

Learn From Your Mistakes

By Bob Osgoodby

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Much of the "hype" concerning affiliate programs centers on the anonymity of the web, and that you won't have to have a "face to face" relationship with your potential clients. Let the autoresponders do the work, have the money deposited in your bank account while you sleep, yatta, yatta, yatta.

People want to do business with people. If you're in sales, and can't stand "Rejection", you're in the wrong business. Trying to market something online, does not shelter you from this either.

People will contact you and not buy into your offer.

Worse yet, you don't even get any contacts. If this is happening, you might want to ask yourself why. Many people will simply "quit" and write it off as a bad experience. Those who succeed find out why.

The first axiom of marketing is that people want to do business with people. If their only contact is with an affiliate page, that may or may not bear your name, they will most likely "click on by". Ask yourself - would you do business with someone you never heard of, know nothing about, and have no way of contacting?

Letting people know about you is one of the strongest statements you can make about your business. If you give a short background on yourself, with appropriate contact information, they most likely will have the necessary confidence to proceed. I have full contact information on my website, including a telephone number they can call in the event of a question or a problem.

Now you might think that giving your phone number to the world, is going to result in a lot of "bad things". Not true! In our 11 years of doing business on the Internet, I have never had a "crank" call - never. I post the hours that people can call, and receive very few calls outside of that time frame. After hours, I turn on the answering machine and give them the hours I'm available. I suggest a broadcast type of message which doesn't allow the caller to leave a message.

Now the majority of people will never call, but will use the email channels provided instead. The presence of a telephone number however, goes a long way in allaying their concerns. I don't recommend an "800" number, as people will think twice before spending their own dime to call. I also give a mailing address, and no, we haven't been visited by "stalkers".

Another nice touch is to include your photo with your Bio information. As they say, "it's always nice to put a face with a name". The more you can establish a personal bond with your potential buyer, the greater your chances of success.

The second axiom of business is to learn from your mistakes, and correct the things that you are doing wrong. During the Second World War, when a group of young pilots in the RAF were fighting for their lives in the air over England, they would often be hit by enemy fire. Their engine would start to misfire causing it to make knocking noises. Thus was coined the phrase "every knock is one step closer to home". They had a great attitude.

We can take a lesson from them. If you can determine why your offer is being knocked or rejected by your potential clients, the closer you will get to attaining your goals. Rejection is common in business, and even the largest companies do studies on every ad campaign they conduct to make them better.

A simple statement on your web page to encourage feedback can go a long way, but don't be discouraged by some of the remarks you will receive. No matter how crude some may be, they are being triggered by something, so don't take offense. Now while I normally advocate the use of a form for sending information from a website, here I do not. Let them be automatically transferred by use of the "mailto:" command to their email account to write the message, as you will then know the return address is valid.

Yes, they may wish to remain anonymous as well, but the use of a form in this instance, which simply allows them to vent, will serve little purpose. You really don't want to be influenced by some bored grade schoolers with nothing better to do.

Follow up to all the legitimate replies you receive to find out why they have reservations. Just this process alone may swing them into your camp. Rejection is not always bad, and if you learn from your mistakes, it just may prove to be a positive factor.

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