

ADMINISTRATIVE VIEWS

Accurate Business Services (Contact: Jeannine@Accbizsvcs.com)

Summer 2003

New Economic Pressures

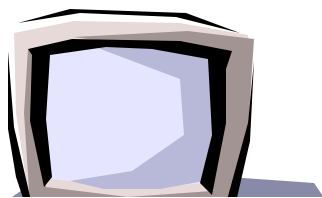
Unemployment seems to be higher now than ever. Many friends and associates have either been hit by massive lay-offs, or are left feeling like they're barely holding on for dear life.

What happens in the administrative arena is that many talented professionals are now doing the work that had previously been handled by three staffers.

This creates new challenges for administrative professionals, one of which is thinking that if they can't keep up with the pressure of the new workload, they'll be met with the fate of their co-workers—being laid off.

What an uncomfortable work environment we have been presented with. As employers, we have to find ways to motivate our staff while working with dwindling budgets, and keep employees satisfied while we ask them to work harder, and longer, without the ability to reward them, as we had in the past, with a bonus or a raise.

As a business owner, I can understand the



Payment for time not worked (vacation, holidays, lunches, sick days) \$3,900*



frustrations of employer and employee. We need to be more creative in finding solutions that will help keep good employees, create an environment conducive to increasing production, maintain a profit level that will allow the company to grow, and do it on a shoestring budget.

And let's not forget, we have to continue to provide a top-notch product or service so that we maintain and increase our client base so the company

“Initiate an employee of the month that includes a designated parking spot near the entrance.”

can grow and prosper.

Beyond the obvious workload solution of outsourcing some of your administrative work to a qualified VA (Virtual Assistant), try spending some time with your staff to get their suggestions for low-cost, or no-cost perks that will help to minimize these new economic pressures.

Have a pot-luck luncheon. Ask employees to bring in a special dish for everyone to share, and allow them the time to enjoy it. Maybe make it a theme of some kind, i.e. Cajun, Seafood, A Taste of Italy, Ballpark concessions, etc.. Anything that will add to the fun and excitement. If you're in retail, offer these taste treats to your customers, as well.

How about an employee raffle? Employees can purchase or earn tickets for a drawing of baseball tickets, dinner and movie tickets, or anything else that would be of interest. The raffle monies raised are used to purchase the next item to be raffled.

Initiate an employee of the month that includes a designated parking spot near the entrance. Get your clients involved by having them vote for their favorite service rep. Perhaps they have products/services that would be of interest to your employees. Suggest a barter or discounts to your employees for the products/services they provide. That will not only be of benefit to your employee, but to your clients and the relationship they have with your organization. Now there's a win-win!

I think that we need to find economical ways to promote ourselves, our employees and our clients, while encouraging good, ethical business practices. It will strengthen our companies and help mend our economy.

* Source: U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Turn Prospects Into Buyers

It may take 4 to 7 visits before your web visitors buy from you.

New information, regular changes, and updates keep visitors coming back to your web site. As your visitors develop confidence in you, they will be more likely to buy from your products or services. Follow these tips to keep prospects coming back, win their trust, and increase your online sales.

Capture your visitors' email address

Collecting email addresses is essential to staying in touch with your prospects.

Provide a free report or subscription to your ezine (electronic newsletter) to capture your visitors' email address.

Follow up with ezines, offer more valuable information to establish credibility, inform them of what's new on your site, and invite them to return to your site.

Provide valuable information and benefits

If your visitors don't see anything that interests them, they will go to your competitors and may never come back. If you provide plenty of valuable information and benefits, they are more likely to bookmark your site and come back later.

Update regularly

Studies show that people spend more time at a site that changes regularly.

1. Make changes and provide new, original, and useful content often.

2. Update your web site at least once a month, even if the changes are minimal. Make small changes, e.g. updates, new articles, a tip of the week.

3. Keep all information current.

4. Indicate the items you updated.

5. Mention that you are continuously adding new information.

6. Ask visitors to bookmark your site and come back for new information.

Content that attracts prospective buyers back to your site

1. Updated information (e.g. industry information).

2. Timely information (e.g. events schedule, class schedule, articles, tip of the day/week).

3. Updated product (e.g. latest edition of your book, updated virus software).

4. New product (e.g. new software demo).

5. Quality freebies (e.g. free reports, tips, and electronic books; free pictures and graphics; free samples, book excerpts; free templates, software, sounds, and videos).

6. Go to this resource page to see more examples of freebies at <http://www.FiveStarWebDesign.com/links.htm>.

Provide valuable content and update your site regularly to gain your visitors' trust, keep them coming back, and turn them into repeat customers.

This article is excerpted from Inside Secrets to Developing a Profitable Web Site. Visit <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/ebook.htm> for more info. By Leva Duell Copyright: © 2003



Business Ethics Solutions

Have a specific business or personal ethics dilemma? Let us help you make the most ethical decision possible.

E-mail your ethical situation and we'll help you find the most ethical solution.

If you're willing, we'll print your story here, and provide our readers with some "food for thought" when dealing with ethics in the workplace.

Questions to help you make ethical decisions:

1. Is it legal? (Does it follow company policy?)
2. Is it fair to everyone (even if not represented in this issue)?
3. Will it do harm? (Will your decision physically, mentally, or ethically harm anyone?)

E-mail your ethical questions to:
Jeannine@accbizsvcs.com

Simple Service Solutions

I think the most important thing to me as a consumer has to be customer service, and service after the sale. I don't see much of it at all any more.

My clients find it refreshing that when they call, I greet them with a smile—whether it's live, or voice mail. How easy is that?

I show an interest in fulfilling my client's needs, and make sure that I keep my

name in front of them so that I'm the first person they think of when it's time to purchase my product or service.

We have to make sure that once a client has purchased our product or service, they leave with the feeling that we appreciated their business and hope we can serve them again. We may even feel comfortable enough at some point to ask them to refer their friends and family to us, the best testimonial there is!

We are so bombarded with marketing information and ways of acquiring new business, that we forget the most simple courtesies we can offer clients to

maintain and increase their desire to purchase from us again and again.

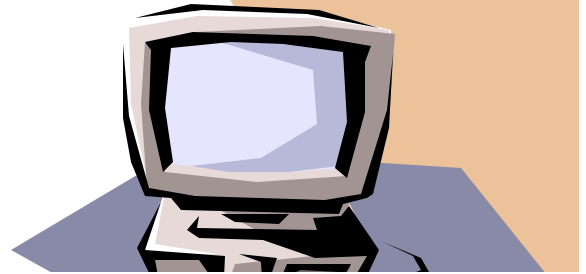
I find that a simple handwritten "thank you" card can make a bigger impression than increasing the size of my Yellow Pages ad. Offering to do something extra, without question, is noticed more often than a monthly special. Offering solutions and referrals to associates that might be better equipped to meet their needs will make them ask you for guidance before they consider another provider, and helps you to increase your credibility with your client.

What is the highest level of service we can achieve? Problem resolution—solving an irate customer's problem calmly and quickly will go a long way in improving customer relations and keeping customers coming back for more.

The best advice I can give is to listen to what they have to say, and then listen some more! Sometimes they just want someone to allow them to vent and to offer them an apology. Although I don't entirely believe that the "customer is always right", I think we need to at least give them the benefit of the doubt.

Most importantly, follow-through. Do what you said you would. And once you've solved the situation to the best of your ability, be sure and check back with them after a few weeks just to be sure that everything is okay, that they received the credit you'd promised, or offer them some additional product or service to make up for the problems they experienced in the past. You'll be surprised how quickly that irate customer can become your best source for referral business.

Sometimes, the simplest solutions make the biggest impact—try it and see for yourself.



... they leave with the feeling that we appreciated their business...

Accurate Business Services

P. O. Box 206
Arnold, MD 63010-0206
Toll Free 1-888-547-6392
www.accbizsvcs.com
Jeannine@accbizsvcs.com

Did you know we accept all
major credit cards?



Focus on the things that you get paid
well for doing...
Hire a VA
Let them do the paperwork!

What's inside:

- New Economic Pressures
- Turn Prospects Into Buyers
- Business Ethics Solutions
- Simple Service Solutions

Internet Finds



ere are some great
Websites:

Just for fun...

[www.unitedmedia.com/
comics/dilbert](http://www.unitedmedia.com/comics/dilbert)

Golf tips.

www.golf.com

What's going on in a city

near you?

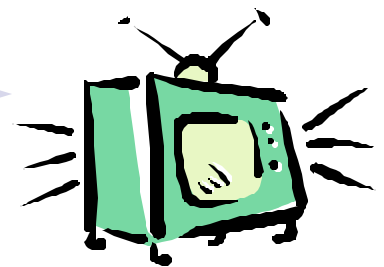
www.digitalcity.com

Great information for
home-based business
owners.

www.workingsolo.com

Or...

www.noahsays.com



Best info about schools &
colleges.

www.familyeducation.com

Where to research informa-
tion about a particular com-
pany

www.thomasregister.com

Have a great summer!