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TV's original home
shopping host



Take care of
the little things, and
the big things will
never be a problem.

Michael J. Pallerino, Editor
 @mpallerino

EVERY WHICH WAY BUT DOWN

"There's only one growth strategy: Work hard." – William Hague

It was one of those defining moments. There I was, about to head into one of the company owners' offices, sure that I was to have one of my emails printed and handed back to me with "the box."

The email was a strategy I had devised to help make working with our off-site printing production team a little smoother. "The box" was the term we used to describe the consequences of meetings when employees like me met with the higher ups.

For me, it was that proverbial last straw. After countless conversations with my boss, I just couldn't see any way around going over his head. Of course, I cleared my email with him. I remember him referring to my impending meeting as "your famous last words."

But there were just too many steps in the production process. Too much disorganization and not enough communication.

As I tapped on the door (and I mean tapped), I couldn't help but think how long it would take to find another job.

But I was wrong. The big boss was eager to hear how each of the magazines in our division could work better and smarter with our production teams. More lead time. More interaction and engagement between respective team leaders. Standing post-production meetings to review the process. With some tweaking of my email language, he sent my suggestions to the VPs of editorial and production, and the process changed.

"Take care of the little things, and the big things will never be a problem." That was the advice he gave me. If you methodically pour over all the little details and items on your to-do list, the big things will never be too overwhelming.

It is a strategy I believe could serve all of us well in 2015. From past experience, the "every-man-for-himself-any-which-way-he-can" approach only stands to bog things down. And this year should be an up year.

Here's to starting your year off on the right foot.

ALSO INSIDE

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STAT PACK



Posting It Up
Who's posting what and why

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

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My son played in a hockey tournament this past weekend in which he really started off slow. He just didn't seem to be playing with any enthusiasm and lacked some real jump. After they lost a couple of games, his shoulders sunk. The coach seemed pretty unhappy with his effort, and then he let him know it.

After their last loss, the coach pointed right at my boy and told him to improve his attitude. This was pretty heavy stuff for an 11 year old. Everyone in the locker room – including the director of the program – was looking right at my son.

Needless to say, he was mortified.

After we arrived back at the hotel, we discussed how attitude determines altitude. I told him that he needed to get control over the voice in his head that was telling him things were not going to work out. When you get down a goal, the trick is to turn off that voice and start thinking about the possible positive outcomes. The little bugger responded in the next game with a hat trick and powered his team to a Silver medal.

If you're human, you're going to have ups and downs. You're going to have moments that you don't feel so optimistic. People who are upbeat 100 percent of the time are either living in a fantasy world or taking something to make them feel that way. Life has challenges. You're allowed to feel a little sorry for yourself every once in a while. Finding the strength to look at the bright side of things is paramount to a life worth living.

If it were easy to see the positive in every situation, I suppose we'd all sign up in a heartbeat. But we're full of emotion, and life happens. So, do your best to remember that we all have highs and lows. And remember that dwelling on the negative drains your energy and repels others.

People migrate to people who are positive because life is tough enough to clutter it with negative vibes. I saw this firsthand this weekend after some of my son's teammates hung their shoulders after seeing my kid do it. In contrast, when he smiled after that last game, they smiled right along with him.

So, remember that your vibe matters. Put out the right one and people will be drawn to you, which can go a long way in sales.



Warmest Regards,

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@markricepotter

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STAT PACK

“I think it's important (agencies) don't lose focus, or you can lose your identity and don't focus on what you're good at. If you try and do too many new things, you confuse yourself, your clients and the people in your company.”

- Nick Rappolt, founder of digital agency Beyond, on the importance of keeping your focus in a marketplace defined by constant change

ALL CONTENT ALL THE TIME

We all know that content is king. But ask today's marketers, and they will say that it must be the right type of content. According to research by the Economist Group and Peppercomm, 67 percent say timely content with unique information is the most successful. At the top of their "must read" lists are articles (71 percent), research reports (51 percent) and white papers (27 percent).

IT'S SOCIAL TIME SOMEWHERE

These days, it's not if you social, it's how much. According to eMarketer, 54.3 percent of the population – or 68.5 percent of internet users – logged on to a social site at least once per month last year. Among these social content sharers, two main groups emerged: those who said they posted once in a while (33 percent) and those who did so usually (29 percent).

CALLING IT IN

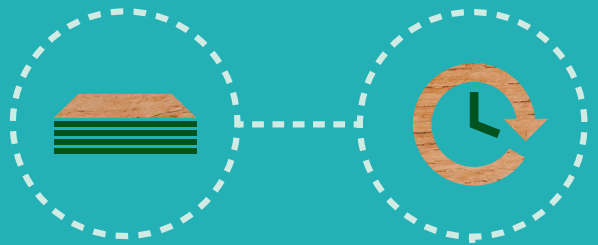
By the end of 2017, there will be 2 billion smartphone or tablet users engaging in some form of mobile commerce transaction, according to a report by Juniper Research. According to the report – “Mobile Commerce Markets: Key Sector Strategies, Opportunities & Forecasts 2014-2019” – mobile consumption of services such as banking, money transfer, and purchases of goods and services are surging, as consumers are either migrating from desktop usage or becoming first-time eCommerce users through their smartphones or tablets. The research firm expects the total number of users worldwide to hit 1.6 billion when the 2014 numbers are tallied.

DON'T I KNOW YOU?

How well do you know your customers?

According to the "State of B2B Customer Experience" report by Regalix, some 80 percent say they can gauge which customers are their most valuable, while 64 percent claim to understand their purchase behaviors. The survey also shows how marketers connect with their customers, with 100 percent saying they interact via their websites. Other channel connections include email (88 percent), social media (80 percent), social communities (48 percent), and mobile web and apps (32 percent).

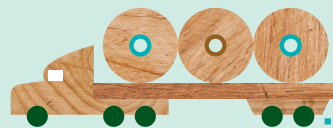




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POSTING UP

Who's posting what and why

Ever wonder what drives consumers to post what they do online and why? According to the "Social Science Aspects" study by Fractl, one in five consumers say reflecting their identity – who they are – is the most important reason. You might also be interested to know that women expect more engagement from their friends and followers – but men share more frequently.

Following is why people share what they do:





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THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

**Uncommon customer insights
that deliver extreme
competitive advantage**

By Anne Graham



Is your customer service department always busy? Do you find yourself saying, “We should have thought of that,” when your competitors launch something new? Have you ever lost a piece of business that you counted on? Do you struggle to grow revenues each year? What could you achieve with a clean slate on these issues? This is your year to make it happen.

Conventional, outdated practices aren't the answer

- Conventional customer satisfaction surveys lack in-depth insights. Worse still, great customer satisfaction scores don't predict loyalty, repurchase or success.
- Conventional market research has shortcomings – how often are you willing to take your valuable time to sit in a focus group or take a researcher's phone call?
- It's unrealistic to expect to get the deep insights from your sales team. They're responsible for selling the products or services you have today.

Drive high-touch impact in a high-tech world

The inescapable fact is that leaders are responsible for figuring out what to sell tomorrow – not by guessing, but by having the insights required to innovate and add value.

The key to extreme competitive advantage is to sit down face-to-face with your key customers, but not via a typical meaningless meet-and-greet or an awkward ride-along. None of us were ever taught the art of what I call a “Value Creation Conversation (VCC).” A VCC is an executive-level connection that builds trust, credibility and understanding of where your customers' heads are, and what their hopes and dreams are for their business. A VCC surfaces seven uncommon insights that deliver an extreme competitive advantage.



Your first reaction is probably resistance. You're already busy running your business. In 2000, *Fortune* magazine printed a highly skeptical cover article asking if IBM could be great again, featuring brand-new CEO Sam Palmisano.

For the next dozen years, Palmisano met with a customer every single day (you don't have to be that extreme) – and he wasn't selling computers. He was listening to the real challenges being faced by some of his largest customers. He saw the coming commoditization of PCs. He saw the need for applied data that could solve some of the world's biggest issues. What he learned convinced him to, in the words of Wayne Gretzky, "skate to where the puck is going."

He sold IBM's profitable \$20 billion/year PC business to Lenovo, bought the consulting arm of

PriceWaterHouseCoopers, and led IBM out of being commoditized and into big data, with the now-familiar "Let's Build a Smarter Planet" branding. IBM thrives, while its competitors have seen a downward slide. That's the power of Value Creation Conversations.

Sell more at higher prices and lower costs

Simply have a Value Creation Conversation over breakfast or lunch with a key client once per week to obtain all the knowledge you need to secure the future of your business. That's a fraction of the 90 minutes or more you're probably spending to send an email every day. I've never seen a VCC fail to produce immediate new business, identify unnecessary costs and surface growth opportunities for the future. Here are the uncommon insights you'll discover in a well-structured Value Creation Conversation:

1. Determine loyalty

Loyalty, not satisfaction, is the proven driver of success. Leading companies have 16 loyal customers for every customer who is not; most companies are little better than 1:1. When was the last time you took the pulse of customer loyalty? A manufacturer that uncovered high loyalty scores during its Value Creation Conversations retained its clients even when operations issues caused lead times to triple.

2. Eliminate dissatisfiers

What makes your customers roll their eyes when they do business with you? You're vulnerable to competitive inroads if the grass looks greener on the other side. A sporting goods manufacturer with declining revenues thought it had a sales problem and was spending a lot of money to fix it. In just half a dozen VCCs, a clear theme emerged: "We love your product, but you're too difficult to do business with." Operations, not sales, was the issue. When it fixed the operations

Being first to market with the gold-standard experience creates a barrier to competition that's almost impossible to breach.



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issues, it stripped out more than \$1 million of unnecessary costs, revenues went up by 50 percent, and it returned to profitability for the first time in five years.

3. Leverage drivers

Drivers are the small, subtle reasons customers do business with you. If you don't understand them, you're likely to make some well-intentioned, yet disastrous decisions. A manufacturing COO learned that the hard way when he outsourced delivery to save costs. The resulting mayhem of damage, finger pointing, returns, re-work and claims-handling skyrocketed costs to the business and its customers.

4. Understand experiential factors

Your customers need to have an experience. Your only choice is whether it's good, bad or bland. Ask your customers who the gold standard is in your industry for the overall experience. If it's not you, you have a choice of doing the work to improve the experience you offer or see your market share erode. Being first to market with the gold-standard experience creates a barrier to competition that's almost impossible to breach.

5. Establish willingness to pay

Do you bend over backwards for your customers? Understanding how to price for value is critical, because just a 1 percent increase in price can drive anywhere between 16 percent to 38 percent

improvement on your bottom line. In one extreme example, a recycling firm that was losing its shirt after giving a big blue-chip client sweetheart pricing for a service to empty the blue-boxes in its high security facility was able to re-negotiate a price 12 times higher.

6. Uncover share of wallet

Even loyal customers often spread their purchases among several suppliers to minimize risk. Are you getting the lion's share? Or just the leftovers? The CEO of a safety-gear company who found out the hard way during her VCCs that she was getting just the leftovers was able to develop strategies to turn that situation around.

7. Discover innovation and growth opportunities

Henry Ford's customers would have asked for a faster horse that ate less, not a Model T. When you understand their greatest challenges and the kind of competitive advantage your company can develop going forward as Sam Palmisano did, you'll have a roadmap for innovation that sells like hotcakes, makes your competition irrelevant and delivers profitable growth.

You don't have to get out from behind your desk to listen and learn how to create extreme competitive advantage. You could always spend another 90 minutes doing email. Only one of those two activities moves the needle in your business. Only one of them is where all the fun is. ■

Bestselling author, speaker and accelerator Anne C. Graham loves to mentor business leaders in the art of using Value Creation Conversations to create competitive advantage. Her latest book, "Profit in Plain Sight," includes 15 free downloadable resources that show leaders exactly how they can use those insights to drive profitable growth and never again have to say, "We don't have the budget for that."

Forbes

50 INFLUENTIAL CMOS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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|----|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
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Awards & Recognition

Ripon Printers has been named the “Best of the Best” in the “Best Workplace in the Americas” program for its outstanding human resources practices. The Ripon, Wis.-based printer received an award in the “Large Companies/Multi-plants (251-plus employees)” category. Started as a way to specifically recognize printing industry leaders throughout the United States and Canada, the “Best Workplace in the Americas” program is one of the most stringent HR awards programs available in any industry because it analyzes key HR metrics and program documents that firms must submit with their entries.

Specialty Printing, East Windsor, Conn., was cited as the newest facility to achieve Sustainable Green Printing Partnership (SGP) certification. Specialty Printing is the 60th facility SGP has certified and the 11th Flexographic Technical Association (FTA) member. The flexographic printing company’s labels, packaging, tags and electronic signs can be found in retail stores, grocery stores, hospitals and medical facilities, restaurants, distribution centers, post offices and warehouses nationwide.

Personnel Moves



Joe O'Connor

Mohawk has made a number of changes to its sales organization, including Cassidy Davis, district sales manager in West region (based in Denver); Matthew Donovan, national accounts manager, West region (Los Angeles); Loretta Kallay, digital specialist, West region (Anaheim, Calif.); Steven

McClinton, district sales manager, Canada (Scarborough, Ontario); and Kimberly Starr, district sales manager, Texas (Frisco, Texas).

In addition, Mohawk has created a new business development team to work with a variety of customer segments to generate print specification, develop long-term programs and to identify new business opportunities. The new team includes Beth Reardon, national accounts manager (Midwest); Christine Schaaf, national accounts manager (Midwest); Todd Kniceley, national accounts manager (Southeast); Molly Rosenthal, national accounts manager (Northeast); Matt Donovan, national accounts manager (West); Jennifer Hurnold, business development coordinator; Joe O'Connor, senior VP, international sales; and Melissa Stevens, VP, sales.



Ken Garner

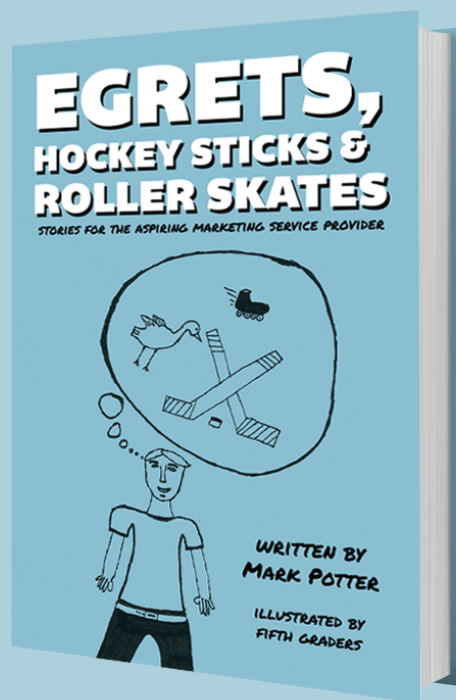
J. Kenneth Garner has been named CEO of AMSP/NAPL/NAQP, succeeding Joseph P. Truncale, Ph.D., CAE, who left to join the Public Relations Society of America as CEO. AMSP/NAPL/NAQP was formed in 2014 following the merger of the Association of Marketing Service Providers, National Association for Printing Leadership and National Association of Quick Printers. During a 33-year printing industry career, Garner most recently served as CEO of AMSP, leading the then Mailing and Fulfillment Service Association (MFSA) through a comprehensive re-branding initiative. He also served as president of United Litho and was a member of the executive committee of the Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service, among other posts.

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Mergers & Acquisitions

Ricoh Company has acquired PTI Marketing Technologies, a premiere SaaS (software-as-a-service) marketing asset management and marketing solutions provider. Together, Ricoh and PTI will continue to develop new marketing collateral management tools that help enterprises and commercial printers improve control of their marketing assets and workflow. The acquisition follows Ricoh's investment in PTI in August 2012 and its 2013 strategic investment in Avanti Computer Systems Limited, which complements Ricoh's portfolio by enabling customers to streamline operations to help improve their bottom line with Avanti's award-winning print MIS (management information system). Under the leadership of PTI president and CEO Coleman Kane, PTI will fully leverage Ricoh to bring new technologies, software and services to market. PTI will continue to operate under its current name, management team and structure, at its Solana Beach, Calif., headquarters and Chicago office.

Heidelberg has acquired Belgian printing chemicals supplier BluePrint, a move that increases its know-how for developing and producing consumables in a key market segment. BluePrint offers a comprehensive range of dampening and washup solutions for sheetfed offset presses and uses an innovative approach to environmentally friendly products. Sales of BluePrint products outside of Heidelberg's customer base will be continued and expanded. Heidelberg intends to systematically increase sales of consumables in the future.

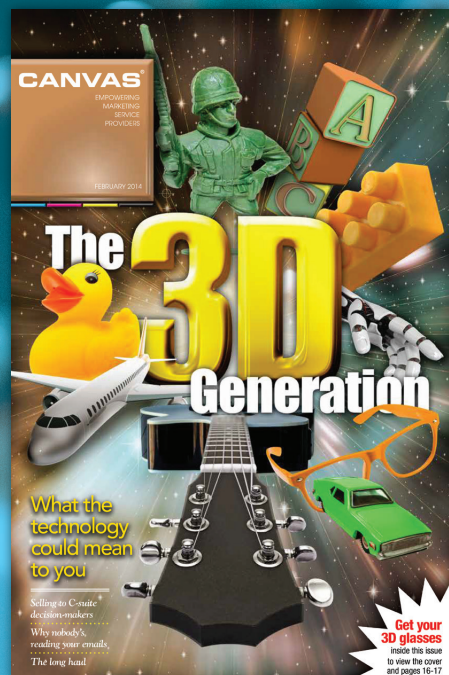
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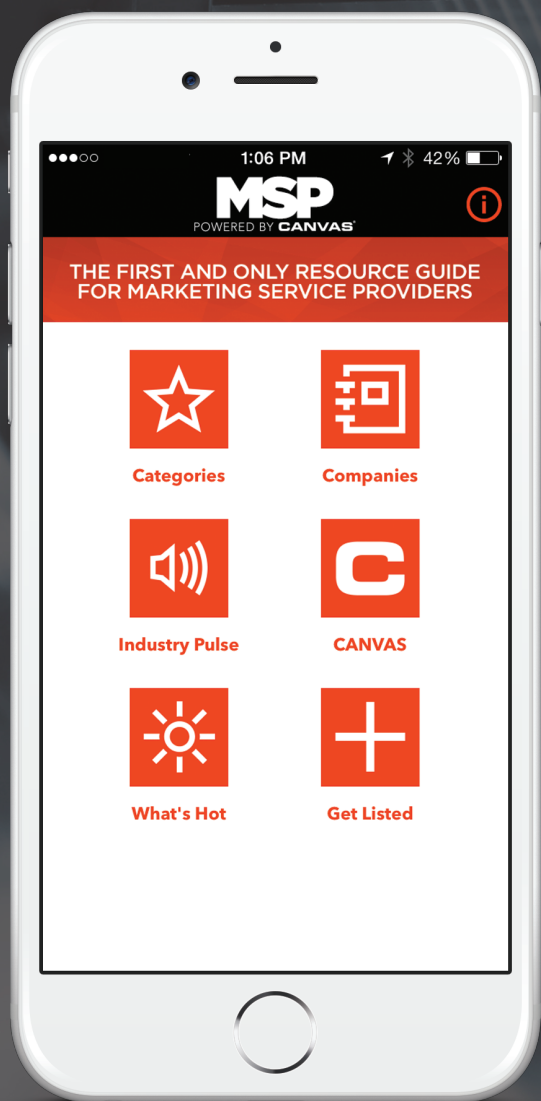
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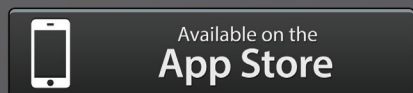
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BOB CIRCOSTA

After more than 30 years in the sales game, there isn't much that Bob Circosta hasn't seen or done. Soaring to notoriety as TV's first home shopping host, he played a vital role in creating the multi-billion dollar television home shopping industry. To date, Circosta has logged more than 25,000 hours of live selling on television, made more than 75,000 product presentations, and has sold some \$1 billion in merchandise. Today, as the owner of Bob Circosta Communications, his breakthrough strategies have been featured on NBC's "Dateline" and "The Today Show," ABC's "Good Morning America" and "20/20," and in the USA Today and The Wall Street Journal. Here he shares what it takes to sell anything.

> TV's original
home shopping host
Bob Circosta



What does it take to get a response to your sales pitch?

Simply put, it's being able to effectively communicate your message. If you can't get others to want what you have or create the need for what you have – nothing will happen. Red Motley once said, "Nothing happens until somebody sells something."

Define what successful communication looks like.

The key is to always think that what you have can truly help the other person. Your marketing message can't be a trick or a gimmick. Your message has to be based on honesty, sincerity and integrity. Ever pitch your product or service and get no response? Oftentimes, the problem is that you told them everything you knew, instead of telling them what they wanted and needed to know. Remember: Facts provide the information, but the emotion provides the interpretation.

Give us some insights on presentations that works.

You need a Grabber – a mutual point of agreement to help establish a relationship that stems from a "helping" perspective. It helps to have a problem/solution factor. Today, every product solves a problem, so it's crucial to clearly define and communicate the problem. It's all about the P O D – "point of difference." Why is your product different from all the rest? Be prepared to communicate its benefits, not just the features. Stop looking at what you have for what it is and think about what it can do for others. And know your CTA – call to action. You have to ask the other person to take action on what you're offering. If you don't, they won't. ■

Check out Bob's new book!

Your marketing message can't be a trick or a gimmick. Your message has to be based on honesty, sincerity and integrity.



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