

Gain Sales Through Incentives

By Rozey Gean

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Entrepreneurs are discovering the value of offering incentives to their prospective clients that will inevitably increase business and sales. Home based business owners are now cashing in on what large corporations have been doing for years. Car dealerships, office supply stores, equipment retailers, and food manufacturing companies, to name a few, whet our appetites with rebate offers and clip-and-redeem coupons - all dangled in front of us for the purpose of compelling us to buy their products. What works for corporate America can certainly work for small and home based businesses!

As consumers, we are consistently looking for avenues where we can get the "best" products and services for our money. When an appealing offer is presented, we sit up and take notice. An incentive, or special offer, does not necessarily mean that the products and services being sold are of a lower grade than top of the line workmanship. It simply means that there may be an opportunity for savings here that we need to look into before making an informed decision about how and where we spend our money.

As a small or home based business, you too can attract new and repeat business by offering your prospective clients a deal they cannot refuse. Through creative marketing and advertising you can get the "savings incentive" across to your target audience and increase business and sales in one winning combination.

What type of incentive can you offer?

1. Attract new business by offering a percentage off on an initial purchase of products or services simply to compel the consumer to try them.
2. Using your client database, send each client a money-savings coupon via e-mail.
3. Develop an ongoing campaign wherein you select a specific product during various intervals to offer at a discounted price.
4. Entice existing clients by paying them a percentage of sales (in the form of cash or future products and services) from clients they refer to you.

5. Offer a buy-something-get-something-free incentive. The "free" product or service can consist of information, an add-on component of the product they purchase, a special gift item, or a specific selection from products or services you offer. I offer a "Buy 2, Get 1 Free" deal. This simply means if you purchase two programs at the regular price, you can choose 1 FREE selection valued at \$29.95 to be shipped with your order.

6. Implement a plan that extends a discount for a limited period of time. This concept works well when sending out sales letters in which you want to compel the recipient to act immediately.

7. Establish a contest or drawing that allows your clients to participate by entry form for a chance at a specific end reward. Not only does this bring people back to participate over and over again, but...it allows for you to build a contact list to use in acquiring "back end sales" later on.

There are numerous other routes you can take in extending incentives to your clients. Perhaps, you have ideas of your own that have not been mentioned here. It is important to remember that you must be able to keep track of the incentives you are offering. Therefore, it may be a good practice to try various incentives at different times, ensuring that each one does not overlap another. And most importantly, make sure you honor all incentives in a timely manner to ensure professionalism and promote future business!

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