

The Value of a Good Customer

Here are a couple of case histories to illustrate the value of a good customer. I sold a mobile home to a couple about nine years ago. The home was, and still is, on my lot. I financed the home for my buyers for three years. When the note was paid off, they wanted to borrow some money. They said they could get the money from their bank, but would rather do business with me. (Wouldn't it be a terrible blow to your self-esteem if your customer said they would rather do business with a bank than with you?)

After learning what the bank terms would be, I let them name the amount they wanted to borrow, the interest rate, and the monthly payments. They dictated their own terms, (after a few questions from me) based on what they had been told by the bank. They gave me the title back, I gave them a check, and it was a "done deal". I didn't even have to leave my house to do it, and I now had a new loan with a 23% yield. (Maybe I should write another book titled "The Lazy Man's Way To Wealth.")

They've now paid that loan off, plus a lot rent payment every month. Now they want me to find them a newer home. I just checked my files on this one good customer. Over the past nine years, they've paid me over \$38,000 in mobile home payments and lot rents. What if I had simply done a one shot deal with this couple, made one profit, and only got one check. How much would I have lost?

Stay in Touch with Your Best Customers

Each year, around the first of December, I mail some of my best customers a notice offering to make them a loan if they need money. I only made one loan out of my last mailing, but it's another monthly check. And it only cost me a sheet of paper and a postage stamp to do it. But who knows what that mail-out might generate in future business. Those folks now know they can get money from me, instead of a bank.

Two months ago, one of my customers needed to borrow \$2,000. I made her the loan, added it to her mobile home note, restructured her payments so they were affordable, and I have another happy customer. And my mail carrier has another check to deliver.

Three years ago, I sold a mobile home to a couple. In addition to the mobile home payment, they've also paid me lot rent each month. So far, in just three years, they've paid approximately \$18,000 in rent and mobile home payments. Yesterday, they called saying they had the chance to buy a double wide on a 1/2 acre of land. They want me to buy their home back and loan them the difference so they can buy the double wide. They said they could probably get the money from a bank but, like the other couple, they preferred doing business with me. If I help them get what they want, I'll probably be able to create another 6-8 years of payments from this couple. Plus, I'll be able to make a profit from their home.

