

# module one: customer service

## Differentiation

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### article:

#### **Packaging That Gets Noticed**

by Laurie Guest

How do you name and market your business? How do you package your products, services, and specials? What will set you apart in the marketplace?

For years, I had a program called Superior Customer Service. Clients rarely chose this program. When they did, however, they were happy with the content. I knew the speech was good, but the way I packaged it didn't attract anybody. I was complaining about this one day to a friend. She said, "Well, tell me about your speech." I replied, "I show people how hot ideas are everywhere to attract and keep new customers. You just need to know where to look for them. My speech explains that." She responded, "That reminds me of my favorite Mexican dish. Usually the jalapenos are mixed up in the meat sauce. I hate that. At my favorite restaurant, they make layers, and they put the jalapenos single file across the top. I prefer it that way because I want to see the jalapeno coming. I want to know if the next bite is a hot one. Your customers are the same way. They don't want to look for the hot ideas. Later that day, I thought about what she said: "I want to see the jalapeno coming." It stuck.

Later in the week, a large association called to ask if I had any topics on customer service. I answered, "Yes, I have a new program titled I Want to See the Jalapeno Coming: The Hot Recipe to Attract and Keep New Customers." She enthusiastically replied, "We're doing a whole Mexican theme! This is perfect!" It was the first time a client didn't start out by asking how much I charged. We know customers buy because they're attracted to a product or service. They're not buying based on price alone, which is a good thing.

I started to realize that how we package and title our products and services is a strong concept. How does this apply to other types of industries? Let's take a peek at some famous brands that put the same technique in place.

Subway had the five-dollar foot long. The story of the campaign traces back to 2004 when Steward Frankel, an owner of two Subway franchises in Miami, Florida, began selling the subs for five dollars on weekends and saw the sales spike without even marketing. Soon, it rippled out to other franchises and eventually became a fresh campaign for the entire brand. Add a catchy jingle, and you've got yourself a hit. They packaged it creatively, and it was a success.

The eyewear industry offers another angle. In 1983, a man named Dean Butler founded Lens Crafters. A couple things happened in the industry to make it a perfect time to start this style of eyewear business. The biggest change was that a law was passed that doctors must give the eyeglass prescription to the patient if he or she asked. Butler saw the chance to put stores in malls and then package it as "glasses in about an hour" knowing people would shop while they waited. Although this fantastic idea came under attack in later years, the concept revolutionized an entire industry. In a 1986 interview with Forbes magazine, Butler claimed, "Marketing eyewear isn't much different from selling coffee. Retailing is what you do when customers walk into a store, but with a new idea, marketing comes first. Marketing is how you inspire customers to come to your door."

How do you inspire people to come to your door? You don't have to be a famous brand to use this concept. If you're a small company, think in terms of short term promotions instead of an entire company rebranding or expensive ad campaigns. I know of an oil change business that displays a flashing light marquee when there's no wait. Another example is a car wash that picks a first name daily and puts it on their marquee. If that's your name and you prove it, you get a free car wash. Creative packaging sells because it sets you apart from the competition.