



Living in a Macintosh World

I live in a Mac world - it's not a necessity, it's a choice. And last Sunday, the New York Times puffed me up even more over the special-ness many of us in the same world feel.

Randall Stross wrote an article in the Business Section, page 3, commenting on Steve Jobs' process of designing the Apple stores. He wrote:

"Analysts predicted at the time that Apple would shut down the stores and write off the huge losses in two years. That assuredly would have been the Apple store's fate had Steve Jobs permitted aesthetic and design considerations to trump all else. But while guiding and planning for the stores in 2000 and 2001, Mr. Jobs took on a more ambitious challenge than building freestanding museums of design that would show the Apple flag and do little else.

He set out to create the conditions most likely to convert museum visitors into actual customers, and then to make those customers feel that they were being pampered long after the sale was consummated."

Wow.

Stross then quotes Jobs as saying: "When I bring something home to the kids, I want to get the smile. I don't want the U.P.S. guy to get the smile."

Are you getting your client's smile?

What Apple gets is that a choice to buy is an emotional one, requiring an intangible connection between buyer and seller. Who knows when love will form and a buyer will realize "I've got to have it and I've got to get it from them"? However, we do know how to nurture relationships & keep them strong. We offer the top 5 benefits that will help customers fall in love and stay with us (and none of those reasons is 'price' - that comes in at #6):

1. Confidence that we will perform as advertised
2. Quality of our product
3. Our product or service meets customer wants and needs, per
4. their definition
5. Service beyond the sale

6. Selection - 31 Ice Cream Flavors!! (my favorite)

In other words, a successful business will look for a relationship with its customers and not just a financial transaction (sounds like life..); it will look for many opportunities to put a smile on the face of their customer that's meant for them alone.

It will create more of an experience for its customers (and employees and shareholders and vendors and strategic partners) that emulates what we look for in personal relationships. In the end, while it may be business for you, it's all personal for your customer and a smile is the first step to repeat business and referrals.

Now are you smiling? *Take a bite out of that juicy Macintosh apple and it'll happen.*



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