



Michael A. Brown's

Business To Business By Phone[®]

Second Quarter 1997 Edition

11th ANNIVERSARY THIS MONTH!

Thank you, dear clients!!

REDWOOD GETS NEW AREA CODE

Beginning August 2, **650** succeeds 415 as our area code, and for most communities on the west side of San Francisco Bay. Please amend your database and contact records. (800) 373-3966 remains the same.

READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Almost everyone reads their own industry's publications. Are you reading your *customers'* trade mags as well? For example, if you're selling technology into corporations, *CIO* magazine is for and about your prospects and customers. For other segments, there are *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, *Broadcasting*, *Progressive Grocer*, *Pacific Shipper*, and a zillion others. By reading what your prospects and customers read, you'll enjoy a common frame of reference, making marketing and selling conversations easier and more substantial.

Also, send article reprints to prospects and customers. Urge them to visit interesting web sites you've discovered. Doing so shows you're paying attention to their interests.

NEW PROGRAMS!!

The Trade Show "Ready Room" ... half-day interactive workshop to prepare your booth staff. Topics include: Sorting Out Your Visitors: the Good, the Bad, the Ugly, How to Make a Compelling Case For Your Company, & Your Products, Avoiding the 5 Most Common Show Mistakes, Lead Optimization.

Database Marketing: Clearing The Myths, Making It Work. Why It's Vital To Clarify Database "Ownership" and Sources, Software "Musts" and "Must Nots," Lead Pre-Qualification and Full-Qualification Criteria. How To Convert Data Fields Into "Askable" Questions. Half-day executive edition or full-day custom workshop.

The Order Add-On Workshop. Why It's Right And Proper To Up-Sell and Cross-Sell, How To Identify the Opportunities, How To Present the Offer, Advancing the Sales Process. Half-day interactive workshop plus practice.

WHY CUSTOMER SERVICE ISN'T

Often, the people providing "customer service" do not know what *real* service looks like or feels like. There are two reasons.

First, the rapid and universal growth of "self-service" permits us to bypass individual, personalized sales and service transactions. So if a customer service rep has limited or no first-person experience with *genuine service*, one can hardly expect the rep to fulfill the employer's promise of, and customers' expectations regarding, service. Or to distinguish poor service from good. Or to care that there is a difference. *He or she likely will mistake the service transaction process for service itself.* You can observe this situation everywhere, from retail to car rental to health care to insurance to government.

Second, the self-service ethic leads too many companies to believe that technology (e.g., phone mail, interactive voice response, web-based commerce) equals customer service. But technology is not the same as service. Technology *enables* service and, if done right, enhances it. But if management allows customer service to "hide" behind technology, service fails utterly.



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Best Advice: Leverage your service staff's age mix, life experience, and business stories. Encourage and pay for your service staff to experience great service providers themselves. Let them see, feel, and understand what superior service can be and ought to be. Then structure and operate your service enterprise to *deliver the genuine item* ... individualized, personalized service.

DISBELIEVE YOUR OWN MARKETING FOR FUN AND PROFIT

Please take out one of last year's marketing brochures or campaign flyers. With 365 days' hindsight, how accurate, how viable was the piece? Among the customers who bought from the piece, who's saying what? Do they like the product or service? Is it performing to their expectations?

Now look at a current brochure or a campaign that's under development. Hype? Outright lies? True? Somewhere in between? This "truth or dare" drill tests your conscience and your professionalism.

Best Advice: Apply skepticism to your own marketing communications. By doing so, you'll be approximating your prospects' and customers' first reactions. Once you see your marcom from *their* perspective, make the appropriate amendments. You'll sell more and keep customers happier, longer.

YOU DON'T SAY

"You'll have to ...", "Our policy is ...", "I can't ...", "Yeah, there's a bug", "Contract", "Have a nice day."

YOU DO SAY

"Here's what I can do for you...", "The best, most efficient, most convenient, easiest,

quickest, coolest way...", "Agreement", "Thank you. We appreciate your business."

PHONE PHUNNY

I answer the call as usual; "Hi, this is Redwood Training ... Michael Brown here." Young voice at other end asks, "Can you train my appaloosa?" I reply, "Possibly ... what's an appaloosa?" "It's a horse." "Ohhhh! Well, I train marketing and sales people, but not horses." Short pause, then the young voice asks, "What's a marketing person?"

THOUGHTS WHILE FLYING

Turbulence and meals occur at the same time.

Pre-flight briefings for first-timers would ease lots of headaches for everyone. It's scary to watch folks stand up and take videos of each other during the takeoff roll.

WHAT I DO

- Advise and train your marketing and sales groups to use the phone effectively to find, land, and keep customers, and grow your business.
- Favorably differentiate your calls from consumer "telemarketing" and from your competitors.
- Help you build and ramp-up your in-house phone team, or recommend the best outsourced call centers to conduct telemarketing and telesales for you
- "Fine-Tune" your phone operations, steering you away from the money-pits and toward profitable best practices.

800 373- 3966 www.michaelabrown.net