

Growing your Product with the Customer in Mind

By Justin Hitt

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In so much as your customer determines which products you sell, they also determine which enhancements you provide through what they choose to buy. If certain aspects of your product do not provide the benefits customers want, they will stop purchasing them. Knowing what contributes to the needs and expectations of your buyers can improve your products with the customer in mind.

1. Start by looking at your product in its smallest unit.

Each product consists of various parts, measure the value of each part against what the customer wants. Think of these parts as building blocks, they each have to hold their own weight while contributing to the solution you provide. Trace replaceable components looking for opportunities to serve better your customer as they use your product.

2. Document your product lifecycle and customer interaction points.

Document different points in which your customer interacts with your product; look for opportunities to sell them more and to receive feedback about how they actually use what you provide. This feedback is useful to decide which features to incorporate in your future product releases.

3. Collect your feedback and inject it into your product development.

When you first introduced your product you probably gave your customers only one choice, now is an opportunity to expand your offerings to fit better their needs. This also presents a great time to remove those components that no longer meet the customers' needs; this pruning is hard but makes for a better product in the end.

Your findings on product lifecycle and customer interacts should be reviewed frequently to reveal opportunities to implement customer suggestions. Your customers hold the key to great product quality and real features that boost demand. Get out there and find out what the customer has to say about your product, you will be pleasantly surprised about the opportunities ahead.

For additional strategies about "growing your product," visit
<http://www.justinhitt.com/archives/2001/02/index00.shtml>

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