

# Using Social Media to Engage Customers

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Social Media can help you to grow your business – by attracting new customers, by strengthening your relationships with your customers, and by getting customers to refer your business to their friends and colleagues. The key to making this happen is to learn how to use Social Media to engage your customers; to have a conversation with your customers; to learn more about your customers' needs; and to help them to see how your business can satisfy their needs.

## **Set Your Goal**

In order to effectively use Social Media to grow your business, it is important that you be clear about your goal. Is your goal to get a lot of clicks on a YouTube video that you create? Is your goal to get a lot of clicks on your website's home page? Are these business goals or bragging rights?

Engagement is growing the number of clicks that each customer makes once they reach your website. Learn how to keep customers clicking – clicking to go deeper into your website. Clicking until curiosity turns into an action – into a sale, into a download, or into a request for additional information.

## **Follow the A-I-D-A Process**

Fortunately, there is a proven process that you can follow to help guide your customers to complete an action on your website. The A-I-D-A process has successfully guided direct mail marketers for decades. The four steps in the process are:

1. Attract Attention
2. Get Interest
3. Build Desire
4. Take Action

Let's see how the A-I-D-A process can help you to use Social Media to engage your customers.

## **Attract Attention**

Before you can make a sale, you must attract the attention of your target customer. And, on the internet this also means that you must attract the attention of the search engines. Search engines and Social Media are a perfect match. When you consistently post interesting videos on YouTube and when you publish blog entries that appeal to the interests of your target audience, you attract attention. Write for your audience, but ensure that you include relevant keywords and "eye-catching" headlines so that the search engines know how to index your social media content.

When you add your comments to a blog post be sure to include a signature line with a link to your website. And be sure to gather incoming links to your keywords from your customers.

## **Get Interest**

In my experience, where you direct the “link” is the key to success in the “A-I-D-A” process. When customers click on a link they are saying, “I am interested; tell me more.” So be sure that you tell them. You do this by linking to a relevant “landing Page.” Each landing page allows your interested customer to gather information about specific product groups or upcoming events. Engage your customer by allowing them to “self-select” from a focused set of options:

- Download detailed product information
- Grab a short “how to” video
- Sign up for an in-store event
- Get a copy of your latest newsletter

It is likely that your interested customer will want to take some time to study the information that they gathered from your landing page. So, be sure that you capture their email address on your landing page. An interested customer will give you their email address in exchange for obtaining quality information from you.

## **Build Desire**

Don't be surprised when many customers leave your website after gathering information from your landing page. That is why it is essential that you know how to follow up with your customers. Now you can send them an email with a link to another relevant landing page where you will use stories, testimonials and case studies to build their desire to take action. Be sure you help them to see how your product or service will benefit them. Testimonials confirm that other customers have benefitted from your product or service. If you offer warranties and guaranties, summarize them on this page. You may have to do additional follow up, so be sure that you can contact your customer to answer any question and address any concerns that they may have.

## **Take Action**

Before you begin the directed marketing process be sure that you have established your goal. What, ultimately, is your desired action? Is it to make a sale? Is it to schedule an appointment? Make it clear and make it easy for your customer to complete the action. Be sure to confirm that the action was completed. And, be sure that you follow up the transaction with a thank you card or a phone call in order to continue to build the relationship with your customer.