

Sell Virtual Services

A Telescan, LLC Business Resource Document

A Telescan Business Note, No. 3

Business Note 1, “*Maybe You Should Sell Niches,*” discussed the concept of selling into a market niche. That is, identifying a special service you can offer to a group of prospects which sets you apart from your competition. In fact, by examining your existing customer base you may discover that you already are providing such a service to one or several of your present customers

Business Note 2, “*Make Your Service Unique,*” introduced the concept of developing a ‘Unique Selling Proposition’ – or USP - to support your market niche. The key point of you USP is to tailor your marketing messages to attract your target prospects with a compelling offer that turns the special features built into your service into specific benefits the customer will recognize.

PLAIN OLD MESSAGING SERVICES

Most answering services provide their clients with message taking and dispatching services. That’s a given, and everyone certainly does that. The question is how can you differentiate your service from that of your competition when they are providing similar services? Without looking, I bet your marketing materials stress one of more of the following service features:

- ? You have well trained agents
- ? You answer calls on the first or second ring
- ? You never place a caller on hold
- ? You guarantee accurate messages
- ? You offer a variety of electronic delivery methods

If we missed something, just tack it onto the list. It will make little difference. Making the list longer is not what’s going to capture prospects. All you’re creating is a long list of the features embedded in your service offering. Listing these features on your promotional literature – without explaining the benefit each one brings to the prospect – produces an incomplete sales message. Remember, prospects don’t buy features. Rather, they buy the benefits – to them - that result from the features.

You need to be more creative when selling your services. Although the basic messaging services you provide might not be unique, your marketing message needs to make them seem so. You need to develop a ‘Unique Selling Proposition’ that will separate your messaging services from that of your competitors; one that will compel prospects to call you to find out more about your services.

VIRTUAL SERVICES

The idea of selling a Virtual Service is to take something you already do and make it the cornerstone of your marketing and sales efforts. In this case, it's making your 'normal' message services seem more special than those your competition offers. It's re-packaging those services in a way that sets them apart from your competition's service offering. It's creating a market niche where one may have not existed, and then developing a Unique Selling Proposition to support your niche.

For example, rather than simply selling live messaging or telephone answering services, offer your own special brand of Virtual Receptionist Services. Q: *What do live answering service prospects really need?* A: What they would really like to 'have' is a dedicated receptionist completely familiar with their business. It's what they need, but can't afford. Q: *What benefits can you provide to live answering service prospects?* A: You can provide them with a Virtual Receptionist. A well trained telephone secretary who comes close to knowing their business well, but whose time is shared with other businesses and is therefore affordable.

Consider the following possible marketing message:

Try Our Virtual Receptionist Service – It's Your Best Answer!

If you need the services of a professional receptionist for your business, then our Virtual Receptionist Service is the answer. Virtual Receptionist Service is almost like having your own private secretary, but at a much lower cost. Each of your calls is promptly answered in your company name, as if the receptionist was actually sitting in your office. Each call is handled per your instructions, which guarantees that all of your messages will be complete and accurate. Virtual Receptionist Service alerts you when messages are taken, or will dispatch messages to you via your preferred communications method.

The idea here was to wrap your 'normal' messaging services in a different and new marketing message. One that speaks to the needs of the prospects you're trying to attract and offers them benefits they recognize as important. Think about all the different services you now provide for your present clients. Consider them from the client's point of view – that is, how do they benefit from them. Then, separate them and wrap each in a new marketing message aimed to attract more clients with similar needs.

Compliments of:

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