

Dial In: Build Business with “ Why Would, not Why Should”

So you find yourself with a few extra minutes to review the OSIP Newsletter. Let me take a moment to recognize your association with OSIP and congratulate you for staying on top of your game! Industry insights, recent developments, future plans... It's a few minutes well spent. Like many news sources and industry publications, you scan the titles, looking for what might grab your attention with relevance and a return on investment for your time. You've now read the first paragraph of this article, wondering if you should continue, asking yourself, "What's in it for me?"

Interesting... **you're thinking just like your customers!**

Whether you provide a good, a service, or an "experience", customers consider their options, and they listen to the same station you hear right now... WIIFM.

"What's in it for me?" Give me a reason to keep reading... Just like your customers ask for a reason to engage, and do business with you. To succeed, we need to provide a compelling and motivating message that drives customer behavior. Like you, customers are asking, "What's in it for me?"

So do you have a clear answer for the customer's "WIIFM" question? Or are you just going to let the customer figure it out themselves?

Let's develop a strategy to answer the customer's "What's In It for Me?" question. We'll start by defining WIIFM, specifically the "Me", and the "What".

1. Define "Me". Who is your customer?
2. Define "What". Why would a customer choose you?

Don't be fooled by the simplicity of these questions. Let's take a deeper look...

ONE: Who is your customer?

Your customer is the individual or organization that makes the buying decision and/or writes the check for your good or service. Collectively, they define your customer base.

My son took hitting lessons at a local baseball training gym. Although the lessons were provided to him, and he had to be engaged, I made the buying decision and wrote the check. Thus, I am (the parent is) the customer. I also saw some teams training together at this facility. So, there may not be a single answer in defining your customer.

TWO: Why would a customer choose you?

Be careful with this answer. Get it right, and you gain new customers. Get it wrong, and you'll wonder why the customer base is not growing. The question is, "*Why would* a customer choose you?" The question is not, "*Why should* a customer choose you?" Any organization can make a list of reasons why a customer should choose them. Those responses are irrelevant to the customer's buying decision, UNLESS the customer is provided with that information!

I heard about the hitting lessons from another parent. Word of mouth recommendations are powerful! And with additional research, I learned the instructors had experience, adhered to safety standards, and offered a discount for early enrollment. The parent making the recommendation provided some information. Additional information came from their web site, an advertisement, and a phone call to the facility. Good thing the receptionist not only knew the details, but could enthusiastically provide me with reasons to choose them for my son's hitting lessons.

THE NEXT STEP: Communicate (Market your product)

The goal is to attract new customers, and perhaps more importantly, keep existing customers coming back for more. When listening to WIIFM, what benefits will the customer hear, that will motivate them to initiate and continue the relationship with you?

My son's hitting performance improved, so I returned. But wait, that's way too easy! How did I know his performance improved? Had he struck out his first few at bats after this off-season hitting program, I could have attributed that to the lessons being ineffective, and deemed it time and money wasted. But I remember the experience at the hitting facility. My son enjoyed going. He wanted to arrive early and check the "Performance Board", which tracked proficiencies with the drills, and recognized special accomplishments. It became a contest to see who could "lead the board" or set a record. The program not only trained him, but provided me, the customer, with "proof" of his skill development. They kept me informed about the focus of each lesson, the reason for each drill, and his proficiency with each new skill. Interesting that I cannot remember everything they said, but I vividly remember how I felt. When they offered a priority registration and discount for returning athletes, guess what this customer decided to do?

Now, set your plan in motion.

1. Develop a strategy to appeal to your customer's buying motivations and earn their business again and again.
2. Review the impact of your front-line team, your advertisements, and your web presence.
3. Confirm that your team not only understands, but also communicates the benefits of doing business with you.
4. Consider your customer feedback and the potential for a referral or loyalty program.
5. Enhance the customer experience to grow and maintain a loyal customer base. Customers are dialed into WIIFM. Make your message count.



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