

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PARTNERS

Have You Told Your Customers a Story Recently?



We were at a Palm Springs tennis center talking to the tennis pro about buying a new racquet. He had us try the Head Speed Lite. We played with it and liked it. In the pro shop we questioned the size of the head and asked where racket sizes were going. This was a perfect entre for our pro to launch into a detailed sales pitch. But he didn't. Perhaps he was tired. Or maybe he'd quota-ed out for the month. More likely he didn't have any specific information readily available! The net result: a failed opportunity to promote the brand and racket.

This sort of exploitable interaction happens all of the time. Salespeople with customers; customers with other customers. Harris Interactive reports that 71% of consumers use product information from family and friends for decision making – that's why Social Media are at the top of every brand manager's list. Social Media platforms provide a forum for the exchange of product information. Despite this enthusiasm we'll go out on a limb here. Our experience leads us to bet that most such exchanges fail to deliver the value to the brand that they could have. What's missing? **A story!** People can't advocate (or sell) if they don't have ample knowledge about a product. They need a **story** to tell. And this is where most manufacturers overestimate the preparedness of their customers and salespeople. Manufacturers assume customers and salespeople know the product (and its comparison with competitors) as well as they do. Or at least the basics....

Advocacy is on every marketer's mind these days. But advertising doesn't generally provide the right material for story telling. To act as an effective advocate, a person needs to be given compelling and relevant information - a story. Not only should it focus on positive aspects of the brand or product, it should also be perceived as having some news or curiosity value. Otherwise why pass it along?

Customer Experience Partners believes content is a vital ingredient in helping to promote word of mouth about one's brand/product. If one finds the right customers and gives them compelling material, customers will be far more effective for a brand in the world of Social Media. Every organization should have a program to disseminate stories to facilitate advocacy when the right situation arises. To learn more, call us or visit us at: www.customerexperiencepartners.com

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