

THE IN-STORE ADVANTAGE



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"Culture eats strategy for breakfast." »Peter Drucker

Ad-In



Out-of-state family members stayed with us recently over the holiday weekend.

My teenage nephew was immediately excited about the tennis wall I built a few years ago in our backyard. He had never before played tennis and was excited to learn.

Had you asked my younger son that morning if there was a tennis wall in his own backyard, its 50-50 he wouldn't have remembered.

To him, it's a basketball court. The adjacent green wall with the white stripe just doesn't register.

However, as soon as he saw others out there, his interest rekindled. For the next four days, our backyard sounded like a tennis camp, with my sons and their cousins banging balls off that wall at all hours.

Don't Stop Believing



I had to sit back and laugh at the times we live in this week.

One of my best friends was attending a Journey concert here in our hometown and texted me over a dozen times during the show.

I am old enough to remember when we did things like watching the bands at concerts.

Today, we are often more involved in reporting what we are doing than in actually doing what we are doing.

When I kidded about the texting, my friend pointed out that a piano solo, drum solo, and three guitar solos gave him lots of time to find something else to do.

He and I agree that extended solos are what we suffered through when our kids took music lessons.

(I apologize to neighbors still finding tennis balls in yards, flowerbeds and swimming pools.)

I, myself, had not played in a year. Yet, all it took was a few enthusiastic visitors to get us heading back to the neighborhood courts.

I was reminded of something I've long stressed to managers. I suggest that the best way to keep their teams executing the activities they want to see is to regularly, enthusiastically model those activities themselves.

Action begets action.

Out on the courts is where I took note of an annual marketing phenomenon. Our neighborhood has five tennis courts. They are almost always deserted - except for a two-week period of the year.

During the two weeks of the Wimbledon tournament, the courts fill up with hackers of all ages. At no time during the year is there as much TV coverage and talk of tennis.

And all across the country, people dig deep in their closets and dust off tennis rackets they haven't held in a year.

Of course, 98% of them will have fun and then lose track of their rackets in a couple of weeks when tennis is no longer highlighted on TV and online every day.

Out of sight becomes out of mind. Living our lives are fulltime jobs.

Most of us have more things to take up our attention each day than we have

You shouldn't be subjected to them when paying \$70 to see AARP rock bands play.

Our joke for years has been that if bands are going to play solos, they need to make them just long enough to allow you to get to the restrooms and back before they begin playing something you actually want to hear.

Hey, nobody wants to be in the restroom when *Don't Stop Believing* cranks up.

I realize I may be guilty of looking at too many things through a customer service lens, but I do have a theory about why those extended "solos" at concerts are almost universally unpopular.

The hits and recognizable music that artists play are for the benefit of the fans.

Solos, on the other hand, are mostly egoistic and for the musician. As much as we may like a group (Heck, we are PAYING to listen to them), most folks' eyes glaze over when they realize we've slipped into spotlight-on-the-bass-player territory.

I've long joked with bankers prospecting for new business that you only think potential customers don't have interest in talking to you.

I suggest the real issue is that they don't have all that much interest in listening to you.

However, they have all the time in the world if you ask relatable questions and actually show that you're paying attention to them.

attention to give. Even things we enjoy often disappear from our consciousness.

Never overestimate the awareness existing and potential customers have of you or the products you offer.

Even “fans” of yours can have their attention and loyalty wane if your marketing efforts wane as well. Out of sight becomes out of mind.

How will you court their attention this week?

One of my favorite quotes on the subject is, “The busiest man in the world will stop everything he is doing to tell you about himself.”

When we go into conversations with existing and potential customers just as interested in what we can learn as in what we can say, we are far more likely to connect with folks.

In our business, the spotlights should always shine on our customers.

"If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time." »Zig Ziglar

Dave Martin, author of [The In-Store Advantage](#), has become one of the most prolific writers in the banking industry. His keynote presentations, seminars, and podcasts have an authenticity and humor that brings teams of all sizes and seniority levels together.

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