



Get the **BUYER INSIDE:**

Ways to Inspire Wonder Within
Your Customers & Drive Sales
Within Your Store

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Introduction by Tiffany Masterson

You've put your heart and soul into your store.

It's your baby. You've gone through the process of designing an attractive layout, an eye-catching storefront, stocking the best inventory, and creating systems and checklists to keep your store and its employees functional and efficient. You've done everything you can to make your store the most cutting edge around with all the latest, greatest and hottest items. But there's still more you can do...



In our numerous discussions with Turning Minds around our roll out of the Wonderbar national retail distribution program, Justin McCullough and his team recognized that if the Wonderbar products were shipped in containers that could double as product displays, it would not only help to promote and sell the individual bars, but it might make it easier for customers and retailers to interact with the product. That slight shift in perspective and understanding of the customer experience and the owner's objective is a great example of the kind of thinking contained in this e-book.

Get the Buyer Inside is a collection of fresh thoughts about identifying customers, attracting customers and maintaining relationships with them. Written with a little bit of theory and a whole lot of practical application, it can help you achieve the long-term customer loyalty you are striving for.

Want a better way to handle "I'm just looking?" It's right there on page 3. How often should you send an e-mail to your "list?" Look on page 16. Is anyone really generating sales from Facebook? I know WonderbarUSA is, and on page 21, Justin lays it all out for you so you can too. Do you know the worst location in your store to place a sign? Page 6. Should you display lesser known products the same way as well known national brands? Take a look at page 11.

Get the Buyer Inside has so much business sense packed into these few pages you'll never take it all in the first time around. Read this book. Reflect on it. Apply a few of the ideas, then read it again and refer to it often. If you're in retail, this book can help to increase your sales and at the end of the day, you'll be glad to have had someone simplify a process that, in my opinion, can be very overwhelming; a process that should be enjoyable.

Warmest regards,

Tiffany Masterson

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When you and I, as owners, think of shopping, we envision customers coming through the door with money, and giving it to us.

We also tend to believe we have such a variety of price points that when a customer comes in we'll sell him something. We've even studied sales techniques to improve the chances of that happening.

What if every time there were only three or four customers in the store your staff could go into guide mode?

But, customers have a different perspective. For them, shopping isn't a series of events leading up to a transaction. To shoppers, the act of shopping is an experience.

Let's look together at some of the things we can do to improve that experience for our shoppers, shall we?

Greeters vs. Guides

There's a series of dance steps shoppers and sales clerks go through, and everyone knows the next move. The shopper is approached by the clerk, who says, *"Can I help you?"* And, unless the shopper has an overwhelming desire for a particular item, she'll respond with, *"No thanks, I'm just looking."*

The problem is one that I call Greeter versus Guide. Our shopper has been approached by a greeter.

The greeter believes it's her job to say something pleasant and generally welcoming, usually *"Can I help you."* And the shopper, who only wants to consider her purchases without being pressured into a decision, replies with the phrase proven to cause the greeter to back off. *"I'm just looking."*

But suppose the clerk doesn't see herself as a greeter, but rather a guide. Her job is to help the customer navigate the store to get what she wants. The guide, when coming face to face with the shopper says, *"Have you been here before?"* The shopper is presented with a simple, non-threatening, *"yes"* or *"no"* question.

If she says, *"No, I've never been here before,"* the guide responds with *"We're glad you've come in today. Let me help you understand what we have and where it's arranged. Maybe you're*



Plus, your guide has now given the shopper a greater opportunity to succeed in finding the items she came in looking to buy today. She has a better shopping experience.

not looking for yourself, or someone else. I can help you to find it. What did you have in mind when you came to the store today?"

If she says, "Yes, I've shopped here before," the guide can ask, "Is this your second visit, or third, or are you one of our regulars?"

Either answer starts a conversation. Plus, your guide has now given the shopper a greater opportunity to succeed in finding the items she came in looking to buy today. She has a better shopping experience. You sell in greater volume.

Many times, when I suggest to an owner that he replace his greeters with guides, he tells me, "My staff is too busy to spend that much time with only one shopper." During peak periods he's probably right. But suppose we implement the guide mentality whenever it gets slow? What if your staff could guide a shopper fifty percent of the time? What if every time there were only three or four customers in the store your staff could go into guide mode?

Imagine the impact on those three or four customers if those simple questions drew out of them the exact reasons they stepped inside the store. Wouldn't they appreciate helping them to go immediately into a buying process rather than into a hit-or-miss exploratory process, maybe getting lucky, or maybe leaving frustrated?

So what we really want to do is look at staffing our store with guides, not greeters.

It doesn't matter whether your store is free standing, inside a mall, or in a strip mall, anytime a shopper walks in through your door, she's stepping into a space that's unknown to her.

She'll walk through the door and take a few additional steps, so as not to plug up the doorway. But just a few feet in she will stop to acclimatize herself to your space, your lights, your signage, your layout.

That sign you made to welcome folks to the store? If you hung it in the decompression zone, she didn't see it.

Decompression Zone

The area between the door opening and the spot where your shopper stops to orient herself is known as the decompression zone, usually the first ten to fifteen feet inside your store. The typical use of this space may be some of the poorest planning of any area in your store.

A lot of stores place things of value just inside the doors to be the first thing people see—the one dollar off things, the special purchases. But, placing them in the decompression zone is counter productive.

That sign you made to welcome folks to the store? If you hung it in the decompression zone she didn't see it. She walked a few steps inside and it's now behind her.

She's also not likely to immediately turn around and head back toward the door hoping to find shopping carts. Once she gets oriented she'll head into the store without a cart.

I often talk about Target as an example of this space used well. It's worth a trip to Target to see first hand their use of the front of store. Target understands that the best stuff doesn't happen right at the front of the store. When you walk through the double doors into Target, you'll find customer service, the bridal registry, and a huge collection of shopping carts extending several yards into the store. People looking for the bridal registry or the customer service desk have those places as their destination. Other people will run in, grab a basket, and move farther into the store. So, whether you are a spa, boutique or other form of retail store, you don't have to be Target to apply this understanding of the decompression zone to your store.

Let her get ten to twenty feet inside the door, and then direct her. Give her somewhere to go.



The buying opportunity starts when your shopper gets past that decompression zone. Don't put any of your precious stuff in it. Don't put your best signage immediately inside the doors.

Instead, make room for your customer to walk into the store and collect her bearings.

This is the ideal place for one of your guides to ask, *"Is this your first visit to our store?"* Because after motoring through the decompression zone, the next thing a shopper does is to ask herself, *"How can I find what I'm looking for?"*

Let her get ten to twenty feet inside the door, and then direct her. Give her somewhere to go. Tell her what to look for. She wants signals, point her toward the things she wants. Help her to find those things. That's why she came in.

Some of the easiest signals, especially when there's no guide present, are your interior signs.

The harder part is predicting the help that shopper needs, and acting on that insight.

Signage

Place yourself inside the store just at the edge of the decompression zone. Survey left to right and right to left. What do you have to work with? Ceiling hangers? Posts? Walls on which to paint full murals?

As close as you can get to the shopper's frame of mind, ask, *"If I came in for __(item)__, how would I find it?"* After all, the hardest part of the shopping experience is getting started. Then, using your new insight, start creating directional cues for your shopper. Create interest by using low, medium, and high space in your sight lines.

Salesperson Awareness

It's very easy to walk up to a shopper who's milling around a display and ask, *"Do you need help with any thing?"* The harder part is predicting the help that shopper needs, and acting on that insight.

Instead of walking up to a shopper who has items in each hand and asking, *"May I help you,"* why not *"Here's a basket. Would you like it?"* If she says, *"No, thank you,"* take the basket back. If she says, *"Yes, thank you,"* you've helped her to have a positive shopping experience. Either way, you didn't frustrate her by making her stop shopping to search for a basket.

Suppose you see a shopper engaging the merchandise. Perhaps she's touching the fabric of a clothing item. Why not ask her if she's looking for something in that fabric? Why not go a little farther and ask, *"Is this something your buying for your self, or buying for someone else?"* Start a conversation. Ask, *"Are you considering price, or timeliness, or is it about an event?"*

Often times our shopper is solving a problem. She has an event coming up, or is buying something to make her feel better because she's had a bad day. If you can tune in to her motivation, customer service can become a treasured moment. But even if your shopper is on a functional mission to get a specific item and leave, anticipating her needs and helping her to get them is going to blow her away.

You don't have to offer something tangible. Offer your new customer a new experience.



We live in a time where so few retailers offer real customer service, this becomes a simple way to create repeat buyers.

‘WOW’ Factor

Your shopper has invested energy in your store, has navigated your signage, has found the items she's shopping for, and she's finally ready to make a purchase (or, for whatever reason has decided not to make a purchase).

What if you recognized that getting her into your store was the hardest part, and she made a lot of decisions along the way. She passed up a lot of distractions. Can you reward her for that?

How would she react at this point in her shopping experience with you if you effectively looked at her and said, *“I want to respect and value you. Here's something free. Here's something new and fresh.”*

Wouldn't this be a great time to literally invite her to enjoy a sample? To attend an event you have coming up? To invite her to another section of the store you're working on? To ask her

....surprise her and say, “Because you spent ten dollars or more, fifty dollars or more, or a hundred dollars or more today, I’m automatically going to give you Product A, Product B, or Product C?” Just because.

opinion about inventory you’re considering stocking? Would this lead her to feel good about your store and want to come back?

What if you were able to repeatedly delight each customer, and say, *“I’m doing this just because I care about you as a customer?”*

It could be as simple as a coffee mug or a t-shirt or something unbelievable like a half-off shopping experience. You don’t have to offer something tangible. Offer your new customer a new experience.

Perhaps that experience is as basic as, *“I think you’re going to look great in this outfit for your event. Would you mind if one of us calls you in a few days to see how it went over?”* A retailer who cares enough to follow through after the sale? That would be an unusual experience, wouldn’t it?

Obviously you know what your store is best at, and what kinds of problems your customer is trying to solve.

What if you offered a ‘members only’ hotline. As a clothing retailer, for instance, you could invite your new customer to call in the event of a fashion crisis. *“If you can’t decide what goes with what, call us. We’ll help you, even if you’re considering products you didn’t buy from us. Here’s the number for our crisis line. When that phone rings, we answer it.”*

What if the experience was *“Every three to six weeks we invite customers just like you to come in and try on new clothes so we can take pictures and see how they fit. There’s no obligation to buy but we want to see what it looks like on real people. You seem like our kind of person, would you be interested in coming in and experiencing that with us?”*

What if, instead of the transactional mindset, you were to surprise her and say, *“Because you spent ten dollars or more, fifty dollars or more, or a hundred dollars or more today, I’m automatically going to give you Product A, Product B, or Product C?”* Just because.

If you think about it, there are dozens of ways to add the WOW Factor. Then, you do it. You mark it on your calendar and make it happen. Your customers will notice and you’ll see the benefits in your monthly sales.

In this section I hope you'll give some thought to how your choices in merchandise, and the way you display those choices, have a major influence on the way your store performs.

Your choices will affect the customers you have, and the customers you believe you want to have. Some of your decisions are price driven. Some are brand driven. Some are experiential.



Merchandise Choices

Perhaps your store carries a homogenized product like Levi's, which are nearly universally available, but nobody drives across town to buy Levi's only from you. Nobody talks about your inventory, since it's so much like everyone else's.

To be remarked about, your inventory must be remarkable. Everyday items are not remarkable. But unique, premium, discoverable products can and do generate new conversations, especially if there's a story to be told about the product.

A unique product like the Wonderbar, for example, is ideal for this purpose. It can create street talk, and can actually help create new demand. Other than your store, where will customers buy this product? And once they're in your store in a purchasing state of mind, can you create up sells, cross sells, or recommend entire new purchase categories to your new customers?

Maybe you've never offered your customers premium products that have not been commercially mass marketed. Where's the best place in the store to place those items? How do you display them?

Display

Do you place the new items in high traffic areas, so that most of your customers will be exposed to the new product display? I wouldn't. The high traffic flow discourages shoppers from stopping to read, or absorb, or consider, or touch the product.



When placed inconspicuously in the aisle, people either walk directly to the brand they seek, or they don't even notice it as they breeze past.

But, through visible signage, can you place a display near your high traffic area, but a few feet away? Can you provoke enough curiosity to draw a shopper to the display and give her an opportunity to engage with the product, learn about the product, and create customer focused, customer oriented conversation about the product?

Closer to the register might be an ideal location. Instead of offering impulse items, (or in addition to those offerings), wouldn't standing in line provide an excellent opportunity for shoppers to hover by the display and consider the product?

If this area isn't suitable, don't "Wal-Mart" the product and shelve it in exactly the same fashion as all of your other merchandise. When placed inconspicuously in the aisle, people either walk directly to the brand they seek, or they don't even notice it as they breeze past.

In the smaller boutique environment I suggest the isle is appropriate for your well-known brands, but separate your lesser known products into more individual displays.

Suppose in one section of your store you sell tea. You offer tea leaves, tea bags, tea brewing equipment. You offer several national brands, a few not-so-well-known specialty brands, and even one gourmet brand that's manufactured in little silk tea bags.

The superstore approach is to cram everything together into a two foot by four foot display, first the leading brand, then the alternative brand, followed by the specialty brands, and finally the gourmet brand, and invite your shoppers to pick one.

But you customer may not be looking for a brand, but rather for a purpose, or an experience. Maybe she's looking for peppermint tea, or herbal tea, or green tea. Turn those shopping decisions into experiences by putting all the green teas in a section highlighted by the individual characteristics of each choice.

And the new gourmet brand which costs four times as much, but comes in little silk tea bags? Tea enthusiasts will seek it out, but for everyone else consider a sign which says, *"Here's why this tea costs four times as much, but is worth ten times the retail price."*



This makes the retailer look smart, intelligent and successful by being able to explain how it works and where its value lies.

Product Placement

Does your premium product provide communications pieces? Use them. If not, create your own. Even a simple hand-written shelf talker that says, *“Learn in 60 seconds why this new gourmet tea is four times the cost and ten times the value.”*

Sometimes manufacturers leave you on your own to work out the display. They’re content for you to break out the product and stack it on the shelf. When shoppers ask about the product, the retailer may walk up and say, *“Well, here’s what I’ve heard about it,”* before he reads the label and starts ad libbing.

I mentioned the Wonderbar, as an ideal premium product. When they ship product they use a package which can be set up as its own display, to increase brand awareness and brand presence. Their packaging ships with marketing pieces and education pieces that tell the customer how to use the product, and the story of the Wonderbar.

And when customers see the slogan on the packaging, *“Unleash the magic on your skin,”* it becomes a perfect conversation point for a sales rep or store employee. What a great opportunity for the customer to learn about the product and for the retailer to have an interaction with a shopper about a product which is interesting and intriguing.

This makes the retailer look smart, intelligent and successful by being able to explain how it works and where its value lies. More importantly, it opens up a dialogue that allows the store to serve the customers needs and increase sales opportunities.

Everybody wants the up sell.

“Do you have our membership card?” “Care to add the hot wax treatment for only a few dollars more?” Or the classic, “Would you like fries with that?”



What if, instead of a last-ditch effort to add ten dollars to the sale price, the up sell was the extension of a conversation? What if you had a personal connection to your customer and the up sell was individualized to that customer because you knew it was right for her?

Here's what we do: we employ our people to become customer advocates, to care about the customer's experience instead of the sale. Good salespeople do this instinctively. We teach the average salespeople by eliminating the lazy question, “*May I help you?*” That question no longer exists. We replace it with, “*Have you been here before?*”

Or, if the interaction takes place in the middle of the customer's shopping experience, and it's past the opportunity to ask if she's been here before, use awareness of her actions, and say “*I find when customers are in this section, they're not looking for beauty aids, but rather some kind of skin care. Is there a particular skin care challenge you're trying to overcome?*” You don't say, “*May I help you find something in this section?*” Instead you say, “*Ah. You're in the skin care section. You must be trying to solve a problem.*”

So, it's an awareness of shopper actions. When she's in the beauty care section, try “*I find when customers are looking at lip gloss in our store, they're usually not looking for what they can find at Walgreens.*” People don't wish to appear rude, so they respond. If she should say, “*No, I'm actually just looking for ...*,” and then name a product, you're off to the races.

And if she declines your offer of help, try responding with “*Oh, perfect. So, have you been here before?*” If she says she hasn't, offer “*Our skin care section is organized a little bit differently than you might expect. Let me show you what's happening in this section.*”

Obviously, that leads to, “*Is there a particular challenge you're trying to overcome? Or are you looking for a specific price point? Are you looking for a certain brand?*”

And then the next question is, “*Why?*” If you're looking for a price point, “*Why?*” If you're looking for a brand, “*Why?*” If you're looking for a certain type, “*Why?*”

The appropriate up sell is the gift she thought she'd have to buy somewhere else, because she didn't know you carried it.

Then, once you understand her challenges, in the service of the customer, say *"May I offer some suggestions? Here's what I'd look at if I were you, based on what I know about products in the store."*

A little probing as to the customer's motivations can help you find she's looking to buy cologne because of an upcoming event. The appropriate up sell is the gift she thought she'd have to buy somewhere else, because she didn't know you carried it.

So, here's what we do: we employ every one of our people to become customer advocates. And that first step is to never again ask a shopper if she needs help, but rather if she's been in our store before, and then take the conversation from there, acting as a guide and a customer advocate.



If we create a customer based on a transaction alone then all we've done is given that customer one single idea...

Regular Contact

Regardless of what we sell, our businesses exist for only two reasons: to attract customers, and to keep customers. Attracting that customer the first time is the hardest thing. The cost is high. The only way to justify that cost is to get those customers to do more business with us.

If we create a customer based on a transaction alone then all we've done is given that customer one single idea: *"If I have a general need that can be met by this general store, that is generally convenient to me, I will generally return."*

Well, that's the greatest common denominator and you're up against everybody else. That is a terrible place from which to get customers to return and do additional business with you.

A much better idea is to develop regular conversations with these customers beyond the one time in the store. When they think of us again, we increase the likelihood they will recall a general need, and find us generally convenient.

Creating Lists

Direct marketers frequently offer "Build your list" as their best advice. And, to an extent, they're right. Capturing customer contact information is the first step to regular contact and conversations.

The first and most obvious is to invite them to sign up for an e-mail list.

Another is to capture their street address information through a store credit application or a rewards program / membership program that your store offers.

A more recent tactic is to invite your customer to use the cellular telephone she already carried in with her to use SMS texting for an immediate discount. Once done, you've added her to your mobile list.

Some stores might set up a terminal or a computer in the store, to 'like' them on Facebook. Others do the time tested "Drop your business card in the fishbowl" kind of thing.

Use any of these. Use them all. At the end of the day what we really want is have more chances to talk to your new customer after her first transaction.



If you hear customers saying “Your store hours are hard for me,” start a store hours list.

E-Mail

We know, ultimately, we want to sell more product. We want to get more opportunity to up sell our new customers, but unfortunately those customers are thinking *“I don’t want to hear about you guys. I don’t want to hear about your \$5 off coupon.”* They consider much of our communication to be noise.

And the only way to break through that noise is to create messages which are valuable to the customer. Start by creating individual lists for different customer interests. Maybe you need a birthday list. Perhaps your customers will appreciate a vacation list, or a summertime list.

Don’t fall into the normal marketing traps of producing a weekly or a monthly message just because the marketing gurus tell you to make contact every week. Don’t send anything on a schedule that’s not relevant and valuable to the receiver. Seasonal lists can be perfectly appropriate.

Another thing: if your customer traffic peaks between 3:00pm and 6:00pm, why not do your mailing between 8:00 and 10:00 in the morning, inviting customers when they’ve already shown themselves most likely to respond.

Alternately, create an opportunity at a special time for people who find your store hours awkward. If you hear customers saying *“Your store hours are hard for me,”* start a store hours list. *“Oh, really. Well, let me grab your name and information. I’m working on new store hours.”*

Remember that your objective is to send meaningful communication to the members of your various lists. If you sell products that people don’t normally purchase every week, it doesn’t make sense to ask them to buy every week.



You immediately have the opportunity to counter it and say, “I have something similar that maybe you didn’t see.”

Snail Mail

All too often your competitor’s new customers will receive a “buy one / get one” offer that shows up in their mailbox seven weeks after they visited the store. By then, do they even remember shopping there?

But, what if you found yourself talking to a first time customer, and said, literally, “I’ve enjoyed having you in the store. Would you mind giving me your mailing address so we could stay in touch? I’d like to send you some offers, but more importantly, I’d like to invite you back to our store again. Is that ok to you?”

Some will say “no,” but what if you immediately put those who say “yes,” into a follow-up system? Three days after her first visit to your store, she gets a personalized letter that reads, “Sally, thanks for coming to our store on Monday. I hope you had a pleasurable experience with us. I’d like to invite you back to the store.”

Now, either add an offer, or don’t, but either way, this letter needs to be signed by the store owner. How cool would that be? Do we think the customer would talk about that? Of course she would, because no stores in her experience have ever done this before.

Customers who have a pleasant experience want to talk about it. We need to give them more ways to talk about their pleasurable experience with us.

Here’s another idea. What if a shopper told you she wasn’t buying because “You don’t have what I’m looking for.” Instead of chasing her from the store, suppose we asked some basic questions of her. “What were you looking for? What is that product or what is that price you were looking for?”

Two things happen. You immediately have the opportunity to counter it and say, “I have something similar that maybe you didn’t see.” But the more important opportunity is “You’re not the only person who has said that. May I have your name, and your information? I’m going to make a note right now.”

You have a little sheet of paper that you just wrote in the price, or the brand, or both. You say to her, “When I carry this, I’m going to let you know. Is that OK with you?”



You have a little sheet of paper that you just wrote in the price, or the brand, or both. You say to her, “*When I carry this, I’m going to let you know. Is that OK with you?*”

A few days later she gets a note, which says, “*You asked for (whatever brand) or (whatever price), it’s regrettable that we didn’t have what you were looking for when you came to our store. We do hope there will be other things you may need that we’re currently carrying. I invite you back to our store for (x) off when you bring this back with you for the things we may have, and I have filed this away in our database.*”

When I get that item I’ll contact you to let you know that we’re now carrying this product. I thank you so much for your feedback in telling us. The only way we can help great customers like you is if you tell us what you’re looking for.”

Will she talk about you, then? Will she say positive things?

People talk about things which go against the grain, that violate their anticipations. If it's business as usual, it's not conversational.



Event-Based Experiential Marketing

While the products and services you sell matter, what matters most of all is that the customer feels that buying from you is better than buying from anyone else. One of the greatest opportunities right now is to create experiences which exceed expectations, without actually doing a whole lot of work. Luckily, the bar is set pretty low since these things are easy to do, but our competitors don't bother.

Bring in a fashion person. It doesn't matter whether she's known or not. Carve out a small spot in the back of your store with a little PA, and invite your customers for a guest luncheon with a 30 minute talk by your expert. Maybe ten of your customers will want to know what's going on in the industry, and you've created another talking point.

What if you turned the clutter and mess of your expansion into another event? Suppose your store clean up sale was available only to past customers who understand the vision of your company, and only after store hours. And when they came, what if you told them *"Obviously things are disorganized. We thank you for your patience. We've given some great discounts, but more importantly, we hope you'll all come back in 30 days when our expansion is complete."*

Treat your customers with respect. Use events to demonstrate that you care about them, and they can care about you. An additional benefit is that your customers will now have a face they can associate with your store.

Word-of-Mouth

People don't talk about normal. People don't talk about typical. In a lot of cases they don't even talk about an overly special product.

People talk about things which go against the grain, that violate their anticipations. If it's business as usual, it's not conversational. If it feels like daily grind, the only conversation that can come out of that is a bad one.



By the end of the month 300 of your customers would be talking about an outstanding experience.

Positive word-of-mouth happens when you exceed customer's expectations. Negative word-of-mouth happens when you disappoint those customers.

Look for things in your store that will create a unique opportunity for customers to talk about you, because you gave them more than they expected.

But don't look for a "one size fits all" experience. Don't try to create the same conversation one hundred times. Instead, look for a hundred different moments you can create, a hundred opportunities with the right hundred people.

Make it happen. Start today. Start small if necessary.

Out of the 60, or 600 people who come through your store on a regular business day, what if you focused on 10 of them today? By the end of the month 300 of your customers would be talking about an outstanding experience. Set a goal of 300 great experiences this month, and create 300 new, positive conversations about your store.



Sometimes it's easier to get our customers to invite us into their world, than to get them into ours.

In your slow moments in the store, let me suggest you engage in social media activities to create awareness and talking points to drive your store's success.



Inevitably, the store sells out. Almost instantly.

Facebook

In my home community, a retailer uses Facebook every day at noon, probably because that's when the store is least busy. They make two or three announcements across the lunch hour. They talk about something they stock which is now in limited supply.

They will literally say, *"The such and such brand of jeans, we've only got 16 pairs left. If you want to get them before we go back to market, you've got to come quick."* The store is connected to a community of people who have 'liked' them on Facebook, and these announcements create another talking point around something the fans already care about. The conversation comes up on their screen, and they can see it. Those fans become activated.

Inevitably, the store sells out. Almost instantly.

And the fans who don't care about the jeans? They ignore those announcements, but may very well pick up on a post which talks about wallets, or belts, or boots.

On occasion the announcements tell a story, like how long it takes to get this product from market. But, notice that the post is more than just *"We need to sell 16 pairs of pants."* And note, too, they don't discount the merchandise. You could do this. You can create interesting messages and reasons for customers and fans to get involved, talk, share, and buy.

Six customers a day is another 180 customers in a month, but with Facebook, an average of 20 of their friends will see the interaction between their friend and your store.

If you know your customers, you could speak to them individually. *“Oh, girl, I thought about you when I got this blouse in, (or this purse in).”* Make this direct contact with five or six customers each day. That’s six who wouldn’t have been affected if you hadn’t posted. Again, instead of trying to be everything to everybody, try to be one thing to a handful of people.

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Don’t overlook getting people involved while they’re in your store. Think signage, or a flyer for their shopping bag that says, *“When you ‘like’ us on Facebook, (x) happens.”* X might be a discount. It might be exclusive Facebook offers. X might be “Facebook friends only” event.





foursquare / Gowalla

What's interesting about foursquare and Gowalla is they're location-based event marketing because people tell their network, "I'm making this happen, right now, today." turning an activity into an event. It's not an event because you celebrated it. The event is taking place because the customer makes it happen.

A user might post, "I just checked in at the day spa." Inevitably, someone on their network says, "Oh, girl. I wish I was at the day spa. That would be so awesome. When you get the time tell me about it."

And if just one person creates an event at your store, that person's network is now sharing in that experience through the person who checked in. It doesn't have to be a hundred people. Just one. And as a smart marketer you check your network, monitor keywords, or check-ins, to see those people who started talking about it. When you find those people, invite them, too.

Say, "Oh, you're friends with Sarah? She had a great day today. She was here for three hours. You should have seen her. We had to practically carry her out she was so relaxed. What will it take to get you down here?"

All because your customer checked in on foursquare or Gowalla, and you spotted it on Facebook or Twitter.

Yelp

Are you monitoring your Yelp reviews? Creating Yelp reviews? It's not difficult. Have a card printed up that says, "Here's how to rate us on Yelp, 'Like' us on Facebook, Check in."

When you've solved a customer's problem and given them a great experience in your store, why not recommend they 'like' you on Facebook, and if they've got the time, to create a Yelp review? Explain, "It would allow me to help other people just like you."

Pull out your card and the old Sharpie, and say to the customer who's just had the great experience, "Here. I want you to go to Yelp and send us a Yelp review." Sure, the card also says Facebook, but you've touched it, and made it unique to your customer. Ask, "Please do this for me."

Because this card isn't typical, you've created a platform for your happy customers to start another positive conversation about your store.

Inside every store is an opportunity to win at an entirely new level.

From the products you choose and their positioning in the store to the approach you take with customers and the conversations you have with them, it's the little things that make a big difference in your success.



I hope this short e-book presented a few new ideas and reminded you of some of the things you already knew to do, but were not yet doing. I'd like to see you put at least one of these ideas into action immediately—you'll be better off because of it.

May your sales grow and your customers return again and again. Thank you for reading *Get the Buyer Inside*.

Regards,
Justin McCullough

About This E-Book

Justin McCullough, is a recognized leader in marketing and business development and is the author of this e-book. As the CEO of Turning Minds he works closely with business owners and executives to increase sales, drive strategic marketing initiatives and improve communications and customer relationships.

Opinions and advice presented in *Get the Buyer Inside* are Justin's, and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of Wonderbar, Tiffany Masterson or Wonderbar Distributors LLC.

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