

THE TWO Most

Powerful Words

for Your Business

By Randi Busse

*A*re you saying thank you to your customers? If you aren't, join the party. Many other limousine companies aren't thanking their customers either. However, don't you want to stand out from your competitors? Of course you do. After all, they have black shiny cars and can drive me to the airport for around the same price just like you can, so how do you stand out in a sea of black cars? One way to do that is by thanking your customers. It's so easy to do and has little or no cost, yet thanking the people who book and use your service can pay big dividends to you as long as you are genuinely giving thanks. Too often when I hear, "Thanks for doing business with us," from a company, it sounds phony, forced, or robotic. People often say it out of habit with no feeling or authenticity. Say it and mean it. And don't just thank your new customers—thank those that have been with you for a long time as well, because we too often take them for granted. Remind them how much you appreciate them and the fact that they have been your customer for many years.

Take a minute now and think about how you are currently thanking your customers and just what you are thanking them for. I'm about to share with you a way to thank your customers for the ridiculously low price of 44 cents. I know you know what that is! Before we get into it, let me ask you a question: When was the last time you received a handwritten card in the mail from someone who you recently did business with? Can't remember? That's probably because you haven't. However, think how good you would feel if you did. Now how about making your customers feel good? Feeling good = stronger relationships. Stronger relationships = more referrals. More referrals = more business. Get it?

Invest in some thank you cards; then start sending them.

Each time you get a new customer, send them a card thanking them for choosing to do business with your company. Because they did choose to do so, didn't they? They could have used another limousine company. While we are on the topic of other limousine companies, just how many are in your market? I'll bet there are dozens, if not hundreds. Yet your customer has chosen to use your company, and aren't you glad they did? Of course you are. So tell them with a thank you card. I don't know about you, but when I see a personal, handwritten envelope in my mail,

"I don't know about you, but when I see a personal, handwritten envelope in my mail, I open it first."



I open it first. It sure beats a bill, and it makes me feel valued and special by the company sending it to me. Isn't that a feeling you'd like your customers to have? I think it is.

Follow these tips to show some appreciation to your customers. They'll be glad you did.

- ❖ **Be timely.** Send a personal thank you note in the mail when you receive business from a customer or when they refer someone to you.
- ❖ **Personalize the note.** If all you're going to write is, "Thanks for your business," don't bother; you are wasting a stamp

and an opportunity by being so generic. Write a short note thanking them specifically for a particular trip they booked with you or a referral that they made.

- ❖❖ **Don't send an e-mail.** While it's free and easy to do, it won't stand out like a handwritten card will—and I know you want to stand out from the competition.
- ❖❖ **Thank prospective customers.** It's nice to thank a prospective customer for contacting you about an upcoming trip or event, even if it didn't result in a sale today. If a prospective customer is thinking about using your company for their transportation needs, do you think they'll be positively influenced after they get a card from you?
- ❖❖ **Don't neglect long-time clients.** Thank your customers, whether it's trip number one or trip number twenty-one, because every time they use your company, they've chosen you over your competitor.
- ❖❖ **Appreciate their feedback.** Customers who take the time to give you feedback—good or bad—are helping you improve your business. How can you fix something if you don't know it's broken?

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Here are some additional opportunities to acknowledge and stay in touch with your customer after they have used your company:

- ❖❖ **Anniversaries:** If you provided transportation for a couple's wedding, why not acknowledge them on their one-year anniversary? If a couple got an anniversary card from you,



how many people do you think they would tell about it? Some of their friends who may also be planning a wedding might be inspired to use your services because of this small gesture that goes a long way.

- ❖❖ **Birthdays:** Of course limousines are popular with kids of all ages for celebrations, but imagine being proactive and offering a complimentary ride to the child of one of your most



loyal clients. It would be unexpected but

they have said or done, you are actually inspiring them to act that way again in the future. When they do a good job, it translates

“Customers who feel appreciated are usually loyal to your company.”

memorable for the child and your client.

into a positive experience for your customers. Thanking and appreciating your employees goes a long way.

❖❖ **Assistants:** If you provide transportation to a corporate customer, chances are you usually speak with an assistant who makes the reservations for their employees. While she is not the one using your services, she is the one who has selected your services. Send a card thanking her for the business and saying how much you enjoy dealing with her. It will brighten her day and keep your company at the top of her mind.

There are some people whom you should thank besides your customers: your employees! Without them, who would actually be taking care of your customers? I know you give them a paycheck every week for the job they do, however, when was the last time you genuinely thanked your employees for all of their hard work in helping your business run and grow? Surveys show that employees crave acknowledgement for the work they do and it often means more to them than a monetary reward does. By giving your employees positive, specific praise for something

The power of expressed gratitude is immense. Thanking customers makes them feel appreciated and important to you and your company. Customers who feel appreciated are usually loyal to your company. They can use your company with confidence and not have to start shopping around for a new limousine service.

“Thank you” are two words that could be beneficial to your bottom line. Use them and use them often. **LD**



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