

# Courting the Customer

A workbook  
to help you  
better understand  
the relationship  
between you  
and your  
**Ideal Customer**

**Michael Pallini**

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## ***Courting the Customer:***

A workbook to help you better understand the relationship  
between you and your Ideal Customer

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I've learned from all of you.

## *Dedication*

To my Dad – who instilled in me  
the drive to always do my best.

# Courting the Customer

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The Introduction:

# I Want To Meet You

Let me introduce myself. My name is Michael.

During the last few years, I helped form and have been the Managing Partner and Vice President of a company called Commercial Success. Commercial Success is a Creative Services Company that works with thousands of small to medium sized businesses all over the country, providing marketing and positioning help and producing Commercials and Jingles. Before this I worked in Radio as a Salesperson, Sales Manager and

Director of Sales doing pretty much the same thing, helping businesses do business.

Throughout my entire career, I have found that helping business owners look at their business through their customer's eyes, has enabled them to better understand how to advertise their businesses successfully and how to service their customers better. Many of the owners of businesses that I've worked with have found my methods helpful – and that's why I decided to write this workbook. My method of building a better relationship is to relate the relationship business owners have with their customers to dating – in other words, to courting the customer.

Throughout this book I'll ask you to step away from things. I'll ask you to look at things from a different perspective. I'll also ask you to jot down notes and ideas. I like asking people to jot things down. I find that

when people are asked to write down an idea after something they've read, they remember the information better and also go in a creative direction themselves. Some of the best ideas come from a spontaneous answer to a question asked after a thought provoking discussion. As you answer the questions in the next few chapters, I hope that is true for you. At the end of this book I'll ask you to formulate an action plan of things to do. I have always believed that an idea with no plan is like driving across the country with out a map... you might get there, but it could take a lot longer and there might be unnecessary detours along the way.

Also, I know that you are busy. So I have designed this workbook to take about an hour to an hour and a half to get through. Take a flight, take a lunch, and take this book with you. Truth is, everything in here you may have heard before. Chances are you

have said to yourself that you need to refresh your thoughts in these areas, but as I have said ... YOU'RE BUSY! The goal of this book is to put it all in one place, and make you focus on it.

So go ahead, get started ... begin Courting your Customer!



Chapter

1

# A Relationship Worth Courting

Being in business means being in a relationship.

I know that you are aware of this. But, do you think about your customer and your relationship with your customer whenever you are thinking about your business? Do you think about your customer and your relationship when you are making even the most minor decision about your business? Do you sometimes forget to think about your customer and your relationship with your

customer, even when you are in the middle of a transaction with them?

Your business would be nothing without your customer and the relationship that you have with that customer. Your customer and the relationship that you have with your customer is the foundation that your business is built on.

## **Your Vision?**

You started your business because you had a vision. Your vision was part of a dream. Your vision and dream grew and a plan was formulated, and took shape. Then, all this became an amazing idea.

You made this amazing idea come to life. You made it a reality. Congratulations! You've built it. It's here. You started your own business. It's everything that you dreamed it would be. You realized your vision.

Many people dream. Many people have a great idea, but that's as far as it gets. But, not you! You saw it all the way through. You did it! You should be very proud. You are truly something special. Your business is truly something special, something unique. It has to be, because after all it was born of a vision. It all started because of your vision. It's yours.

Yet, the truth is, the customers (the people that you ultimately built it for) don't really care. They don't care about you. They don't care about your vision, or your dream.

The customer doesn't care about all of the hard work, or the planning. The customer doesn't care about the late nights, or the difficult decisions. The customer doesn't really care about any of this. The customer has never really given any of this much thought, and they won't.

The customer doesn't care about your vision or your dream unless there is something in it for them. The customer doesn't care unless your vision and dream is their vision and dream, too.

## **Want and Desire**

The customer must see something that they want. This "something" must be a product or service that they, the customer, desires. It must be born from a want or a need. This desire, want, or need must be important enough that the customer actually cares about it.

Your business must fulfill this desire, want or need in a way that is different from the way it is currently being fulfilled. The need must be great enough that the customer cares if it isn't being filled differently.

If a customer is already getting what they want from someone else why should they switch? Why should they stop doing business from who they are doing business with? And, if they do stop, why do they want to start doing business with you? What's in it for them?

It is imperative that you realize that no matter what your business is or does, no matter what products or services you sell, *the customer* will ultimately determine whether your business, your vision, your dream, will thrive.

## **Destiny is in the Hands of Your Customer**

The customer will decide whether you will be successful or not. Your success depends on your customer. Your future relies on your customer

and the relationship that you have with your customer.

You can do your best, work countless hours, brainstorm and strategize, but unless the customer purchases whatever product or service you are selling, your business will not be successful. Your business will fail.

That means, like it or not, you are not in control of your destiny. I know that this is a difficult position to be in. As relationships go, this one is very one-sided. This just doesn't seem fair. After all you're the one with the vision and the dream. You're the one doing all the work. You're the one toiling day by day, doing your best to make the vision and dream a reality and you really don't get a say in whether it is going to work or not.

If it makes you feel any better, this one-sided relationship I've just described is very typical with many

businesses today. In fact, it is probably more the case than not.

What about businesses that are different? What about businesses or companies that were able to move beyond this one-sided relationship? What is it about those businesses that is so special?

The businesses and companies that have achieved a true relationship with their customers have an extremely loyal customer base. These are businesses that are sought out by the customer. In some instances these businesses may even help define, in the mind of the customer, who the customer is. In these “special” businesses the business and the customer are in a relationship together, meeting the needs of each other.

## Getting Into a Different Relationship

Don't get too discouraged, this takes time.

In order to achieve this kind of relationship with your customer, you must work very hard to change the nature of your relationship with your customer. You must get into a different relationship with your customer. You must move from a one-sided relationship to one of mutual trust, communication, and interaction.

In order to change from a one-sided relationship to one that is mutually committed, you must be willing to admit that the great idea for your business, your vision, your dream, all of the hard work and countless hours making your idea a reality, then finally opening the doors, saying, "It's here world, come and get it," is only the beginning of your relationship with

the customer. It is difficult to accept but just making your product or service available, does not mean your work is done.

By doing all this you have merely introduced the idea of your business to a *potential* customer. You must realize that you need to work hard to make the customer *want* to come in to your business, just once. Once a customer has come in for the first time, you have to work twice as hard each additional time they are in contact with you, so that they will want to return again, and again, and again.

You must agree to work hard to keep your relationship fresh and new. You must agree to be attentive to the customer's needs, to anticipate their every desire, to be one step ahead of them, anticipating what they want, to deliver what they expect the way they expect it.

In order to satisfy your customer you need to change your vision from the vision of what you see, to the vision of what the customer wants and how the customer “wants” to see it. It is imperative that you build a relationship with your customer where their needs and expectations are met.

Ultimately, this is what must happen: you must be in a relationship with the customer and your customer must be in a relationship with you.

In this relationship, you will be forever courting your customer.

## **Courting the Customer**

What do I mean when I say, “courting the customer”? I mean that you must always be winning the customer over. You must constantly be working toward meeting the wants and needs of the customer.

In this relationship you must do all the courting. You must be the one winning the other over.

Does this seem unfair? Does this seem one sided? Isn't it true that in a successful relationship both parties are supposed to get something from it? In a successful relationship aren't both parties supposed to be satisfied?

The answer is, yes. If a relationship is worth keeping, both parties do get something out of it. Both parties ultimately should feel happy and satisfied with each interaction. Both party's needs should be met and both parties should feel comfortable and secure when the interaction is done.

If you do it right, the customer gets what they want, their expectations will be met, their vision of how your product or service should be made or done will be a reality and they will want it and purchase it and be satisfied. Wow! Great!

Now, what about you? What about what you want?

You will win, also. You will get what you want: a customer. You will have a customer that you can call “your” customer. You will have a customer who wants to buy from you. Your customer will be who you want them to be. Your customer will buy from you the way you want them to, when you want them to. That’s a good relationship. That’s a relationship built of mutual understanding. That’s a relationship worth keeping. That’s a relationship worth courting.

Take a moment and jot down what your vision was and what you see now.

***WHAT was your dream, what was your vision for your business?***

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***If that's no longer your dream or vision, what is it now?***

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