



WOMF™

Getting The Forum to
Work For You

Word of mouth is the most powerful way to generate business, so use it.

Most people love to help. Most people love being asked to help. Don't be too shy to ask to be recommended. You're kidding yourself to think you will get as many recommendations by just being great, as you would by being great and then asking for them. People love to help people who have helped them.



You should make it as easy as possible for customers to leave positive comments. Many businesses are using their initiative by capturing people's comments before they leave the store, encouraging them to use the computer provided at the front counter to quickly post remarks about the value of the experience they have just had. Alternatively, you may choose just to get customers to write their comments on paper and you can enter them later.

To get people talking about you, you have to give them something to talk about. You want to get customers saying "Gosh you didn't need to do that" Below are outlines and some examples on how to do this.

Personal



As the theme song from the Television series Cheers so clearly put it, "Sometimes you want to go, where everybody knows your name, and they're always glad you came" People want to know how much you care before they care how much you know. Use names, acknowledge past purchases, and make people feel special, purely by recognising them and taking an interest in them. Invite clients to use the phrase "tell 'em I sent you" with a promise for the recipient to receive extra special attention as a result.

Surprise



Do something out of the blue that comes unexpected. A great example of this is from a boat upholster who upon receipt of payments of \$2,000 or greater, replies with a letter a week or so later. The letter thanks the client for the opportunity to work on their boat then explains that some of the materials used on the job have come in under estimate due to an extra discount they have received from their supplier. Their policy states any savings they can make are handed back to the client; please find enclosed a cheque for \$121.35... Surprise customers and they will tell other people about you

Above and Beyond

Encourage your staff to have a solution mindset with every opportunity they are presented with, take the story of the clerk at Nordstrom's department store who refunded the full amount an elderly lady had paid for a car tyre, even though Nordstrom never sold her the tyre (Nordstrom don't sell tyres). This story has travelled the world many times over. Above and beyond creates word of mouth.



Difference

Doing something differently literally becomes the definition of a conversation starter. With the 'better than' bar continually being raised in the battle for consumer attention, difference is still the stuff that people talk about. Stop trying to be better and start focusing on being different. Take an Australia dentist who instead of getting you back for numerous visits, numerous injections and numerous bills, sits you down for an extended period and gets all your dental work completed in one visit. To make patients relaxed, there is a baker making hot bread in the practice with the delicious aroma cancelling the smell of dentistry chemicals. Simple but different. This dentist uses no advertising and clients are only accepted through referral, by being different to your competition you give people something to talk about.

Remarkable

People share information because it makes them look good. In Tom Clancy's book Executive Orders, the story is told of a US President who gets his chair designed to fit the exact contours of his back by an orthopaedic chair manufacture that does it for free without fanfare. However, imagine the opportunity to inform your next potential client that your chair is the one used by the President in the Oval office. Remarkable story to tell and the ultimate endorsement and testimony to demonstrate quality and get people talking.

EXTRAordinary

It is not the cost of the extra's; it's the way they are given. Upon walking onto a car sales yard with my children, we were greeted by a salesperson who handed each of my children a matchbox car. After I purchased a car from them, I got it home to find a box of assorted wine in the boot. One week later, we got a teddy bear in the mail with a big 'thank you' written on its sweater. Little extra's, but a story I am still telling 7 years later.



New- Cool stuff



Because of our need to add value in conversations, we love to have information to share that others do not have. People love to talk about new things. A colleague of mine was recently at a Networking group meeting where a builder was speaking about his trade, he cleverly took the opportunity to show off a new range of fingerprint entry door locks that had become affordable for the domestic house owner. Of the 20 odd people who spoke that day my colleague only came back and told the story of new stuff. Every industry has new products and services being introduced to them, highlight these developments, tell customers about them and you will be giving them something they can talk to other people about.

Authenticity

Be aware that the word of mouth entries need to be authentic.

Manufactured, exaggerated, overly detailed, comments could be taken as non-authentic. Customer comments do not tend to sound like adverts. A frank, genuine entry is more powerful than a clichéd all-encompassing comment.

