

Converting Customers Is Better Than Offer Conversion

Since early man first paid to have someone carve “Eat at Joe’s” in a well-positioned tree, advertisers struggled to develop metrics to measure ROI on advertising investment.

Now as the digital marketing industry has emerged from the introduction phase of the product life cycle, metrics nip at the ankles to measure data such as click-through rates, time spent on the site and my favorite “much ado about nothing metric,” offer conversion.

On the surface, the question “Did the offer convert to a sale?” seems viable. But I don’t focus on short-term needle wobbles. It is difficult to apply a short-term metric to measure a long-term strategy. Knees tend to jerk.

Good, sustainable strategy is often jettisoned because a tactic “didn’t work.” What does that mean anyway? Who decides on the definition of “it worked”?

I have a good clue about what many readers may be thinking: “Hey, if we had sales from an offer (conversion), the ad worked. If we didn’t have sales the campaign was a bust.”

I’m too old for that type of thinking. I’ve seen way too many “early winners” go home losers.

Conversion only means we moved a customer into the trial phase of the know-like-trust path to long-term success of a product. Most conversion data is based on trial not upon customer intent to buy again and refer.

I’m still an old-school marketer and happy to own that moniker. Old school marketers built brand awareness first and continued with marketing campaigns to build an intention to

buy.

Along the way, consumers talk to one another over backyard fences, in grocery stores while reading labels, and through a digital coffee table at YELP! Friends, family and previous customers influence conversion more than any marketing campaign.

Marketing builds share of mind. Awareness and intent to buy grows as share of mind grows.

The real difference-maker in marketing is what customers say about your product after the first sale or trial.

This is the major take-away from this message:

If your product solves a felt need or problem, it will sell well. It will convert. It will make marketing look great!

Does your product, book, idea or ministry really work for people? Does your product do what you say it will do? Do people who use your product come back for more?

We must do much more in that arena. Work on it until it helps people. Do more, not less. Add value until it overflows.

A focus on conversion is a focus on the wrong thing. Did the ad convince someone to buy something they don't need? That's conversion.

When consumers don't line up to buy something, the message isn't very cloudy.

If the product works, the message will work in the long run.

People talk.