

Creating Customer Evangelists: How Loyal Customers Become a Volunteer Sales Force

By Ben McConnell, Jackie Huba, Guy Kawasaki

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For the first time in paperback, a revised edition of the book that launched the term “customer evangelism” and inspired the creation of an industry. Updated with new statistics and figures, this landmark book has shown countless companies how to harness the power of evangelism marketing and increase customer loyalty, sales, and profitability.

When customers are truly thrilled about their experience with a product or service, they become outspoken “evangelists” for a company. For most businesses, customers are loyal to people, not brands. Creating a culture of not only loyalty but belief is the formula for creating authentic and powerful word of mouth.

By researching companies with dedicated groups of outspoken, buss-spreading evangelists, authors Ben McConnell and Jackie Huba distill the formulas of the successful companies into the six tenets of customer evangelism. *Creating Customer Evangelists* explains why many traditional loyalty programs fail and how organic word-of-mouth programs often create communities of influencers who accelerate a company’s success.

Creating Customer Evangelists is the bible for any business hoping to convert good customers into exceptional ones who willingly spread the word.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This enjoyable but hardly essential book offers case studies of eight companies whose customer communities—that is, the base of customers who believe in a particular product or service—are robust and successful: Southwest Airlines, Krispy Kreme, Build-A-Bear Workshops, the Dallas Mavericks basketball team, Pallotta TeamWorks, O'Reilly & Associates, SolutionPeople and IBM. The authors, cofounders of the marketing consulting firm Wabash & Lake, claim that "customer evangelists" are free; they offer a six-step plan for building customer evangelism, but the specific programs they recommend are expensive. They decry "nuisance" advertising, yet praise MSN's infamous Hotmail spam tag line attached to every e-mail Hotmail users send and IBM's graffiti campaign that resulted in criminal fines. They argue against focusing on shareholder value and cost controls, but criticize companies that imploded for ignoring those two things. Although the idea of deepening customer relationships is certainly valid and should be embraced by marketers, there are better and far more balanced accounts of this process available (the first four chapters of Philip Kotler's *Marketing Management*, the standard MBA text, for example).

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Review

"In the best book of the month ... McConnell and Huba offer six practical tenets for turning customers into evangelists. " -- *The Business Reader Review, December 2002*

"[Creating Customer Evangelists] is the new mantra for entrepreneurial success." -- *New York Times*

Lessons of customer evangelism related through real life company stories make this book an absorbing read. -- *Harvard Business School*

The book is packed with working examples of how to [create customer evangelists]...so buy it, learn from it. -- *Azriela Jaffe, Welcome Business USA*

From the Inside Flap

"...the entire world is drenched and debauched in content and advertising, and we need evangelism even more.... The next step is fueling the fire of customer love, and this is what this book explains.... I wish I had written this book...."

—from foreword by Guy Kawasaki, CEO, Garage Technology Ventures

Turn Buyers into Believers!

When customers are truly thrilled about their experience with your product or service, they become outspoken "evangelists" for your company. Savvy marketing professionals are discovering that this group of satisfied believers can be converted into a potent marketing tool to grow their customer universe.

Authors Ben McConnell and Jackie Huba know how to take your company's best customers and build them into influential, loyal, and enthusiastic evangelists. In *Creating Customer Evangelists*, you will learn how to develop evangelism marketing strategies and programs that will create communities of influencers who can drive sales for your company.

From their research into the best practices of some of the most forward-thinking companies, McConnell and Huba outline and explain the six basic tenets of creating customer evangelists:

- Customer plus-delta: Continuously gather customer feedback.
- Napsterize knowledge: Make it a point to share knowledge freely.
- Build the buzz: Expertly build word-of-mouth networks.
- Create community: Encourage communities of customers to meet and share.
- Make bite-size chunks: Devise specialized, smaller offerings to get customers to bite.
- Create a cause: Focus on making the world, or your industry, better.

McConnell and Huba profile eight highly successful companies to illustrate these tenets and prove how solid customer relationships build and sustain companies through good and rocky times. These in-depth company profiles provide real-life examples of evangelism marketing at work, including the opportunities and pitfalls of specific campaigns.

Creating Customer Evangelists explains how organizations as diverse as Southwest Airlines, Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, The Dallas Mavericks, IBM, and others successfully built their customer base and created targeted marketing programs to involve their biggest fans. These programs have produced legions of unofficial salespeople and a cost-effective and powerful marketing force.

By deepening customer relationships, successful organizations create communities that generate grassroots support and value for their products and services. Creating Customer Evangelists focuses on this ultimate marketing approach. McConnell and Huba demonstrate how you can convert good customers into exceptional ones who willingly spread the word.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kara Corbett:

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Edna Miller:

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