

MARKETING FOR ROOF CONSULTANTS

By Bob Lyons, FRCI

The following was written as a result of input received during a roundtable discussion on Marketing for Roof Consultants chaired by Bob Lyons, FRCI, at the recent RCI convention in Galveston, TX.

Building Customer Relationships

The three top criteria to building customer relationships listed by clients are:

1. Trust. It takes time to build trust. Consultants must work at this highly important relationship with every contact made.
2. Proactive communication. Never take for granted that yours is the only company that can produce your client's needs.
3. Deliver What You Promise - Don't Oversell. Clearly establish your firm's strengths and weaknesses. Fine-tune your business model so you are selling what you can deliver.

How to Work with Short-sighted Decision-makers

In today's business climate, consultants are often interfacing with clients and companies that think in terms of "Current Month," "Current Quarter," or "Current Year" performance mentalities. This mindset makes it very difficult for them to address roofing needs from anything other than a crisis management approach. What consultants need to show them (with facts and empirical data as much as possible) is that approaching their roofs with a life-cycle cost perspective is a more appropriate way to go. Consultants must demonstrate that the initial cost of the roof is never the total cost of the roof over its service life. Lastly, they must convey the message that proactive roof maintenance pay\$.

Relationship Selling

The four distinct personality traits typically encountered in interaction with different client types (as developed by the Wilson Learning Center) are:

- ☺ DRIVERS
- ☺ EXPRESSIVES
- ☺ AMIABLES
- ☺ ANALYTICALS

Each of these personality traits requires a different type of interaction. Not everyone can be "sold" on the same methodology and style of interaction. Consultants are urged to research this topic more on the Internet and to read books such as *Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goldman.

How to Generate New Clients

1. Develop a good "Introduction" for use on the phone and in personal meetings. This introduction should be no longer than two minutes and should address, at a minimum, the following key components:

- Your Name.
 - Your Title.
 - Your Company Name.
 - What You Do.
 - What Products or Services You Provide.
 - What is the Value for the Client?
 - Who Are Some of Your Clients?
 - Why You Are Calling - What Do You Want to Do Next?
2. Develop a Unique Selling Proposition (USP), defined as that one thing or attribute that would cause a client to want to do business with you over any and all options they may have.
 3. Show Up. According to a study and article done by the American Purchasing Managers Association in the mid-1990s, there were two top reasons why purchasing agents did business with salesman:
 - #1. - Price.
 - #2. - They came by and asked for the business.

What is the Value of Business Promotion?

Marketing, public relations, and sales all have a place in our industry. Depending on the size and budget availability of each company, a detailed plan of initiatives and expectations for a return-on-investment (R.O.I.) should be developed and implemented as a subset of the total company Business Plan.

Keys to Client Retention

- Trust.
- Proactive communications.
- Service and follow-up. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bob Lyons, FRCI, is a founder and first president of RCI and was named the first Fellow of the Institute in 1986. Bob has been a member of NRCA, CRSMCA, MRCA, FRCA, RCAT, CSI, PRSM, and a faculty member of RIEI. He is one of the co-founders of New Millennium Roofing, Inc., and now works out of its Tampa, FL office. NMR is the fourth largest roofing services company in the U.S. Lyons currently serves as Executive VP and is a member of NMR's Board of Directors.



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