

WHAT IS A SALES FUNNEL



AND WHY YOU NEED ONE

BY BOBBY CHRISTY

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The question isn't "if" you're going to use a sales funnel, it's "when". Businesses are overlooking the #1 way to grow their companies online right now... it's using a NEW FUNNEL TYPE that Russell Brunson, the Founder and CEO of ClickFunnels, just called, "the greatest 'funnel' opportunity that everyone missed (including myself)".

LET'S SET THE STAGE...

The small businesses in your local area... If you don't know it already... are hurting. In fact, they're bleeding sales...and customers, to the tune of hundreds of thousands per business. And the reason for that is obvious...

The OLD marketing methods...the ones that they've come to rely on... stuff like word of mouth... Yellow Pages and newspaper ads... simply aren't working anymore.

And here's the craziest part. They KNOW these forms of advertising aren't working! But they keep on spending their money there because they just don't have any other good options...

They do this on average to the tune of \$10,000 per month... Yes, I said \$10,000 dollars per month! This is a marketing budget that's ALREADY allocated and being spent on OBSOLETE forms of advertising...

This is going on in YOUR hometown... and it's going on right now...

And it represents MILLIONS of marketing dollars... being tossed to the wind
And these businesses simply can't sustain it much longer...

So, while everyone else is busy trying to squeeze more out of what isn't working, they're overlooking the #1 way to grow their companies online right now...

Marketing doesn't have to be complicated or confusing. It's simple at its core.

I learned about the basics of marketing in college more than 40 years ago. They are:

1. Audience
2. Offer
3. Copy

First, you need an audience. They have an itch that needs scratching. A problem that needs to be solved.

Then, you offer them a solution to the problem. This is the most important step in the marketing equation. You do this in the simplest way possible using words that they can understand. This is by no means sexy. A lot of marketing geniuses today try to baffle you with complicated strategies - based on lots of steps. Each step has a catchy name, must be done on a specific day, and takes dozens of hours to build.

The bottom line is that people buy for one of 2 reasons. They are either moving away from pain or they're moving toward pleasure. Pain is the stronger of these two motivations.

If you offer the same product at the same price as your competition, you're going to lose. Your offer is why a buyer chooses you.

Finally, we have the copy. Traffic methods come and go, but the words determine your success.

WHY YOU HAVE TO HAVE A SALES FUNNEL TODAY

The WHY is simple. If you don't have a sales funnel today, you won't have a business a year from now. It's no longer a

question of “if” you’ll have a funnel, but “when”. It’s that important.

OK, SO WHAT IS A SALES FUNNEL?

A sales funnel is the journey or path a prospect makes on their way to becoming a client, customer, or patient. The number of steps or layers that a prospect goes through varies from company to company, but the essence of all funnels is the same – get the prospect from Point A to Point B.

We’ve all lost sales and losing a sale is painful. It happens, which is why having a funnel is important.

WHY IS A SALES FUNNEL IMPORTANT?

A sales funnel is your tool to guide your prospect on the path to solving their problem. It’s designed to answer the questions that the prospect has and allows them to move along at their speed.

A sales funnel isn’t about us, but rather it’s all about the customer. Funnels weed out those who aren’t interested and not qualified, leaving behind those who are interested in our products, goods, or services.

Most funnels are more like sieves patched-together with spreadsheets, post-it notes, ragged calendars loaded with missed appointments and forgotten follow-ups.

A properly constructed funnel makes progression seamless.

WHAT ARE THE STAGES OF A SALES FUNNEL?

Funnels have a number of stages. We’ll use the 4 step “AIDA” method to walk you through this:

Awareness – Interest – Decision – Action

Stage 1: Awareness

This is where the conversation with the prospect begins. It's where we start to build trust. Remember, people won't do business with us unless they know, like, and trust us.

Awareness is where prospects learn about you for the first time. Maybe they clicked on one of your ads, read your blog, found your website via a search engine, or heard someone talking about your product or service.

Remember that businesses exist to solve problems. Let the courtship begin.

Stage 2: Interest

We draw them in with a device called a "lead magnet". A lead magnet is nothing more than something of interest to capture leads via an opt-in.

The goal of the opt-in is to simply gather an email address.

This is where the conversation begins. It's a lot like dating. The goal in this stage is to begin to get to know one another. You build trust through your brand. Every touch moves the prospect closer to making a buying decision.

Remember, your prospect has a problem that they are looking to solve. Buying decisions are made emotionally and justified rationally.

Your level of success is directly proportional to how well you communicate your ability to solve their problem.

Stage 3: Decision

We're almost home. I said almost! Research shows that more than 50% of prospects who want information aren't on the right product. This is why you don't want to get into a tug of war regarding price. Price is a concern only in the absence of value.

Stage 4: Action

It's time to bring everything together. First and foremost, have you solved your prospect's problem? If you have, you have a new customer. If not, there's more work to do.

CLOSING THE GAPS

The sales process by its very nature is far from perfect. The best funnel in the world isn't going to perfectly work every time. Even good prospects can slip through a gap along the way.

The best way to minimize that loss is to have a clear idea of the steps in your sales process—and help in making those steps happen.

So, where are you losing potential customers?

Are there any bottlenecks in your sales process?

Is there any place in particular where prospects are getting lost in the shuffle?

What's working? Is there anything specific that results in a sale?

In the next article, we'll look at how funnel automation closes these gaps.

Until then,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bobby'.

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