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GIVE LOVE, GET LOVE

Turn Amazing Customer Service Into a Major Revenue Source

Boosting customer retention by any amount can have a huge impact on your revenue. A study conducted by Bain & Company and reported by the Harvard Business Review found that even a 5% increase in retention can boost revenue by 25%-95%. In short, your ability to retain the right customers can make or break your business.

Businesses are constantly searching for ways to achieve customer loyalty. After all, it's far more cost-effective to keep the same customers coming back to you than it is to constantly go after new ones. Marketing to new customers can cost up to 25 times more than simply catering to your existing customer base.

Loyal customers who love your business are an incredibly powerful asset. They can do a lot of your marketing for you through social media and word-of-mouth channels, making others aware of what your business has to offer and the value that working with you provides.

But how do you get to that point? How do you develop a strong bond with your customers that is hard to break and will keep them coming back time and time again?

It really starts with stellar customer service. Poor customer service

is the No. 1 cause of customer loss. Upward of 71% of people say they cut ties with businesses over poor customer service. Customer service includes your employee-customer interactions, your response to problems, your response *time*, and your approachability on social media.

Look to businesses that have figured out how to do customer service right. Like Apple, LEGO, and beloved businesses right in your very own community. Consider what you can incorporate into the customer service experience that you offer. Think about the experiences and levels of service you yourself have been thrilled with as a customer and, as much as possible, bring those practices, "in-house" into your business.

Another way you can win loyal customers is just by being present. One way to do that is by answering phone calls, emails, and online inquiries *immediately*. The more time you put between the initial customer contact and your response, the worse it looks for you. When people visit your business in person, be there to offer a hello, answer questions, and engage in casual conversation. When you're there for your customers, your customers want to be there for you.



A Split-Second Decision
That Led to 35 Happy Years

If there's one lesson both attorneys and doctors are constantly reminded of, it's that bad things can happen quickly. Car accidents, falls, dog bites — catastrophe can come out of nowhere and leave a person changed for the rest of their life. Being reminded daily of this bleak fact is tough — which is why I want to provide a counterpoint. In the spirit of Valentine's Day, I want to share something that happened very quickly and lead to the happiest years of my life: my marriage to Alissa.

We first encountered one another as college students in an apartment in Boston — and using the phrase "love at first sight" wouldn't be accurate. You see, the first moment I saw Alissa, she had her back to me, facing a record player and singing along to a Linda Ronstadt track. It was March of 1980, and I can still remember being awestruck by her voice. So, I suppose it was love at first listen.

But of course, at that moment, I had no intention of dating Alissa, much less marrying her. After all, she was dating my friend — whom I went up to Boston to visit that weekend. He wanted to go out while she stayed in, so I never really got a chance to talk to her that first night. We'd become acquaintances later on, but even then, I would never have guessed this beautiful woman would one day be my wife.

Three years later, I'm working my way through law school as a bartender in Lido Beach when I get word from Alissa. She and my friend had split up, but he was looking to possibly rekindle something. He wanted to take her on a date, but she felt more comfortable having other people come along. So, Alissa invited me and her sister along. Between my studies and my late-night bartending schedule, I almost didn't go on this double-date. Now, I'm so grateful I did.

Alissa and I ended up talking the whole evening. I was struck by how warm and full of life she was — and still is. The next morning at my aerobics class (this was the '80s after all) I confided in my instructor that I'd never met anyone quite like Alissa. So, I resolved to stay in contact with her.

We wrote several letters back and forth between Lido Beach and her home in Toronto, and then on May 11, 1984, she gave me a call. She was in New York and wanted to hang out. I went to meet her, and we've been together basically every day ever since. In fact, our bond was so strong that on July 4th of that same year, at age 25, I asked Alissa if she would marry me.

“All three of us were in the kitchen and I was hunting for something to eat. Briefly, I stuck my head out of the fridge and told them, ‘By the way, I’m getting married.’”

If one of my own kids got engaged that quick, I would have had a heart attack — especially if they broke the news the way I did to my parents. I



was actually living with them at the time while I finished up school.

All three of us were in the kitchen and I was hunting for something to eat. Briefly I stuck my head out of the fridge and told them, "By the way, I'm getting married."

Contrary to what you might expect, my mother was ecstatic. You see, she was very ill and was so excited she'd get to see me wed. In fact, we actually moved up the date of the wedding to make sure of this. So, on a snowy, day in January 1985, Alissa and I got married after being together just 7 months. I'm sure plenty of bets went around that night on how long we'd last together.

And yet, 35 years and three beautiful kids later, we're still going strong. In fact, our daughter recently got engaged herself — though to a guy she's been dating for a long time. It's fantastic news, and like most good things, this engagement took a while to develop. And yet, looking back over the last 3 1/2 decades, I can say with certainty that sometimes, great things really do happen in a blink of an eye.

Happy Valentine's Day,

Roger Simon

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The Storied History of Evan Williams' Journey to Success

The journey of entrepreneurship is akin to finding your way through a jungle with a poorly drawn map. Navigating all the obstacles can be terrifying, but thankfully, the many entrepreneurial odysseys that came before us offer great opportunities to learn. Evan Williams, co-founder of Blogger and Twitter, went on a wild journey himself while finding his way out of the metaphorical jungle and into success.

Williams began his career running irrigation for his family farm in Nebraska. After only a year and a half of working for tech startups in Florida and Texas, he found his way back to the farm but didn't give up. He persevered, moving to California and eventually working with Meg Hourihan, pioneer of online blogging and fellow internet entrepreneur, to co-found Pyra Labs in 1999. Together at Pyra, they developed Blogger, a journaling platform that became the launch pad for Williams' entrepreneurial prosperity.

Unfortunately, after venture capital and company resources were depleted, Pyra Labs' employees, including Hourihan, quit en masse, and Williams forged on alone to keep Blogger afloat. In 2003, Google acquired Blogger, which is successful to this day and credited as one of the first blogging sites. Fun fact: Williams also coined the term "blogger"!

After Blogger's acquisition, Williams' new startup, Odeo, was poised to be a premiere platform for podcasts and podcasting software. However, due to a laundry list of problems, including a lack of vision and the rise of Apple, Odeo experienced a less-than-stellar launch and simply could not compete with iTunes, a platform already holding a major foothold in the podcasting community.

At that point, Williams turned his attention to another side project under Odeo's umbrella: Twitter. Learning from their abysmal launch, the team focused on making a social networking service. With this singular focus, Twitter's popularity exploded and garnered attention from entrepreneurs and consumers everywhere. Today, Twitter is the sixth most visited website in the world and boasts 330 million active users. In the third quarter of 2019, Twitter's revenue amounted to \$823.7 million.

Evan Williams' journey to success is one for the ages, and it's a lesson every entrepreneur can learn from while trying to find the one opportunity that will launch them into the big leagues. If you're interested in learning more about Williams' path to entrepreneurial glory, check out the bestselling biography "Hatching Twitter: A True Story of Money, Power, Friendship, and Betrayal" by Nick Bilton.



Whose Fault Is It Anyway?



Representing a Client Hurt by Her Own Car

What happens if you're a passenger in your own car and the driver causes an accident? Can you make a claim against your own insurance company? What if the driver lost control because of a known medical condition? Can the passenger be held negligent for getting in the car with a driver with a known medical condition? These are all questions that came up in a single case our firm took on.

Our client was a passenger in her own car, which was driven by her son. The son lost control of the vehicle and struck a portion of a building. Our client suffered a traumatic amputation of most of her thumb on her nondominant hand.

At the scene, witnesses reported that our client's son had suffered a seizure. We made a claim against our client's \$500,000 insurance policy, arguing our client was injured as a result of the negligent operation of her own vehicle by her son. The insurance company defended, arguing there is no negligence for a medical emergency, and even if the driver was negligent, our client was negligent for allowing her son to drive with a known medical condition.

In the course of the lawsuit, our client's son denied he suffered from a seizure and claimed he had no history of seizures. He did previously suffer concussions and had been treated with seizure medication. When we demanded the defense provide us with access to our client's son's medical records, they resisted. They eventually withdrew their defenses that a known seizure disorder caused the accident and that our client was negligent for allowing her son to drive. The insurance company offered \$200,000 to settle. We advised our client to reject the settlement offer and proceed to arbitration. She agreed with our advice. As a result of the arguments presented by firm partner Roger L. Simon at the arbitration, our firm won an award of \$450,000.00 for our client — 2.5 times the amount the insurance company had tried to settle at with their very own insured.

Cases like this illustrate how the question of fault can be a complicated one to answer. But with the diligence to hold the insurance company accountable and a dogged pursuit of the facts, an experienced legal team can make all the difference. Before taking a settlement on what looks like a complex case, consult an attorney you trust.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION OR PERSONAL INJURY?

Make Sure Accident Victims Know Their Options

At times the areas of personal injury law and workers compensation law can overlap. After all, they both exist to help injured people with the financial consequences of an injury suffered in an accident. However, knowing the key differences between these areas of the law and when they interact can make all the difference for accident victims.

ON THE CLOCK VS. OFF

As most people understand employees hurt on the job may file workers' compensation claims. If the injury was suffered in "the course of employment," the injured person is entitled to compensation for related medical expenses and lost wages. A personal injury claim, on the other hand, is made against a negligent party not tied directly to the victim's employment. This civil suit can secure a broader range of damages compared to workers' compensation, including compensation for pain and suffering.

WHEN LAWS COLLIDE

But what if a third party causes an accident that injures a worker on the job? For example, say an employee is sent out to run an errand and gets hit by a car. The driver's negligence may have injured the worker,



but their work was the reason they were out of the street in the first place. Which kind of claim does the employee make? Depending on the circumstances, it could be both.

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

In New York, it is possible to pursue both a workers' compensation and a personal injury claim against a negligent third party. This allows for the injured party to recover a broader spectrum of damages. Thus, it is important that those who suffer an injury while on the clock know their options.

When working with injured persons who may not know which claim they should pursue, you can make a significant difference in their life. If you believe they were injured by a third party, recommend that they consult a personal injury attorney you trust. We offer free consultations and work with a network of highly qualified workers' compensation attorneys who will work with us to protect the injured workers' rights and win the best possible outcome.

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SOLUTIONS

Date Truffles



Inspired by The Minimalist Baker

Valentine's Day is all about love ... and chocolate. Enjoy these chocolate peanut butter date truffles with your date this Valentine's Day.

Ingredients

- 1 lb medjool dates, pitted (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- Warm water
- 1/4 cup peanut butter
- 1 cup bittersweet or dark chocolate, chopped
- 1 tbsp coconut oil, melted

Instructions

1. Using a food processor, blend dates and sea salt until dough can be formed into a ball. Slowly add enough warm water to mixture to thicken dough.
2. Roll dough into tablespoon-sized balls. Freeze for 20-30 minutes.
3. In microwave, warm 1/4 cup peanut butter for 30 seconds, then drizzle peanut butter on top of balls. Freeze balls for another 20 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, in microwave, warm chocolate with coconut oil until melted. Stir well.
5. Coat balls in chocolate and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
6. Top with additional salt and freeze for 30 minutes. Serve at room temperature.