

BUSINESS MADE EASY[!]

A man with short, light-colored hair, wearing a blue and white checkered button-down shirt, is smiling broadly. He is splashing in water, with white foam and droplets around him. The background is a light, textured grey.

Episode 65

Better Systems for Communicating with Your Customers

Full Episode Transcription

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Good day! Good day! and welcome to the Business Made Easy Podcast where we make business easy. Jason Skinner, your host here for another week of the podcast that is all about growing your business, growing your business bottom line and giving you a better life as a result. How are you doing out there? Thanks so much for joining me. Whatever you're up to, if you're out there having a run, listening to the show at the moment, I hope it's going well for you and you're, uh, cooking up some good times. I know my times are very rusty at the moment and I have to get out there and do a lot more running. That's for sure particularly now there's warmer weather happening here in Australia. That will be very much doable. For everyone else there, thank you so much for joining me as well. Whatever you're up to I hope, uh, you're having a good day and, um, to the new listeners, don't forget to hit the subscribe button. Welcome to the show and hit that subscribe button and that will make sure that you get each episode as I bring it out each week.

Now some fun facts. We are having a, uh, well not facts but fun information, fun news I guess. We are having a competition, running a competition at the moment to, give one lucky listener a chance to win three of my old time bundle of books, three of my old time business classic books that I absolutely love. They are just being foundational in my education and, and this-- the three, you get the chance to win all three to read up to Christmas. Entries are closing on the 1st of December and to enter the competition, all you need to go to is businessmadeeasypodcast.com/competition and hit your entry details in there and it is also free for listeners to enter and yeah, you could have a chance to win three all-time great classic business books.

One of them being Daniel Carnegie's "How to Win Friends and Influence People" which is an absolute game-changer in terms of dealing with people

better in your business and just basically being a better, better human being all around. It's a great, fantastic book. The other one is the "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" by Steven Covey and if you haven't read that, that is an awesome book as well. We're going to put links to these in the show notes. And the third one is "The E-Myth" by Michael Gerber.

All of that creating a turnkey, turnkey operation in your business and, uh, it is sort of-- your business works with that too. It's an absolute, fantastic read as well and a must-have in your book collection if you haven't got it already but you can have your chance to win that. You can have your chance to win all three of them in one go just by going to [businessmadeeasy.com/competition](https://businessmadeeasy.com/podcast/competition). I just thought it would be a bit of fun to have, uh, have a competition and if you do, uh, if you do enter, the more times you share your, uh, entry. uh, on your social media platform suite, that increases your chances of winning as well so, uh, just a bit of incentive there to, uh, get your entry up as well.

Alrighty. Onto today's show. We are gonna be talking about communicating with your customers in light of, uh, Daniel Carnegie as I've just mentioned his great book. Daniel Carnegie was a great communicator and all of that communicating effectively. And we are going to talk about communicating with your customers effectively today and what that means, because I will use a case study shortly but, we really need to be in, I believe in the modern business era that we're in now, we do need to be communicating better with our customers more than ever before because our customers are very knowledgeable. They know what they want, what they don't want. They know about our products and services and they know who our competitors are as well and they know what they're doing. They know what our competitors are doing. So, that's a more, you know, even the more reason to be communicating better with our customers

and potential customers, et cetera. And, I want to go through a process today and I want to go through, I guess, things that you can, practical things that you can think of and implement in your business and tools, I guess, that you can implement to help you better communicate with your customer. Because, one of the things that I, and I know I get this so much in, particularly service-based businesses. Now, what we're talking about today will apply to any business. I'm going to use a service-based business as an example but what I'm talking about today will apply whether you're an online business, again, I always try and cover all bases.

So, it doesn't matter of what stage of business you're in, the information will be relevant but, we use a service-based businesses example. Now and it's a gardening business and a lawn mowing and gardening business to say for instance and, Now when, this is a business that is so, so easy to communicate better in and they don't, they absolutely don't because they don't, simple reminder system or a simple information like an email or contact with a customer to say, "Hey Jason. Just letting you know that we've got your lawn scheduled for tomorrow to whatever date, you know, two-days' time or whatever to come and mow your lawn and tidy your garden" for instance. Now that would go, as a customer. That would do a couple of things to me. It would, let me know and communicate with me that the garden and lawn is under control and they're looking after it. And two, it would set them apart from any other lawn mowing business out there in the world that doesn't do that. And why that's effective is because it's a set clear expectations for me, the customer. I'll repeat that. It's set that communication, sets clear expectations for a customer. So, I know. I don't have to go to bed worrying that the lawns are not gonna be mowed tomorrow. I don't have to have, my wife, my good wife Melissa driving in the driveway again, "When's the lawn gonna be mowed?" Because I

can tell her it's going to be done on Friday or whatever. So, it's just a very simple example like that, and so easy to implement in a business and not taking off any more time and actually, in fact, you probably saved them time because I wouldn't be texting them all the time asking when the lawn's gonna be mowed. So, this is just a very, very simple example and I see it so many times in every sort of business. It doesn't matter what business you're in. you can do these sorts of things to set the expectation for your customer.

So the very first step in the process is, how do you do that? How do you communicate effectively, to set clear expectations for your customer? And the very first thing I always think of when I'm looking at helping businesses with this, implement this stuff is to put yourself in your customer's shoes, always be thinking in terms of your customer. Now, I'm gonna use another example because this, this is a more serious example. This could be a, medical, or let's say it's a medical practice, a medical specialist that deals with very major sort of stuff, for instance. So, we'll go to the other extreme. From the lawn mower, we'll go to a more complicated example and just to show to illustrate further how you can do this. If those patients normally come to these medical specialists-type businesses because they were referred by doctor, by normal GP doctor, general practicing doctor who usually says, "You need to go and see a specialists of XYZ and I'm gonna refer you or write out a referral and I'm gonna refer you to that, medical practice." Now, going back to my thing, putting yourself in your customer's shoes or in your client patient's shoes in this case. The very first thing that the patient would be experiencing, I would think, would be the anxiety of that what it is that's wrong with me. Why do I have to go to a medical specialist? What's it gonna be like when I get there? Where will I park? Will it be overnight? Will I be okay? There's a world of thought and anxiety that will build up in that patient before they went to that appointment with that medical

specialist. Yet, from leaving the GP, and this is quite often, from leaving the GP clinic and making the appointment to see that medical specialist, there is literally, in a lot of cases, very little communication, or expectation setting after that point. So the patient is left feeling anxious until that appointment.

So, that could be broken down with clearer communication and we're gonna go through some systems that you can use to do this, but some ideas around that would be to, as soon an email came out to the patient, once as soon as they made a booking saying, "Dear Mrs. Jones, we're looking forward to seeing you on this date at this time. This is where you pack. Dr. such is an expert in this field and we've seen great results to this." but, just being open and clear as to what to expect so to set that expectation and reduce that anxiety for that patient prior to the appointment. And then, you're gonna have a more relaxed and a more engaged, patient when they come to that medical practice.

And I can use a million examples, again, around this setting expectation and think--putting yourself in your customer's shoes. let's say, I'll buy something online. I don't know how long it's going to take to arrive. Maybe I could go out saying, "Mr. Skinner, thanks so much for your purchase with XYZ. I want you to know that we're packaging your product right now and it's going to be couriered by XYZ Company and it should arrive to your door within this timeframe. We'll keep you posted with any updates on that." There's systems in place that allow this to happen and what it does is it sets the expectation for you and I can relax and know that my goods are being packaged, they've got the order, they know that I want the goods. They couriating it to me on this courier so that's the courier information I'll be looking out for. And roughly this is the day or time that it's going to arrive and they're going to keep me updated with any changes. That's a brilliant way to communicate with your customer and set yourself apart

from everybody else out there that's not doing this stuff and it works. It really, really works. So, that's already-- I guess the first step in this process is to put yourself in your customer's shoes and think about how your customer will be if-- how you would feel if you were, making an appointment to go and see your medical practice or if you were buying something off yourself? How would you feel and what would you want to know? What would create anxiety? What would set expect-- clear expectations and those sort of things for you as well?

Step 2, I would want to understand how my customer likes to communicate. Now, if my business relies on mainly elderly customers, I'm really not going to send them a Facebook message or, you know, hook them up to some bot system or something like that. It's just not going to-- it's-- they aren't-- it's not going to be clear communication. It's gonna get missed. They're not going to like it. It's actually gonna increase anxiety 'cause they get frustrated with using technology. likewise, if I've got a business that somewhat tend to use more, the physical mail in that case. if it's more important. if you're dealing with tradesmen and those sorts of things, you might be more inclined to use SMS like you use a text message or SMS with them and keep your message short and sharp, you know, short and brief, just to the point. Or, you might have customers that need more elaborate information. So, you have to really-- when you're putting yourself in your customer's shoes, you have to think about exactly how your customer likes to receive information too because the receipt of that in-- the vehicle that delivers that message and delivers that communication is vitally important to get right because you need to match where your customer is in terms of their communication style.

And, there's lots of ways you can do. That could be a phone call, I'm a big lover of the phone. [inaudible] for this. I hate the phone, I hate using the phone and I

hate, yeah, just I don't know, I just don't like spending a lot of time on the phone. I prefer to communicate digitally, but equally, there are times where you have to communicate on the phone and that's because your messages are getting a bit confused to whatever. So, I have a rule in our business. If we have to go back and forth with any or more than once, then it's time to pick up the phone because there's a breakdown in the communication there and you're not getting the message through clearly enough over the digital space so you need to pick up the phone. And that might be the case for your business too.

You might, a simple phone call to your customer to let them know about something might be a far better-- and more effective way of communicating than not. Otherwise, you can do this. Just an email system and we're going to talk about some of these in a moment when we talk about scaling this and how you can automate a lot of these of in an email system. Physical mail, as I mentioned, SMS, Facebook Messenger, there is a host of different ways that you can communicate with your business, in your business with your customers and you really need to identify exactly where, your customer is on that communication spectrum and how they like to communicate.

So, once you've identified that, you put yourself in your customer's shoes, you know how they like to communicate, look at your overall business cycle or your business process. Look at, from the very first contact the customer has with you, sit down and map it out.

And again, you could use a mind map to do this or, just a white board or some form of excel spreadsheet or something like that. But map out exactly where your, the process that your customer has to go through, the journey they have to go on with you to do business with you and work out in that journey what can

be eliminated, are there things in that journey that could be eliminated from the process like we don't need to do that stuff. It's really an overkill. We don't need that from the customer or the customer doesn't need to be involved with that.

So, that's the very first thing you'll be mapping out if there are any inefficiencies. Can we cut those out so we don't have to put the customer through our process? Now an example of that is dealing with the bank. I don't know how, I'm sure all of us have had to deal with banks at some stage. The banks are renowned for putting you through their process. They put you through their mill if you like. They don't come from your perspective, your comfort and enjoyment perspective, the customer's enjoyment and perspective.

I think they really missed them out here. we had a dealing with the bank recently and, honestly, it was like, they were trying to extract the very blood out of me but not once but multiple times for information and now we need this and now we need that. Instead of actually communicating me with one concise thing to say, "Hey, this is what we need from you blah blah blah blah...and this is why and here's all the things that--" It was just like going on and on and on.

So, you really need to look at that and look at your process and make sure you're not pulling your customer through a process that's not necessary or is going to create more anxiety in them, or make their experience with you less enjoyable. And you'll be rewarded by doing this because I guarantee your competitors out there are not doing this. So the better you can do this, the better you can make this customer experience and reduce the anxiety in your customer, the better they're going to love your business and doing business with you. So, keep that in mind as you go, and so eliminate anything that's not necessary.

And then look at, in that process what points should we be-- would be-- I got a-- that was a mouthful. At what points in that customer journey would be best to communicate. At what point would a client, 'cause you're putting yourself in their shoes when you're looking at this, what point in that journey would they be feeling that information would be warranted at this point? So, like my gardening example, if you're mapping out this process, I'd be looking at sending a message or appropriate point would be a message goes out on day, on the day before the service is being performed.

That might be one step in your process that communication is required. A further process might be a day after the service has been done to follow up and see that the customer is happy with the way the gardening was done and the lawn was mowed, et cetera. Just any feedback or, I hope everything is to your satisfaction and we met your requirements. So, these two points of communication for lawn mowing business there that really could, happen and that is one thing we don't do enough of is follow up with their customers to make sure that everything was okay and did it meet their expectations.

See, in business, what we're trying to do is, we're trying to set expectations for the customer before they become a customer. Okay at the time of becoming a customer, we wanna set expectations. We want to meet that expectation by delivering the service or product and then we want to follow up to make sure that, not us, but the customer's expectations were met. So we're not looking at, did the customer meet our expectations in this follow up. We're looking at, were the customer's expectations met and or, better still, did we exceed them? Did we create a wow in that customer? So, very, very important that you map out that process for the customer journey with your business and it does not matter what business you are in. Again, it can happen to any business and you can do it

with absolutely with any business. Every business must map out this process and unfortunately, nobody does.

If you're a trade-type business now, I'll give you another example as we move through this. If you're a trade-type business where you're installing something or you might be an electrician or whatever business you're in or a trade, you can do this too. You can set clear communication with the day before you're going to do anything if you're gonna go to XYZ building site, tomorrow, and you'll be there all day or you estimate that it will be all day, then I would send a text message to person's place that you're going to or the building site and say, "Hey, just letting you know that, I'll be on site tomorrow from this time and I expect I'll be there all day. if I can get it done sooner I will, but, looking forward to seeing you." Then the day after you do the service, you could follow up, "Mrs. Jones, I hope everything is still working all right with your broken power point" or "I hope everything went well with your kitchen or your air conditioner," whatever business that you're in. You could do this before the service and then after the service is performed. Very, very simply and I'm going to talk about some systems that will help you do that as well.

So, mapping out that journey, setting that expectations for the customer, and being clear about what the customer can expect next. So when you're doing that journey and going through that customer journey, think about what's the next logical step, okay, for the customer? So, if any customer's coming into your business and it's like - well you can expect that I'm going to,, package your product today, I'm going to send it today. It's gonna go in here like my online business example previously. Let's set out all the expectations in my mind. So, it takes away all that anxiety. And what you'll find too is it will reduce phone calls, it will reduce emails or it will reduce a lot of reduce a lot of incoming,

correspondence to your business because you're communicating along the way. You're setting the expectation, illustrating the path, so there's no doubt. And the very, very important thing is when you do all that is you need to deliver as well. Make sure you deliver. If you set an expectation for somebody, you make sure you always, always, uh, meet that expectation and better still, exceed it because, Well, I don't know if you have heard of the saying, I've heard those saying, under promise and over deliver. So, if something is going to take, three days to deliver for a customer, don't write in your email, "Mrs. Jones, I expect to be, delivering this to your business or you'll expect this to happen for you in two days" When you know it's gonna be three. Tell the customers it's gonna be four days, stand the promise and, and-- that, that sets the, that sets the frames in the customer's minds. They know exactly that it's gonna be in four days. Now, if you deliver that in three, that's fantastic. You've exceeded their expectations. That's what creates the wow.

So if, again, if you're a tradesman and you're gonna trade business or some form of business where it's a service-based business, under promise and over deliver all the time and and, uh, I think one of the traps that we can't get into is in that sales pro-- in the in the sales process of trying to win the business, we actually over promise and then the business behind us lets us stand particularly to a few. If your salesman's out there, if you're a team or a team of people, a new business, and you got a sales rep or someone out there selling things in your business and then they say, "Oh yeah, we can, uh, we can install that kitchen or air conditioning or whatever it is, uh, in two days for you. Uh, um, unlike the competitors, you know. Oh, Mrs. Jones goes "Great! I'm going to get an air conditioner in two days." But your team don't show up for a week and no one contacts Mrs. Jones, she's not gonna be really happy. And, it just erodes and erodes and erodes the trust and and and value in your brand. So I want you to

always, always remember to under promise and over deliver when you're doing this communication with you-- with your customer.

So, yeah, and it's just basically avoiding surprises along the way. You just wanna avoid nasty surprises that people are left wondering why or in doubt or anything you're moving doubt. So, you're probably thinking here, that's great Jason, you've got, uh, you've now got me doing extra work and how're all these even gonna happen. And, uh, because I don't have the time to-to keep keep doing whatever I'm doing as we speak. Now I get they're all busy. And one of the things with setting up these communication systems are they need to be consistent, okay?

And I have a bit of an analogy. McDonald's doesn't stop making Big Macs because the Big Mac maker doesn't turn up that day or, you know, the guy that puts the lettuce on the Big Macs they don't, all of a sudden, don't put lettuce on them that day because he's not there to do that. They have systems in place and you need to have systems in place in your business because when you set an expectation, you're also setting an expectation that is going to be communication.

So when you're communicating and setting the expectation, you're also inadvertently, uh, triggering in that customer's mind that, there's going to be some form of communication along the way. So if I deal with you today and get one result, and then in three weeks' time, you're on holiday or someone else in your business is on holidays, the person that does the email or communicating is away, and and that email doesn't happen or that communication doesn't happen the next time they buy, that erodes trust as well because it's inconsistent with their expectations and what they were expecting.

So and then it creates anxiety again and it all goes on. So, very, very important that whatever systems you put in place, you can deliver on and are consistent. They they consistently happen and and reliably happen without, too much fuss. And this technology, that's the great thing now and and I try and implement in businesses as much as possible.

Technology, to streamline these processes and automate these processes. And, there's this little high-end systems that do this and there's lower-end systems that do this. You can do-- the basic things that I'm talking about is SMS messaging systems and, email, basic emailing systems that you can use. Very cost-effectively to set up automation sequences that actually happens so that, when an event happens in the business, the email system with pre-configured templates is is all there set up, ready to go and you just go throw it up to the higher end systems like, Infusionsoft which is one that I use, in my business.

I think people actually call that Confusion Soft 'cause it's quite a, quite a robust [inaudible] that software. You do need to actually got certified in it and it was only way I could learn that was to go and do the certification course and and the Infusionsoft University. They actually have a university for this program. It's is quite a based of a program but really, really high value and and really, really effective because what it will do is if you trigger , an event in your business say, a customer makes an appointment, that can put that customer into a sequence of communication events to happen within your business and delegate tasks to people and send emails out to, uh, to customers, et cetera, to to to do these communication steps along with the customer journey that I was speaking about.

So, you know, Infusionsoft is one of them, and I can talk to you about that further if you if you drop me a line at Jason@businessmadeeasypodcast.com. There's other other more simple tools which I really like to is Convert Kit. It's got a great little automation system in the background that that you can set up various, communication sequences for customers and really, really simple to use and, you just set up the default templates and email templates and it pretty well works without you having to even touch it once you set it up. So, the things I'm talking about here are not things that you have to then going to spend a lot of time on doing. You can get automated systems that is set like Infusionsoft or a Convert Kit. I'll put links to those in the show notes. If you go to businessmadeeasypodcast.com/episode65 where on so, uh, yeah, if you go there to episode 65, /episode65, I will have links to those, uh, tools in the show notes to help you as well.

But the end game of this is, to set yourself apart from the competition. Set yourself apart from what you're competitors are doing. Do it better. Do it in a way that makes your customers go "Wow! These guys are great at this. I love these guys. I love that they make me feel special. They make, make me feel important and-and th-they deliver on what they say they're going to do. That's what we want." Um, because that way too, when you do that, you don't have to compete on price.

And we can get into price polls and, uh, dropping prices and, you know, or that sort of thing just by doing exactly the same and offer exactly the same service and product as the other-- as your competitors, well you really got nothing there, nothing different than price to compete on. You can think you do it better or you like and, uh, but it's what your customer experience is the, is the important thing. So, you can take price off the table. When you communicate in

this way, when you build trust with your customer and you-you're removing anxiety and pain from their life, you can actually, take price off the table because you just do it so much better than your competitors and that's what I want for your business. I want you to be able to do it better than your competition and, uh, grow. With respect to that, back in [episode 64](#).

Alrighty. Well, that's all I have time for today. I hope that's been a value for you. We do want to communicate better with our customers in our business. I've given you some practical points there. Put yourself in their shoes. Think about it now. Think about, what do my customers actually, uh, experience? What's their experience when they deal with my business? I talked about understanding how your customers likes to communicate, so make sure you're delivering your communication in a way that resonates with them and that they understand and in language that they understand too is an important point. Make sure you're not using jargon, that that no one understands but you or your people in your industry.

Make sure you speak in terms in context of your customer. Be clear about your customer journey. So, understand at what point in the journey-- of the customer journey with your business, do you need to communicate? Some places, you'll need to communicate more than others. Don't over communicate but I don't believe you can really over communicate unless you're spamming people. Don't go spamming people but if you're adding value in-in helping them in in removing the anxiety, yes make sure you, you map out those communication points that you should be communicating and how. It could be a mix of points, it could be a mix of methods.

One might be a phone call, one may be an email. So it could be a mix. It might be an SMS, whatever. Make sure you're delivering. Make sure you're exceeding their, uh, expectations and you're delivering on those expectations that you set in your communication and remember also to follow up after the- after the product or service has been sold or purchased or consumed, or whatever business you're in.

Alrighty. So I hope that helps and, uh, until next week, I'm going to hand you over to Mia very shortly but before I do, remember if you haven't joined our free Facebook group yet, this is our businessmadeeasypodcast.com/community and if you've got any questions about today's episode or you want help in an area of today's episode, drop me a line at Jason@businessmadeeasypodcast.com. I'm here to serve you and add value to you and, uh, to you and your business and help you grow, and that's what I'm all about. So, until next week, you have a great week. I hope you kick some awesome goals and, here's to your suc-- here's, here's to your success and I'll hand you over to Mia. Take us out Mia.

Thank you for Tuning In

We hope you enjoyed this episode.

If you have any feedback or questions about the content in this episode please don't hesitate to drop me a line at jason@businessmadeeasypodcast.com I would love to hear from you.

Other things that you might like to help grow your business.

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Thank you again,
I appreciate you!

*Regards
Jason*