

Subject: My Zen Dog Destroyed Spotify

How My Zen Dog Destroyed Spotify!



Why Understanding Your Customer is the Key to Repeat Sales (and Sanity)

Hi [NAME],

I have a problem.

You could call it a 'First World Problem', for sure...

But it's a problem, nonetheless!

You see, whenever my wife, Heloise, and my daughter, Belle, leave the house, they put on soothing spa music for Lulu, our cavapoochon.

They swear it relaxes her when she's alone indoors.

I have my doubts but who can tell what our dog is like when there's nobody at home to observe her?

It could be that she lies on her back with cucumber slices in her eyes, clutching a glass of kombucha in her paws, going with the zen musical flow.

You never know...

But while Lulu might love the sound of wind chimes and whale noises, she has totally WRECKED my Spotify algorithm.

Until recently, it was a finely tuned machine delivering me an ever-evolving mix of jazz, psychedelia, and experimental electronics.

Now it has gone rogue!

My carefully-curated musical world has been hijacked by 'Calming Music for Dogs'.

Instead of Miles Davis, Frank Zappa and CAN, I'm am recommended 'Dreamy Vibes', 'Zen Garden', and 'Sleep Rain Music'.

It wasn't quite what I signed up for.

You see, Spotify is a business that has one job: to know what I like and keep me engaged.

For the most part, they do it well.

Their algorithms track my listening habits and serve me all the weird, out-there stuff that I love, with plenty of new recommendations that appeal to my taste.

But the moment that the system goes wrong, and Spotify mistakes me for someone else (ie. a pampered dog) then the recommendations become useless.

In fact, it becomes downright annoying!

This got me thinking about the way online businesses work...

How to Find Your Home Business Algorithm

Spotify's entire business model is built on serving the right content to the right people.

When it gets it right, it draws in new users and keeps them listening by making sure nothing pushes them away from the app.

That means delivering fresh, relevant music that's likely to appeal to the listener, with curated playlists and suggested listening that makes them come back again and again.

A good online business works the same way.

If you don't know your audience – including their specific needs, frustrations, and desires – then you might end up doing the equivalent of selling dog meditation music to a fan of vintage jazz records.

So, before you start thinking about developing products, setting up a website or writing any content, you need to understand what your target customer's ideal 'algorithm' is.

By that I don't mean a literal algorithm...

I mean knowing what drives your customer's decisions.... what keeps them engaged... and what makes them buy again and again.

This could include knowledge of their lifestyle.... their desires, likes and dislikes.... the online networks they use.... the pattern of their usual shopping behaviour... and what they choose to buy (and when).

You need to know...

- Who they are (age, interests, lifestyle)
- What they need (problems, life obstacles and pain points)
- What they like (hobbies, lifestyle)
- Where they hang out online (email, social media, YouTube?)

You can then use this to create a 'customer avatar' – a character study of the person you are aiming to sell to.

A basic example would be:

'Alan Jones, a married 45 year old owner of a small business with older teenage children. He likes sports, going to the pub and hanging out with friends. He worries about his business and economic threats to his livelihood. He wants to grow his income

without hiring more staff or taking risks. To find helpful information he uses Google, YouTube videos and Facebook.”

You can add way more detail to this, right down to the kinds of website Alan likes to visit, what he thinks about politicians and what products he has bought in the past.

But anyway, I'm sure you get the gist!

With a clear idea of the personality and character of your customer, you will know at all times who you are talking to (or aiming your products at).

It means that you can communicate with them as if you know them personally. In turn, your customer will feel like you're talking ONLY to them, in the same way as a Spotify playlist used to feel like it was ONLY for me, and not my dog. 😞

As the famous marketing guru, Seth Godin says, “everyone is not your customer” ...

The more you try and make your products and services universally appealing, the LESS attractive it will be to your keenest potential buyers.

And here's something else to bear in mind.

Deliver More of What your Customer Likes

When Spotify works well, it delivers me more of the kind of music that I enjoy.

It only went wrong when my dog-influenced algorithm began delivering track ideas and playlists that were not only irrelevant to me, but which I actively disliked.

Suddenly a service I enjoy became a source of irritation.

Same happens when you have an online shop, and you start selling products that have a different ethos, style or target buyer... or when you have an email newsletter and recommend affiliate products that they don't need or want.

Whatever business you get into, it's crucial to keep your products, content and recommendations relevant to the goals and interests of your target customer.

Otherwise they'll begin to doubt that you have their best interests at heart.

Then once you have a firm idea of what they enjoy... give them MORE!

- Have a bestselling product? Create a bundle with bonuses and extras that you can sell to those customers.
- Have a number of repeat buyers? Offer them an exclusive VIP product like a higher-level membership website access or a one-to-one consultancy.
- Have an email list? Then segment that list into different niche audiences and send them useful free content on a subject before recommending relevant affiliate products that they will like.

Remember that the easiest way to make money online isn't to constantly find new customers...

It's to sell more to the customers you already have!

So if someone has already bought from you once, give them reasons to do it again. For instance...

- Give multi-buyers special discounts or access to limited offers
- Give loyal customers early access to new products through exclusive private invitations.
- Offer ongoing subscriptions where you deliver a service on a monthly basis with a recurring subscription.

When you offer these extras and upsells, your customer won't be annoyed with you, because this is precisely what they signed up for!

They WANT to be enriched with ideas, advice and product recommendations that you have curated for them.

What they DON'T want is to feel like you're just flogging anything you feel like without considering their tastes and interest.

Which brings me back to my Spotify...

I probably need to split the account so that there's one for the dog and one for me – this way I can recalibrate my algorithm and get it working for me again.

If that happens, I just need to make sure that Heloise and Belle don't accidentally use the wrong account before they leave the house...

I'm not sure Lulu can handle three hours of Captain Beefheart!

Best wishes

Nick