Referral Engine Pro

Session Three Transcript

John Jantsch: Welcome to Session Three of Referral Engine Pro. This time we're going to talk about some things, offers, campaigns to do with existing customers.

So, moving on to our system. Offers and execution, we're still in education, but we're focused on this very distinct group. Just by way of review as we do in all of them, how'd you come with your list of strategic partners? Are you starting to get a picture of what your strategic partner network is going to look like?

What kind of content opportunities can you build so that you have a very attractive platform for your strategic partners? Did you come up with some ideas for co-branding, for maybe doing endorsed mailings together, for producing workshops where you'll actually come and present useful, valuable, educational content and workshops? And maybe they're online as webinars or teleseminars for your strategic partners.

Is there a way for you to come together and create a formal blog network or some other network of content? Can you simply just co-market each other's products and services in your own promotional and own marketing materials? These are all the things that you need to keep working on. As I said, this is sort of a never-ending process, really, of building out this foundation of strategic partners.

We're going to move on to specifically to customers. One of the first things, I've talked about this idea of ideal customers, and an ideal customer is one that's very profitable that also already refers business. And the idea here is to actually take your customer list and really score your customers in some fashion so that you can start identifying what I like to call the champions. The folks that really are an ideal customer, usually they are referring business.

One of the reasons is that we talked about way back in Session One is that they are logically and emotionally really attached to your business, so there's a pretty good chance that's the type of customer you need to be going after more of. And so from the referral standpoint, rather than putting out a blanket call for referrals, if you spend your time really working on the champions.

And in many cases you can stimulate them much more quickly to generate a lot more referrals, and really get kind of involved in the game. So sometimes it's a matter of actually equipping them with tools to be a better referral source. And I haven't stated it to this point, but in many cases actually helping them be a better referral source certainly will pay dividends for you.

But in many cases I think you're also allowing them to do something that they are predisposed to do anyway, and I think that giving them an opportunity to increase the value they have with the relationship to the folks they're referring. So don't look at it as

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purely a personal act. I think it's actually something that's a good community building act actually within your customer base.

One of the tools you can use, we've already talked about is, this perfect introduction. So, one of the tools to equip your customers is to teach them how to spot an ideal customer. What to say to an ideal customer, what an ideal customer might say, and certainly let them know what your referral process is and your marketing process. This is a great, simple way for you to put things in their hands.

Another tool is certainly from a customer standpoint is to actually get them involved in producing content. Do you have a review process? This is a place where you can actually go back and help your customer understand the value they're receiving.

There's a tool called Audio Acrobat that would actually allow you to create or allow your customers to actually leave audio testimonials. Rating and review sites like Yelp. Show your customers how to use these. These are essentially referrals, but they're also a way for your customers to get involved in creating content.

The last one I want to tell you about is something I call a testimonial party. And I've actually had some folks use this very effectively. And the idea is to bring your customers together for an event, hire a videographer and actually get them...so, maybe it's a social event, it's an appreciation event, doesn't hurt if they've had a couple of glasses of wine, too.

But get them to, on camera, talk about their success stories or their testimonials, and it can be a great way for...in many cases, it's something they want to do. A great way for you to get a lot of it in one time.

In fact, this idea of success stories is something you should be gathering from a content standpoint really with all of your customers. It's simply a matter of describing the customer, and these can be documented. They can be video that you host on your website.

They can just be audio interviews, but you want to get the customer involved and certainly describe what type of customer they are? What type of challenge that they were having? The solution that you provided, and really the results they have achieved because of the relationship. And this really is something that particularly these referral champions in many cases really want to do.

Creating some referral offers, and there is...as part of the site there's a document that really kind of gives you somewhere in the neighborhood of 50 of these, but here is a high-spot, a few here. But the idea is that even your customers that want to refer business to you: giving them the tools, giving them the motivation, keeping it in top of your mind, and these are some things that you can have running in conjunction. It just doesn't have to just be you pick one.

The first one is always making an expectation. I would have as part of your sales process that you are working with a customer before they even maybe agree or when they agree,

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that you're saying something like, "Hey, we know you're going to be so thrilled with what we agreed upon today that part of our process is that at the end of 90 days we're going to come back and make sure you're thrilled. And if indeed you are, we're going to ask you to perhaps share the names of three other folks that you think would like together that you know would like to get this result."

It's a great marketing message, but it also sets the expectation that you are going to come back, make sure they're happy, and at that point ask for referrals.

In some cases going out to a customer that maybe is a leader in an industry, or in an association, or a chamber of commerce, or something, and actually offering to do work. Maybe you have a new product that you'd like them to experience.

Do the work for free with the only stipulation being that if they've really enjoyed it, if they enjoy the product, the service, they got a result, that they're willing to share that by way of referral with a group or with their network of some form.

100 percent refunds. Sometimes actually creating, even though I do not believe that money is a good motivator for referrals. I think it changes the reason why people are referring. There're certainly are some businesses that do it. I am not a big advocate.

However, there are instances when you can effectively be giving a payment. But if you can wrap it in a great message, or in an offer that kind of turns it into a game, I think it changes it dramatically.

The idea behind this is if you sell a product or a service that's a fixed amount that you can actually offer to somebody when they make a purchase that they have the ability to get a 100 percent refund. And all they need to do is give out these four cards to friends, and when each one of these comes back you'll issue them a refund, a 25 percent refund up to 100 percent.

It kind of turns it into a game. Effectively you're paying for referrals. But now they get to try to get to the 100 percent refund club.

Creating a tool like a gift certificate and routinely sending these out. So this is something that has value. Whatever amount makes sense for your business. But you're actually sending them out to your customers on a routine basis and saying, "Hey, here's something that you can... of tangible value, real value that you can give to neighbors, friends, colleagues, that you think of they might need what we do."

It just makes it an easy way for people to refer. Now another twist of course, is that that referring party when one of those comes back, you can actually give them some sort of a discount or a gift as well.

Having tiered pricing. So when you go out and do work with a customer that you might actually, if they're willing to actually refer your business, you might even go as far as creating some sort of vehicle like a postcard that they could actually fill out on the spot. That they would actually get a discount on the spot.

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Having some sort of price list like that, that gives people preferential pricing. For those that refer it could be another great way to motivate referrals.

Creating events where your customers can actually bring a friend for free, or for half-price, or some other proposition that would really allow them to introduce somebody. So again, the idea behind this is they are actually I think providing something of tangible value to a friend. They're helping build your audience as well if you're doing an event.

These are all as I said, there are many, many more contained in the workbook pages. But these are just some great examples of the twist to come up with creative offers for your customers.

I want to address this idea of moments of truth. One of the things that you can have all of these offers, you can all of the campaigns in place, you can have all the processes, but you also want to make sure that there are very logical places where you are routinely asking for referrals.

I already mentioned this idea of expectations. So certainly during the lead conversion process, I think if you're going to generate any amount of referrals, particularly service businesses, you need to have some sort of a results review process.

And, certainly part of that results review will be to identify any problems or issues. But certainly that's a great place for when somebody's a happy customer for you to ask for those referrals.

Having some sort of follow-up meetings with customers. It's a crime that some folks never talk to their customers until the customer calls them up and orders something. And I think you need to have some routinely built-in process where you are staying top-of-mind. That can be some kind of a quarterly or monthly communication, or can be a set follow-up planned assessment evaluation kind of meeting.

And the last piece I want to say from a moment of truth standpoint is, get in the habit of writing handwritten notes. Maybe at the end of the day on a Friday, write five of them to customers. It's amazing showing that appreciation. Nobody writes handwritten notes anymore.

It can really be something that sparks a great deal of referral interest because it just sparks people to talk about you. Not only do they know that you appreciate them, but it's just a gesture that so few people do anymore.

So, your action steps. Revise your... if you're still working on your ideal target and core messages, complete this referral education system for your customers. Look at your testimonial, your success study plan.

What are you going to do to routinely get more testimonials? To get your customers more involved in creating content, participating in the rating and review sites.

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Choose one of the customer referral marketing offers that you can build a campaign around. Either from this presentation, or from some of the tools on the site.

And then outline what tools, what marketing tools, letters, postcards, coupons, gift certificates, what are you going to need to create in order to actually put that campaign in place.

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