

Why was he willing to switch to me

I have mentioned trust several times, mainly because it is one of the most important ingredients for a successful sales call to take place. Customers don't switch over price alone they switch because they are either confused about the product they are buying or they are not sure that the company they are dealing with is telling them "The Whole Truth And Nothing But The Truth".

Being upfront about pricing and how pricing will benefit the merchant is only part of the process of establishing and maintaining a merchant relationship. It is the agents duty to give the merchant as much information up front as possible and to always explain changes as they occur rather than waiting for the merchant to call in with questions. Here is how James Hipkin describes trust.

Trust Me – Loyalty Marketing Isn't Hard

by James Hipkin

Trust is a key characteristic of loyalty. But you won't get far saying "trust me." Trust is something you need to earn. Customers are looking for practical evidence they can trust you. The easiest way to provide practical evidence is to make it simple.

When I worked on a major telco's loyalty program we did some research to identify attrition motivators. It had to be more than price and we found that it was. Among lapsed customers "trust" metrics were very low. They didn't trust their current carrier either but switched for a better offer. They switched for price. Among vulnerable customers "trust" metrics were also low. Not as low as the lapsed customers but low enough to test their willingness to stay. Give them a better offer and they are gone.

For our telco client we determined that trust and confusion were inversely correlated. The higher the level of confusion the lower the trust. Our client's lost and vulnerable customers were confused by all the promotional prices and products. They just wanted to make a long distance call for a price they could understand.

Apple's customers are loyal. Windows/Intel customers are trapped. Microsoft's current campaign clearly demonstrates you can get a cheaper PC from a WinTel provider. So why don't Apple customers switch? They trust the brand, which translates into loyalty. Why do they trust the brand? They aren't confused. Apple's products solve their problems simply, they are easy to understand and to use.

iPod wasn't the first MP3 player. It was the most successful because it was simple. iPhone wasn't the first smart phone. It's the most successful because it's easy to use. Apple greatly diminished music piracy by using iTunes to make it simple to purchase individual tracks for 99¢. Google was not the first search engine. But Google made it simple to search.