

Luxury Experience Company

Uncovering Three Untapped Online Opportunities

Written by Edward F. Nesta

You have listened to business associates, friends, neighbors, the person at the local deli, and people you are not sure who they are, about what you should do to increase your marketing and attract new clients. Are there any untapped opportunities out there versus reacting to the next "big" Internet solution?

Many of the untapped opportunities are not really new, but they are a more focused, direct, and a controlled look at what you are doing today.

Do More Than Just Listen to What Your Customer is Saying

One of my favorite untapped opportunities is to promote the components of your product or service that your customers are looking for, but in a way that puts the customer first and your product or service second. While this seems pretty basic, there are many companies who collect data about customer interaction only to gloss over the data while driving a different marketing message. I am referring to placing your customer in "your space," engaging them and getting them to feel you are providing what they are looking for. In the retail sector they continue to hone this relationship using all of the information that they collect as part of their customer understanding; they use this to differentiate their relationship with the customer from their competition. This concept easily crosses industries, for example in the hotel and resort sector entities tend to promote only their product while missing out on the opportunity to be the online concierge and connect the different elements of the area while retaining their connection with the customer and thus building a relationship that differentiates them from their competition.

In retail, a customer may be buying a product because they need it, they desire the product, it is a replacement, or it was bought on a whim. The important point is that you know why a product or service is being bought, thus it is best if you do not go directly at the customer just to sell a product or service, but utilize the understanding of "why" to connect with the customer. In the travel sector, for a business hotel they know what the business guest who stays at their hotel wants and uses, thus if you direct your promotions and services to those specific needs you show the business traveler that you, like them, are focused on delivering a valued proposition, and this will create a stronger connection with the guest. In the leisure market, hotels and resorts should look at their product as the customers home-away-from-home by guiding prospective guests through the maze of what there is to do in the area, times, costs, and more, while communicating that at the end of they day where they put their head to rest is taken care of. In both cases you are putting the guest's needs first and this will create a stronger bond over time.

The Untapped Website

You spend a lot of time, energy, and money developing your website, but being first on the results page of a search on your brand name is just the beginning, now the work begins. You need to take all the information you utilized to create your website such as touch-points, demographics, and content to find complementary websites and build relationships with them. I like to call this phase "seeding the Internet," which is typified by being marketing centric and targeting key components of your brand to comparable websites and getting your message out there. The trick is that if you have targeted a specific message, example: a resort that has a golf course and targets a relationship with a golf related website should make sure that the link back to their site lands on the golf section of their

website and not on the home page or other non related page; you do not want to loose a potential customer after all the work it took to get them to your site.

If you break apart the different components/touch-points of your product or service, your will have the material to start building different nodes across the Internet, which will expand your presence, visibility, and exposure. After all, you did not spend all that time, energy, and money on a website to have it stand alone, so spread the word.

Behavior Targeting

So, now that you have seeded the Internet and built relationships with websites to carry your message, you need to track the behavior patterns of where they came from and what else did they look at when they landed on your website. This type of information will allow you to serve up appropriate data to prospective customers from specific websites and promote the components of your product or service that your customers are looking for, but in a way that puts the customer first and your product or service second. This leads us back to my initial point of doing more than just listening to what your customer is saying.

I thank you for your continued support of Luxury Experience Company, and as always, your comments are welcome, so please send comments to: EFNesta@L-E-Company.com.

© March 2010. Luxury Experience Company. www.L-E-Company.com. All rights reserved.