are selling, so obviously there will be times when you will have to say no, but that should be an exception. The key to increasing sales is to “yes” your prospect to a closed deal. The answer is yes, yes, yes.

In addition to saying “yes” as often as possible, I am sure that we can agree that it is the best policy to make the buying process easy for your potential customers.