

The Power Of An Image

By Lori Osterberg

Books are such a wonderful gift to the world. In a few short paragraphs, they can transform you to far off places, create settings from any place in time, and add detail to your imagination like no other source we know. When you want to disappear from reality for a few moments, the best place to go is into a nice hot tub full of bubbles with a few lit candles and a great book!

How can a few words on a page do that to you? How can they change your mood from sad to happy, and lift your spirits to make you ready to face the world again? It's in the detail. It's in the way those details fill your emotions. It's in the way you perceive the world around you based on what has filled your mind within the last few minutes. Everything we do is for the experience. We do it for what it brings into our lives.

So we base our ideas and our perceptions solely on the experiences we have. Experience is everything. The way the rest of the world perceives us is through the experience they receive while they are with us. Imagine how you feel in different places. If you receive an experience above and beyond the expected, don't you feel just a little more special? Don't you recommend those places that go above and beyond the normal, and give you an experience that you never thought was possible?

What does it take to create that type of an image for your company? Here are three ways for moving your business forward.

1. Create a memorable first impression. Whether on the pages of your website, through the first contact with a powerful brochure, or a handshake at a local restaurant, first impressions have a definite effect on your future business.

Did you know a person forms an opinion of you within the first 15 seconds of meeting you? Or that a person makes a decision to read copy on your website or a brochure based on the headline alone?

If you were presenting to a potential client, you would never show up in jeans and a sweatshirt. Yet many people think nothing of printing up brochures on their home computer, and adding handwritten information as needed. Then they wonder why business isn't as good as they had hoped. What people see the first time they make contact with your company is what they will carry inside for a long time to come.

2. Concentrate on the detail. Putting effort into the little things can have an instant impact on your business. From the thickness of your business cards, to the colors you use on your website, everything tells your customers how well you focus on your business.

Have you ever been to a clothing store that wraps your purchases in tissue paper before putting it into a color-coordinated bag? I love getting home and unwrapping my sweaters from the tissue paper. It just makes them seem a little more special. Yet there really isn't

a difference between them and the large department stores that simply drop the sweaters into a bag. It's just my perception of the quality of their service. It's the detail they choose to put in their presentation.

3. Follow through on everything you do. Have you ever been totally enthralled in a movie: you love the story line; the characters have captured your heart. And then, the ending comes to an abrupt halt? Don't you somehow feel a little cheated?

Servicing your customers is the same way. You can create an incredible first impression, have a convincing sales presentation, have a wonderful product or service, but if you fall short in your delivery, you will lose all credibility with your customers.

Creating the experience always begins with the image you portray from beginning to end, throughout the life of your business. And the more magical it is, the more it will spread like wildfire through your community.

Lori Osterberg has created three successful businesses in the past 10 years, and along the way discovered secrets of taking a local small business and turning it into a worldwide success. She now shares this passion with people all over the world, and writes and mentors on using technology to grow your business – and stay small at the same time! Receive her FREE ezine at www.VisionOfSuccess.com.