



CLOUDZONE ONE

Guide to Increasing Sales Through Technology



The biggest challenge for any business today is to have a loyal customer base that would refer your products and services to their peers. This blog will help you identify ways that can give you an edge above your competitors as you will increase return spend from customers, grow your customer base and ultimately bring in more revenue to your business.

1. Use the internet to your advantage.

The invention of the internet has changed the playing field drastically, as it provides small to medium sized businesses a very effective form of marketing without breaking the bank. A recent study has shown that one third of consumers would use the internet first and foremost as a tool to source their product knowledge and another 15 percent cited specific products of interest via online advertisement.

So, no matter the size of your business or what your brand is about, if you lack an online presence, you might get lost in the abyss of webpages, as most potential customers tend to use Google or other search engines to find information about a business or company. It can seriously impact your credibility and market reputation if you chose to ignore these factors.

If you are new to creating an online presence, you will need to look at getting your business set up with a Website or Social Page as this is a vital step to bringing your brand to life. Utilising internet advertising like google AdWords, Blogs etc. will help to gain visits and activity to your website. Think about using E-Commerce websites with pay gate systems where customers can purchase directly from you, as this will serve as an online portal where you can display and sell your products or services and communicate relevant information to your prospects.



The next step would be to identify a primary social channel, ask your existing customers what social channels they currently use, to help you identify which social channel you will target first. Social networks utilise user information to serve highly relevant advertisements based on interactions within a specific platform. Social

advertising can provide huge increases in conversions and sales with lower cost of acquisition.

- Set up an ecommerce website, and or review your current website, allow for easy navigation and online ordering, if a customer struggles to find information, or to place an order they will take their business elsewhere.
- Have your sales team post helpful information, advice and ideas that provide value to your audience.
- Have your sales team boost their digital presence, this will enhance their chance of prospects noticing them and connecting with them online.



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Brand Storytelling

YOUR BRAND

Creating stories to build a brand not only helps you develop a persona for your company it helps fuel your reach. Businesses using inbound marketing/brand storytelling for consumer reach attract new customers at a much higher rate than companies relying on social media alone. Let's have a look at a few key factors, in creating your brand story.

Know your Audience.

Creating your brand with a specific audience in mind will simplify the process and it will see to that your content is more relevant to the consumer. So, think about the person who would likely buy your product or services, think about what they would like to hear. People relate to a good story! Telling, a generic story will simply not work as it will likely not be shared on social media. People are more likely to share content that they like and relate with, so set some the time aside to know your audience.

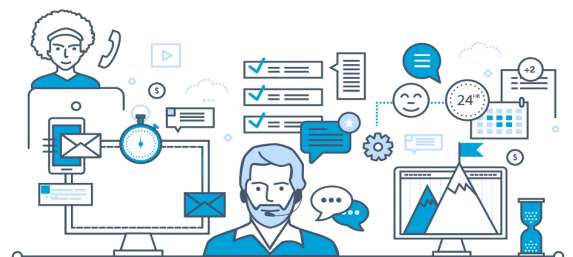
Develop a storytelling strategy.

Know the results you want to achieve, how you plan to get closer to your goal, and the resources you'll use along your marketing journey. You need to tell your companies' story not only to your clients, but to your salespeople as well.

Help them understand why you are selling your products and or services, have them be just as invested as you are, Sales people who truly understand the value of your product or service and believe in it are more likely to tell your story the way you want it told, they will automatically convince their prospects to feel just as passionate about your product and or services as you are.

It's all about the TITLE.

Titles, headlines and taglines are an effective brand storytelling method. If you saw your title in your Instagram stream, would you find it irresistible? Clickbait titles won't work, especially if your content doesn't deliver. Make sure your titles are click-worthy and your content share-worthy.



Keep the Plant Watered

STRONG SALES TEAM

A strong and healthy sales organisation is key to the growth for any business and as far as your customers and prospects are concerned, your salespeople are the face and voice of your business. Making it so much more important to empower your team and equip them with the tools and knowledge they would require to be successful in their role.

Offer them the right tools for the job.

For Business owners, salespeople are often not on the list when it comes to providing new software, unlike other jobs and roles in organisations where employees use specific software and tools to make their day-to-day activities more efficient. (eg. Accounts and Point of Sale) While you may hire salespeople with lots of skill, it's important to provide them with tools to improve their probability to close those big deals.

When it comes to salespeople keeping their admin up to date and staying responsive to customers often takes a lower priority, to prospecting new opportunities.

It's important for them to have a real-time, central data-source available, allowing them to quickly update customer records with progress towards closing, and giving them the power to provide product information and quotes at the tip of their fingers.

Strongly consider equipping them with a cloud-based ERP system that includes CRM. This will allow your Sales Team to upload information on the go, from any mobile device or laptop.



DEVELOP TEAM

Encourage and allow them to attend industry conferences.

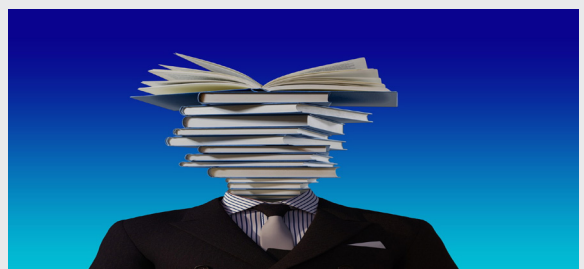
Invest in your sales team and keep them up to date with your industry developments, by providing them access to Industry conferences and event.

Attending these events can be the fuel your sales team needs to fire on all cylinders. Allowing your sales team to be part of these events and conferences is crucial to helping them see how they fit into the bigger picture as well as allowing them to network with other professionals and learn about the latest industry trends and tricks of the trade.

Organise and invest in ongoing training.

While training for an experienced sales person may seem unnecessary, its important to include your sales team in your company's overall ongoing training and education program, this will ensure that your sales teams are subject matter experts, from being able to address prospects questions with confidence to creating an environment of collaboration within your sales team where they can share best practices with less experienced sales people. Ongoing training ensures that your sales team continuously communicates with each other and that they are always a step ahead of your competitors.

- Use a Cloud base ERP system that includes CRM, Sales, Inventory.
- Encourage your Sales Team to Network at Conferences
- Invest in Training your Sales Team.



Define Your Customer

PARTNERING WITH CUSTOMER

It is essential for a sales team to develop strong partnerships with their prospects and existing customers. Have your sales personnel understand the importance of having a partnership with their clients instead of being just another Vendor and that its mandatory for them to know more about their prospects business, to partner with them and be a support to the goals they have for their business.

This is done by doing diligent research into their prospects' businesses, creating market insights that would encourage a confident and trustworthy relationship with clients.

Investing in a cloud base ERP System will empower your sales team to store information and insights gathered on specific prospects and to be able to move the sales prospect through on their sales journey, from a lead to a customer. The ERP System also provides them with handy information about who the main decision makers are, what the previous conversation were including the outcome of each communication with the business and even to which distributors best matches their business's criteria.

Storing this information in one place will make it easier for your sales team to customise the information they have to meet the needs of their prospects, not giving the same sales pitch to everyone, they can carefully fine tune into the prospects' unique needs, problems and objections.

- Encourage your Sales team to store information gathered about potential clients on your CRM, making it easy for future use.

OVERCOMING OBJECTIONS

The most challenging part of the sales process is overcoming a prospect's objections. Even in today's digital revolution, it hasn't changed the fact that consumers still go through the same buying cycle, namely: Awareness, consideration, conversion and evaluation. However there has been a significant change in the path to purchase, that was traditionally linear, to where consumers are now moving back and forth between stages, making today's buyers more discerning than ever. Your goal is to handle and nullify any objections in a convincing manner to overcome these roadblocks standing between you and that sought-after sale.

As an experienced sales person you would know that most sales calls are met with at least one objection. It is important not to be discouraged when a prospect indicates that they are not ready to buy, as a sales objection is an expression by a prospect that you have not yet displayed the added value your product or service would provide them and how they could reap the benefits from your product or service.

Your first reaction when you hear an objection may be to jump right in and respond immediately. Resist this temptation. When you react too quickly, you risk making assumptions about the objection. Take the time to listen to their objections, listen to their needs, their frustrations and challenges they have in their current status quo. Acknowledge their concerns and be prepared by knowing every feature and benefit of your product/service.



OBJECTIONS

HANDLE OBJECTIONS

Ask your prospect open-ended questions and not questions that lead to a yes or no answer, remember that your goal is to learn as much as you can from what is deemed as important to your prospect. By knowing that your product/service would provide them with a solution to their current situation, doesn't guarantee that the prospect would buy from you. They need to be convinced that you are sincere in fulfilling their needs and not just seeing them as a quick dollar in the bank. The art of sales is inherently associated with objections, but most can be overcome by building a sense of credibility, trust, and re-framing the way your prospect sees what you're selling. When it comes down to it, sales are about showing the product/service at the angle that's best-suited to the conversation. Here are some examples of objections you may face and how you can overcome these.



Popular objections/ tips to overcome them.

- **We do not have the budget** – Do not react by lowering your price, this is a clear indicator that you have not shown the prospect enough added value and will create a bargain hunting mindset within your prospect. This is where you would use your product's value proposition. Show them how your product/service would make a positive contribution to their business or day to day life.
- **The compliant prospect** - Many people fear change, leading many prospects to dismiss a product before they've learned what it can do for them and their business. Fear of change is a natural reaction, and it's up to you to address the prospects concerns by showing them examples of how your product/service has brought positive change within their industry. This will build trust and confidence in you.
- **We do not have the time** – This is where it is important for you to know the specific industry your prospect is working in. Different industries have different peak periods. By understanding your prospects industry trends, you would be able to build a sales pipeline and plan out your diary to have the right conversations at the right time. 53% of customer loyalty comes from the initial sales process that they experienced. So, know your customer, understand their needs and value their time by making the sales process as seamless as possible.

CUSTOMERS FOR LIFE

RETAIN CUSTOMERS

In a perfect world, your customers' attitudes and behaviours will never change, and they will keep buying from you, but we do live in a competitive world, where you have to keep in touch with your customers' ever changing needs to ensure that you stay competitive with similar businesses and ultimately retain their business with you.

Not acting to strengthen your relationships can cost your business a lot of money, as clients will seek alternative solutions, should they either get better prices or better service. The only way to keep on top of this is to act, by consistently staying in touch and up to date with your customer's needs.

Every opportunity to sit and talk with your customers is priceless. Listen to your customers challenges, their goals, their visions, listen to what they know, what they wish they knew and what they wish you would tell them.

Listening to your customers feedback will improve the customers experience and establish a trusting relationship. If you've listened to customer feedback, you'll already have a good idea of who your promoters are and who your potential detractors are.

Happy endings give you stories to share:

These are the customers you'll want to ask for referrals, they may regard your service so highly that they're natural advocates of your brand. Sharing their stories on social platforms can drive new business for both you and your customers making them walk away with a smile on their faces.

PROVIDE GOOD SERVICE

"The Squeaky wheel gets the oil"

There are few things that impact a brand's reputation more than the way it responds to complaints and unhappy customers. Customer service has always been an important part of developing brand loyalty. With the internet and social media giving individuals their own platform to publish information about their daily lives, it's becoming even more critical for companies to provide great customer service.

What can you do to make sure that you properly respond to an unhappy customer so that you both experience the most pleasant outcome possible? You can make unhappy customers positive contributors to your business, instead of treating them as a loss, you see them as an opportunity.

Each dissatisfied contact has the potential for becoming your company's best promotor, a key referral source.



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CUSTOMERS FOR LIFE

CREATE VALUE

Converting unhappy customers into valued customers will dramatically impact your business. There is a reason for the saying "the squeaky wheel gets the oil".

- Having a good cloud-based ERP system will give you the tools to send out surveys where you ask clients for their feedback. Keeping your survey brief and quick for customers to complete can help drive higher engagement, providing a more accurate picture of your business' current NPS and areas of concern.
- Use a CRM system to manage your customer records
- Use Marketing campaigns or online forms to send out customer surveys.
- Consider utilising your CRM to log and report on customer feedback
- With a customisable CRM system, you can further tailor each field within the customer record that captures feedback to your needs.
- Create drop-down fields to select satisfaction ratings from pre-defined lists or create long-form text fields that can hold more detailed feedback, allowing reps and customer service staff to know which customers to pay some extra attention.

Move to the Cloud.

Having a Cloud Based ERP system that includes CRM, will help you manage and track your most critical customer information and store this value in one location. It will enable you to view contact information, follow up via emails or social media, it allows you to manage your tasks and track your performance, all this without leaving the application. Enabling your sales people to gather and capture information on the go. If you are looking to invest in a programme that does it all, contact CloudZone One to see how NetSuite can work in your organisation.

