



STORY BY ROB SALISBURY

who loves ya baby?!

HOW DO YOU KNOW if your customers have gained from the benefits you promised them?

Lollipops and one-liners are rarely the components of great television, yet one of New York's earliest CSI agents earned his reputation as an intelligent yet controversial tough guy in his top cop show of the 1970s. Fighting for truth, justice and the right to conduct business his way, legendary Hollywood Greek Telly Savalis is best remembered as Kojak.

Combining his infamous one-liner "who loves ya baby" with a red lollipop in mouth, bald-headed Kojak stood out as the number one detective of his era. In similar manner, today's top sales and marketing professionals have developed trademark statements that insure their USSA (Unique Sales/Service Advantages) are separating them from others in their industry.

Trust is the key component

Kojak knew that to obtain incriminating evidence from his suspects meant he had to quickly earn their trust. As an actor, Telly understood the key to large television viewing audiences was in communicating as Kojak that he was on their side and each week he could be counted on to solve the next big case.

Telly's ability to build trust with his unique image and character won countless new viewers each episode, ensuring millions of dollars in advertising revenue to the producers and investors in the show. There are lessons to learn from the simple things unique professionals like Kojak did to build relationships into long-term success.

Recently the managing director of the giant brewing company Lion Nathan was quoted saying, "we have seen a dramatic shift from relationship selling to partnership and solution selling in Australia. Today, we have to be very knowledgeable in our industry; we must understand our client's business and bring in our organisational resources to help our clients".

Confirming relationships as the foundation of maintaining a competitive edge in their business, he further said that “to compete in service, price and in solving our clients’ challenges, we will add value in every area of the relationship in addition to our products and services doing their part”.

Ensuring customers feel great

Today’s customers can be both jaded and very informed shoppers. It reflects in their demand for wider ranges of products including no-nonsense top-rated service experiences leaving gaps most vendors can rarely fulfil.

For example, McDonald’s built an early reputation and brand by providing McDonald’s burgers with a quick turnaround to the masses in Southern California. By the late 1960s McDonald’s had expanded across the USA and was opening its first international location in Canada.

McDonald’s supported its early business growth with average food, simple menu choices and from its beginnings, an enthusiastic service culture combining clean bathrooms, good operating hours and free parking.

Parents, aunts, uncles and coaches of weekend kids’ sporting teams give McDonald’s the quick nod as their fix when hunger pangs started to knock. Children love “Macca’s” each time a colouring book or mini toy is enclosed in the kids’ meal deal, thus food begins to be second issue to the gift at point of sale.

First class love affair

Qantas, Emirates and Singapore Airlines do not discount first class seats with bookings confirmed weeks ahead on international routes. American Express and Visa Card Gold members ensure loyalty to card companies when business class seats are offered at nearly two for one as a special.

First class clients pay for service and of course, expect the full benefits that go with it. More than just first class or business class service, these top-rated airlines are known for making us fall in love with the experience. A result of their superior focus on processes and attention to the details.

Relationships count

Trust built up over time is often the result of listening for their true needs and then exceeding customer expectations. When clients understand their needs are first, it is nearly a 100 per cent certainty that our clients will help us in meeting our needs.

In concluding, personal and high-end business relationships thrive in an environment of trust and connection. When clients trust you and your business, you can rest assured referrals will be knocking at your door.

When clients know that they count, you won’t have to ask “who loves ya baby”, because you will already know.

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