



The Contrarian Entrepreneur Show

Episode Transcript



Entrepreneur Development Coach

www.tomharris.us | tom@tomharris.us | 877-901-9977

Episode 009 – Don't Sell Them What They Want

(note: this document contains the essential language and content of this episode, but is not necessarily a complete verbatim transcript)

What They Want or What They Need?

What if a customer says they want a certain thing, but you know that what they want is not what they need, and therefore if they buy it, they'll probably be unhappy? What do you do?

You've probably heard the old adage, "Find a need and fill it." Surely that makes a lot of sense. Surely that's a good strategy for business success. But there are a few problems with that idea.

First of all, people don't buy based on need; they buy based on want. Buying on need would be logical and rational, but most buying decisions are not logical and rational. They're emotional. People will buy a particular product or service based on emotion. They buy something because of how they expect it will make them feel.

But, secondly, even if most people did buy based on need, many people don't know what they actually need; what would be the best solution to a problem, or what would provide the most benefit or improvement. They often simply do not take the time to do enough research to find out what the best choice for their situation is. So it's left to salespeople to convince them that that salesperson's particular solution is the best one. And I think we all know by now, if we'll admit it, that salespeople play on people's emotions, and try their best to give the customer what they want. Result: people may or may not end up with the best solution.

So, let's say that you're a provider of a product or service, and that product or service comes in many different shapes, sizes colors and configurations. If you're talking to a customer, and you're paying attention, it's not hard to discern what they want. But if you're a professional - if you really "know your stuff" - you might also discern that what

this particular customer wants is not the best solution for them; it's not what they need. In fact, it may even be a case where what they want will make their situation worse. And when they discover that at some time in the future, they'll probably blame you for it. In that case, some salespeople will say (or at least will think to themselves), "Hey, it's not my fault; I sold you what you said you wanted."

So what do you do? Do you sell them what they say they want just because they say they want it? Or do you try to explain to them why this other option will be better for them. And what if they resist your suggestions? How hard do you try to convince them? Here are several options:

a) Just sell them what they say they want. It's a lot easier to do that. They're happy in the moment because they get exactly what they wanted, and you made a sale, and you're both on your way. The classic win/win deal.

b) Briefly explain why a different solution might be a better choice, but if they begin to resist, sell them what they say they want.

c) Try really hard to explain why a different solution is a better choice, but if you're not getting anywhere with your arguments, sell them what they say they want. They might be a little irritated because you didn't just sell them what they wanted in the first place, but it all turned out OK.

d) Refuse to sell them what they want if you know, based on your professional expertise, that they won't be happy with their choice. There are 2 possible outcomes here:

- They'll be mad in the moment, will probably go buy what they want from someone else, and you lost a sale. But you have preserved your integrity. Unfortunately, once in a while, it becomes a choice between making a sale and hanging on to your credibility, integrity and professionalism.

- If you do succeed in selling them what you know is best for them, they'll probably soon realize that and love you forever.

Now, what I've just described here can obviously take on a million different variations. And you may or may not have found yourself, as a sales professional, in a situation like this. But you might. So deciding in advance what philosophy and approach will serve both you and your customer might be a really great idea.

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Your Business Appetizer for Today:

From my book "Business Appetizers", available on Amazon.

Snippet 52

Your business model must fit you, and you must fit it. Don't go into a business that does not play on your existing interests, ideas, desires, and beliefs, just for the sake of making money. That probably won't work well.

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Your Marketing Munchie for Today:

From my book "Marketing Munchies", available on Amazon.

Snippet 189

You must explain, in very simple and understandable terms, what your product or service is, how it works, and how it can help.

If people don't understand what it is that you're selling, they're not going to buy any of it.

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Website Wisdom for Today:

From my book "Radical Rules for Websites", available on Amazon.

Snippet 15

People use websites for only one reason - to get information.

Don't go overboard trying to "entertain" your users or dazzle them with animations and fancy graphical displays. If they want to be entertained, they'll go to a movie.

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Today's Profound Thought:

Even though you may not have enough to do everything, you have enough to do something. Do what you can with what you have where you are. Start now.

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This show is available as a podcast (audio only) on iTunes, on YouTube as a video, and as BOTH on my website where you can also get PDF transcripts of episodes, leave comments, ask questions, and get lots of other goodies, so go to tomharris.us/ces, the BEST place to find this show.

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Reminder:

When you're reading, listening to, or watching something, if you look for ideas, you'll probably be pleasantly surprised at what you find.

But if you look for ready-made, canned, one-size-fits-all answers and solutions, you'll probably be disappointed, because they probably won't work well for you.

The ideas that will probably work best for you are YOUR OWN IDEAS.

So, start creating some new ideas TODAY.

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You can email me at tom@tomharris.us, or call me at 877-901-9977.

I love to chat, so don't hesitate.

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In closing, remember to: THINK, LEARN and CREATE:

THINK

Think for yourself. If you don't think for yourself, then other people will do your thinking for you, and that's not a good thing.

LEARN

Read books. Read blogs. Watch videos. Watch TED Talks.
Listen to podcasts. Learn something new every single day.

CREATE

Create something -- something good -- something that wasn't there before and would never have been there if you hadn't shown up.

THINK, LEARN, CREATE

Be Brave, Be Bold

and I'll meet you here next time.

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