

Strategies for a Changing World...How to Prosper in Today's Economy

The customer today is different and you're going to notice a change. A big change. How you prepare for the new customer will determine your long-term success.

It's a different world now. We are not going to recover, per se. We're going to revive and revise. And you can be in it or watch it pass you by.

Here are some examples of "different" on the business side. Car dealerships, stock brokerages, insurance companies, banks, homebuilders, commercial real estate agents, residential real estate agents and mortgage lenders have all revised and restructured their business - and that's the short list.

And the customer is different too. *Way different.*

The economy may never come back -- this may be the New Economy. Ask any daily newspaper.

Let me give you the details of what the new customer (both business and consumer) and a changing world look like:

(NOTE: I'm using "he" but I also mean "she.")

- He's going to decide somewhat slower. He's been hesitating for more than a year.
- He's angry about the value of his home and the value of his investments.
- He will not be doing business the same way he's done it before.
- He will not be banking the same way he banked before.
- He will not be advertising the same way he advertised before.
- He will not be buying a car the same way he did before.
- He will not be buying a home the same way he did before.
- He will not be investing the same way he did before.
- He's online. Checking out your Web site - and your competitor's Web site.
- He's socializing. Telling everyone what's happening in his world and the world.
- He's Tweeting, Facebooking and LinkedIn-ing. Social media is still a fi restorm.
- He's blogging about his experiences with you for the world to read.
- He's YouTubing about his experiences with you for the world to watch - by the millions.
- He's Googling, not yellow-paging.
- He's texting. A lot.
- He's using his mobile device to do damn near everything.
- He's WiFi-ing in his hotel room, on the plane, in Starbucks and at home.

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- IF he's reading a paper or getting the news, it's online.
- He's as likely to watch The Daily Show and The Colbert Report or listen to Howard Stern for news as he is to watch a network "news" person read a TelePrompTer.
- He's purchasing after midnight. By the billions.
- He's looking for ease of doing business with you.
- He's value oriented, but will look to price as part of the decision.
- He wants a relationship.
- He wants, needs and expects GREAT service after the sale.
- He does not want to wait for anything or anyone.
- He needs help and expert advice.
- He's looking for ideas and answers.
- He can check your price and your facts in two seconds or less on Google.
- He knows as much about your product as you do.
- He knows MORE about your competitor's product than you do.
- He can pay right now IF you can take a credit card online.
- He expects someone to answer the phone when he calls that can actually HELP.
- He is SICK of off-shore call centers, erroneously called "help desks."
- He is SICK of you telling him how important his call is while he stands on hold.
- He is SICK of your recorded hold message.
- He demands the truth. All the time.
- He no longer trusts the institutions he used to hold sacred.
- He expects you to be as computer literate as he is.
- He needs to be understood and feel your sincere concern.
- While you are qualifying him, he is qualifying you.
- If he needs a referral or recommendation, he'll go to Craig's list or Angie's list or Google or his next door neighbor, or anyone else but you ... UNLESS you have video testimonials online.

As you're thinking about (and making excuses about) these statements, you better be thinking about your answers and responses to them. And you better be making the strategic decisions and game plans to make them happen.

After reviewing these statements, ask yourself this BIG question:

What strategies will you need to embrace in this changing world?

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