



# The Art of Selling



Imagine a row of cramped stalls on the dusty road somewhere in the Middle East, several hundred years ago. The stalls sit side-by-side on both sides of a dusty street. Some people in the crowd are simply going from one place to another, and some have come to purchase a particular item. The vendors use all sorts of schemes and strategies to get the attention of the passersby and draw them to their own stall rather than to their neighbor's. Each vendor must convince one person at a time that he has the best product compared to all those around him and that it would be a grave mistake to buy from anyone else besides him. The buyer has to be convinced that what he is giving up is nothing in exchange for the value that he is getting in return.

## **This is the art of selling.**

Every business person, whether on a dusty street in the Middle East or in an air-conditioned high-rise in New York City, has to convince the buyer that his product is the best and that the buyer would be missing out on a great deal by walking away from the transaction. The object of the person or company selling the goods and services is to convince the buyer that he will get more than he is being asked to give.

People have been mastering the art of selling products and services to those who need them since the beginning of time. The methods that entrepreneurs use to sell their goods have changed down through the millennia, but the principles are still the same.

## **No business exists without a buyer.**

No sale happens until a buyer is convinced that he will benefit by making the purchase. The buyer has to believe that what he is giving up in exchange is worth less than what he is getting. A person who walks into a fast food restaurant values the meal more than the few

dollars that the meal will cost. If the buyer doesn't perceive that he is getting more than he's giving, there is no transaction.

### **Selling online is no different.**

Granted, the method of selling online is relatively new in the history of commerce, and there are certain unique strengths and weaknesses related to online commerce that did not come into play just a few years ago. Selling online is still selling, and the principles have remained unchanged down through centuries of business transactions.

One of the biggest complaints about online sellers is that the vast majority of them seem to think only about closing the sale.

Because of the universal reach of the Internet, it's easy for some online sellers to feel they can hide because they're not looking the buyer eye-to-eye over a counter in a retail shop. Buyers likewise also feel less secure because they can't see the seller face-to-face, and they usually cannot visit the store in person and reassure themselves of the legitimacy of the business. These unscrupulous online sellers really have no regard for the customer; they value only what the customer can do for them, which is adding dollars to their bank account. It is quite possible for an online seller to build an entire business model on one-time sales rather than building a list of satisfied clientele who come back for repeated purchases.

### **That's the danger awaiting online sellers – the bad reputation of a few.**

Other online sellers – the kind you want to be – couldn't be more different. They really do want to do the right thing, and they're aware of the need to provide honest value to their customers. Their desire is to provide significant value to the buyer at a fair price, but they sometimes struggle to communicate that value. Their heart is in the right place, but they have difficulty reaching out and convincing the buyer that they're different than the other group.

### **No business can succeed without a seller convincing a buyer to pay.**

Even if your heart is in the right place, you'll have to develop the art of convincing people that you have what they need if you want to succeed in your online business. People browsing the Internet today have the attention span of the Middle Eastern customers walking down a dusty street, scarcely glancing at the vendors who shout for their attention. Online sellers must hold the attention of potential buyers and convince them that the products they are selling really can help them solve their problems and can do it better and cheaper than anyone else's product can. What you are selling simply must be better, and you must also believe that it is better and be able to communicate that.

Whatever your product or service, you must be able to convince the buyer that what he gives up in return is less than the value he's getting by making a purchase from your online store. It's your job to create the need, or at least to magnify it, so that you're standing ready with your product or service just as soon as the buyer is convinced of his need.