



The Frequency Factor

Sometimes it's not what you say, or even how you say it that matters, but how often. Clients *do* like to be dazzled by your latest special offer or big announcement, but they need more. They need to feel like they've built up a valued working relationship with you. So you have to keep the lines of communication open at all times. You have to stay in touch, even when you're not directly looking for a sale or a response. After all, you don't want to look like you're touting for business in every single communication.

Think of your client relationships like your relationships with friends. They like hearing about all your life's big events, but they probably don't appreciate having to wait to hear from you until you've got exciting news. Sometimes they just want to 'chew the fat' on all the everyday things.

Drip feed

Let's think about a new drip feed approach to marketing communication. Right now, customers are looking for stability. And nothing says stability like a regular stream of communications. (Just as nothing suggests a lack of stability like a constant stream of special offers and big price blitz bonanzas!)

If you're looking for practical benefits, here are some biggies:

1 You're still standing

You need to be loud and clear about your firm footing in a post-recessionary climate. So ramping up your communication strategy to include some additional emails or blogs can reinforce the message: you're still the reliable force you always were.

2 The power of repetition

Perhaps the most obvious benefit (irrespective of the state of the economy) is: keeping your business front of mind with buyers. The more your clients hear from you, the more likely they'll be to think of you the next time they need a product or service you can provide.

3 Increase the averages

There's an even more basic law at work here that says the more often you write, the more often you'll get a response. When you start issuing more regular communication, you increase your chances of response considerably. The more often customers hear from you, the more likely they are to get in touch to ask a question or check something out.



Shake it up

You might need to consider adding a few new elements to your communication armoury. Mix it up a bit with a combination of emails, blogs and newsletters. But don't stop there. How about promotional text alerts, online surveys – competitions? The more you can do to engage the reader – the more effective your ongoing communication will be. All it takes is for one email or alert to tickle their interest and it'll make them more receptive to subsequent communications.

Your ultimate goal is twofold. One, to establish an easy relationship with clients based on the firm foundation of effective, ongoing communication. (Of course that needs to include staying in touch by telephone too.)

Second, to make your communications worth reading. As long as clients can see they're getting something interesting or worthwhile from you, it doesn't even matter if they don't get around to reading everything you send. That sense of intent to read is valuable; it means they'll dip into your communications when they can. (Of course, the value of sending more frequent communications is that it gives them lots more opportunities for dipping.)

Practical tips

It's not just variations in format and mode of delivery you need to think about – but variations in subject matter too. Keep things interesting by addressing a whole selection of topics – from product and service reviews, to advice sessions, sneak product previews, addressing readers' questions...

Remember who you're writing for. The majority of your communications should be written specifically for customers. Think about things from their point of view and make sure they get something interesting or something useful out of your communications.

Think up a strategy for the different mediums at your disposal, e.g. email, blog, text or Twitter. Assign people to each one and set a rough timetable so that communications do get sent. But allow room for flexibility – you won't always have the time. Allow for the fact that there won't always be something meaningful to say either.

Staying in touch is one of the most basic things we can do to keep our clients interested. The constant drip feed makes you seem like a prominent supplier who's always got something useful to say. So, keep on top of your company communication and you'll find that more of your clients want to keep in touch with you too.