

Business lessons gleaned from Google

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Would you like to earn positive word of mouth, additional loyalty and more revenue? Study the Google AdWords response to my digital advertising efforts and walk away with a free set of business lessons. Not only is it as simple as ABC, but it also applies to your employees as much as your customers.

I recently invested my evenings trawling through the myriad of call-outs, videos, tips and tricks that Google provides to anyone attempting to advertise on Google AdWords. With the search engine's increasingly complex algorithms seeping into the advertising process, I had to wonder if it was all worth it.

Still, I found myself spurred on and inspired by the amazing amount of self-help resources Google provides. Squeezing this research in between other corporate duties, I finally created an advertisement (all of six words in length), took the plunge and launched it. The first day, the advertisement received no clicks. The second day produced much better results. While I was feeling somewhat happy with myself, I had a nagging doubt polluting my conscience, wondering about the source of the clicks, not being certain beyond doubt that I had launched in the correct marketplace.

Then day three of the campaign arrived, and to my surprise so too had an email direct from Google AdWords. My first response was that Big Brother was watching. Once suspicion subsided, curiosity rose and excitement abounded when I read the content of the email. I cannot find a Google shop to walk into, yet I was clearly in the middle of the virtual service centre.

The email highlighted my success, showing my Google AdWords in full display. That appealed to my self-achievement.

In the "what's next" section, the bulleted lifeline checklist was spelt out:

- In larger and brighter font, a toll-free number I could call should I still feel perplexed and need an expert by my side.
- Five more suggestions in how to improve keywords, bidding, budget, grouping and writing, all to be sent out over the next five weeks. How did they know I struggled to absorb too much information at one time?

What can a leader glean from this example? Knowing that a vision cannot be reached without the full engagement of all stakeholders, how can these best practices then add value to the customer and team experience?

Best practice one: The importance of being there for customers and teams, no matter what format the "there" portion takes.

People need to know they belong and are supported. A customer will reward a sense of belonging and importance with loyalty, while a team member will commit to productivity and ownership.

Best practice two: The importance of 24/7 assistance.

Full access to support and knowledge will help cement a feeling of importance, along with a sense of worthiness to have earned the right to this support. This builds a customer or team member's sense of belonging.

Best practice three: The ability to be aware no matter what distance exists between customers or employees.

No longer can distance be a reason for separation. Physical or remote separation is overcome in this day and age by technology portals and varying forms of communication.

Best practice four: The ability to perceive your service or requirements through the eyes of those important to you.

You have a vision, see the future and design supporting products and services. Your customers and team members do not, and hence see things differently. Their lens is one of needs, frustration, desire and access. By seeing through their eyes, you reduce the distance between yourself and those important to you.

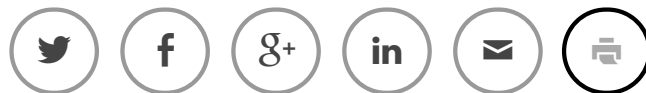
Best practice five: An understanding of guided assistance, drip-fed in alignment with the ability to absorb.

This is how you embed the perceptions of others into your processes and systems.

Each person absorbs information differently and very few can absorb an entire process, story or steps in one huge overload of information, or using one main format.

In summary, Google AdWords has provided exceptional and timely insights into the simplicities of leadership. Why do we continue to complicate business?

Debbie Nicol, the managing director of Dubai-based business en motion, is a consultant on leadership and organisational development, strategic change and corporate culture

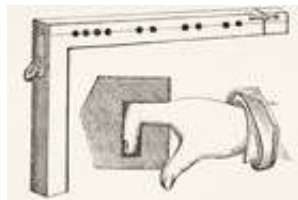


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