

TAPPING INTO THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF YOUR CUSTOMERS



Expert tips for getting to know your target audience

By Lisa Mancuso

To give your customers what they want, you have to know what makes them tick.

When businesses take the time to get to know their customers, they form relationships that inspire loyalty. “Companies need to present themselves in

ways that their prospects and customers understand them, but their customers and prospects also need to feel understood," says Michael Fishman, co-founder of [BehaviorCon](#), a conference that looks at the psychology of selling.

Your customers' psyches could hold [the key to more business](#). Read on for tips on getting inside their heads.

Learn from every interaction. Give customers a way to reach out to you, whether via phone, social media, or email. Then, create a system for monitoring their feedback. "I think responsiveness and understanding are siblings; they go hand in hand," says Fishman. Whether a customer is calling about a concern or inquiring about the whereabouts of a package, respond within a reasonable amount of time and use the opportunity to get a clear understanding of your target demographic. Follow customers' concerns and the comments they make on social media and then use what you glean from that information when establishing pricing or creating a new product.

Pay attention to words. To truly understand your customer, you first must appreciate the words they are using to articulate what they want. How can you do this? Head to Amazon and read customers' reviews of best-selling books on the subject or category of your business. "There you have what I call a 'language laboratory,'" says Fishman. Through their own words, you'll have a sense of what's really important to your customer base. Use this information as you develop new services or improve those you already offer.

Show them that you care. It sounds simple, but caring about your [impact on the community](#) and expressing that you care sends a clear message to your customers that you want to get to know them better. Whether it's in a daily email or a monthly newsletter, share information about what your company is doing.

Use content to gauge their interests. [Publish relevant articles, blog posts or videos](#). Then, track which content is most popular and you'll have a solid idea

of what interests your customers most. Continue to share information on those topics and be sure to read and respond to all comments customers leave. Not only will you learn about your customers' interests, but the content may attract new prospects.

Ask them. Use email, online surveys, and social media platforms to ask for feedback on customers' experiences. If a customer complains on Yelp, make sure those concerns are addressed. Engage in conversation so you can learn more about their pain points or what's making them happy.

Being in tune with your customers will help you discover information about them that you can use to solve their problems and create messaging that captures their attention. The more you are able to make your customers smile, the more likely you'll have a [customer for life](#).

Lisa Mancuso is a writer and editor who covers business, entrepreneurship, and women's issues.

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