



CREATING AND MAINTAINING A CUSTOMER DATABASE

Building and maintaining a customer database can seem like a daunting task, especially if computers are not your strong point, but an up-to-date customer database can save your business time and money and most importantly, help you attract repeat business.

Small businesses have many options for creating a customer database. You can custom build your own in a basic spreadsheet such as Excel – a good choice if you are already comfortable with this software. There are also more sophisticated, dedicated database software programs that can be helpful, as well as online solutions.

The objectives of a customer database are to:

- Keep track of customer data including contact information and buying habits.
- Streamline marketing campaigns with the touch of a button for either email or hard copy mail outs.
- Classify customers into categories.
- Allow you to follow up on, and measure the conversion of new leads.
- Create a variety of reports on customer behavior preferences etc.
- Collecting information

When setting up your customer database think not only in the now, but also in the future, by gathering data on existing customers and future prospects.

Learn how to build a prospect database with solutions such as survey cards and business card fishbowls. Having customers fill out online information that can be emailed directly to you is another effective way to collect information.

Finding the right software

You don't have to be an IT expert to set up a database if you choose user-friendly database software. However you do need to get your head around exactly what the benefits will be

to your business and then find something to match. For example some systems allow you to track how many customers read emails and how many then followed a link to your website, this a great tool, but probably not necessary if you don't use email campaigns or a website!

Start managing

Name, address, phone, and email are all important, but you'll need much more information on customers to take full advantage of your database. Creating your database is only the first step, you'll also need to set up a plan for its ongoing management. Who will update it? Who will purge outdated contacts? Who will have access to it? How will it be secured? Like any system a database is worthless to you without everyone following the correct procedures to keep it updated.

Other tips for maintaining a successful database

- Start now. You can begin collecting data even before you purchase database software.
- Assign ownership of creating reports and programming new fields to one person within the company and allow others to add records. This will streamline the process and ensure the database layout is not compromised.
- To keep your database fresh, provide training for everyone in the company on how to update records, add new clients, and create a policy of when records should be deleted.
- Backup your database regularly — weekly if possible. To decide the frequency, consider if you lost a few weeks of information, how many customers or prospects would be at risk?
- Make sure that your database contains layouts for address labels to enable you to quickly send out mailings to current customers.

60 SECONDS WITH...

MIKE COATES, from COATES MITRE 10 LITHGOW



Favourite Destination: Cycling in Nth America or New Zealand.

Favourite Food: Most Asian Food, the hotter the better.

Someone I admire:

My Parents. Most of the things I do that I am either good at, or I enjoy doing, they taught me. I owe all of my success in life to them.

Favourite Movie: Kill Bill

Something I want to see: I want to see the whole planet by bike.

How do you motivate your staff?

- Always treat your people like you would like to be treated yourself.
- If your having a bad day don't take it out on them. Go Home.
- Always find a reason to give them a pat on the back weekly.

Do you run a staff incentive scheme?

I have tried lots of incentive schemes. They don't work well for long. Now I just reward my team when they do something well. That way they are not expecting or depending on the reward.

What tools do you use for your time management?

I use Outlook and my iphone to organise my life. Without them I would be stuffed.

How long have you been in a Performance Group?

I have been in a performance group for 18 months. I have just joined a second group.

How do you benefit from being in a Performance group?

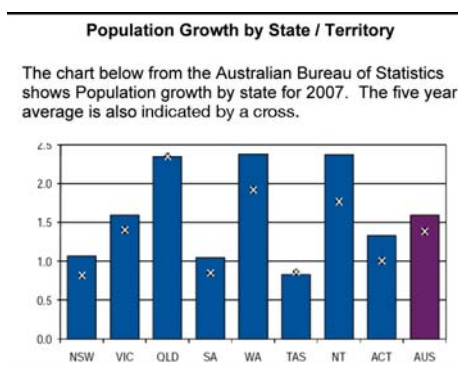
- They help me to look at my business through other people's eyes.
- They make me want to perform better in the eyes of my peers.
- My fellow performance group members are like a board of directors keeping me honest.
- It is one of the best things you can do for your business and your personal development.

POPULATION MINI-BOOM PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMES

A new report shows that a boom in population growth has helped Australia's retail sector perform more strongly than in other countries during the current global economic downturn.

According to the latest PKF Business and Population Monitor, Australia's growth rate was 1.9% in 2008, with 253,000 new residents - six times that of Britain, and double that of the United States.

The report also has encouraging news for the building supplies sector. While the number of new homes being built has slowed down, the decrease has been far less than in other markets such as the USA. Australia is still in the position of having too few homes for too many people and that the situation is being magnified with the population growth.



Matthew Field, director of enterprise advisers at PKF, says SMEs should investigate these trends and discover areas of strong immigration, such as Sydney and the inner suburbs of Melbourne. 'The retail sector can make a big gain from these immigration trends, as these people will need to set up homes and buy products

for the house. You will also have niche areas, particularly in inner cities, where some ethnic groups band together and businesses could find opportunities there. Identify where the spikes are happening and what goods and services you can provide."

Field says unlike the resource-boom driven population growth seen in the 1990s, many industries are taking part in the growth with the biggest winners being retailers and construction companies.

There is no more basic driver of economic growth than population growth.

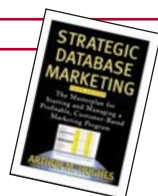
-PKF Business & Population Monitor 2008

BUSINESS BOOK OF THE MONTH

Strategic Datasbase Marketing (2nd Edition)

Resurg Rating: ★★★★★☆ Author: Arthur Hughes

Let me start by saying that after spending some time researching titles available on customer database marketing I was not faced with a glut of invigorating titles. It is certainly not a topic that has attracted the most dynamic authors of our time! However I am confident that the recommended title is one of the most respected, and useful books available on the subject. If you are looking to invest in a new customer database or CRM tool you should read this book first. While it is written as much for marketing managers as for the owners of a small business it is relevant and easy to understand and the learning can be applied to small businesses. Topics covered include: how to use your database to increase sales, the best ways to gather and interpret raw data, how to increase customer loyalty, how to use web based database marketing tools and important how to test and measure all database marketing activity.



NEW PG MEMBERS

Congratulations to the following businesses who recently joined a Performance Group:

Jamie Davies – Davies & Rose Rural Supplies

Brendan Heenan –
MacDonnell Range Holiday Park

Thank you to the following Performance Group members who referred the above new members. They will now each receive a cheque for 10% of their annual Performance Group fees.

Jenny Tonkin – Cairns Coconut Holiday Resort

Do you know someone who would benefit from being in a Performance Group? Email their details to performancegroups@resurg.com.au, if they join a group you will receive a cheque for 10% of your annual Performance Group fees.

PERFORMANCE GROUP CALENDAR OCTOBER 2009

14th Oct, 4pm NZ time	Harvey World Travel NZ Conference Call	0800 448 298, 90673653#
13th & 14th Oct	Travelscene American Express SAWA	Adelaide, SA
14th & 15th Oct	Cheesecake Shop QLD	Brisbane, QLD
15th & 16th Oct	Mitre 10 QLD	Sydney, NSW
15th & 16th Oct	Harvey World Travel VIC2	Melbourne, VIC
17th & 18th Oct	BIG4 G2	Alice Springs, NT
19th & 20th Oct	Mitre 10 NSW1	Heidelberg, VIC
26th & 27th Oct	Harvey World Travel VIC2	Melbourne, VIC
26th & 27th Oct	Mitre 10 NSW2	Leeton, NSW
26th & 27th Oct	Harvey World Travel VIC 1	Melbourne, VIC
27th & 28th Oct	Swimart NSW	Rydalmere, NSW
28th & 29th Oct	Mitre 10 VICTAS1	Bathurst, NSW
29th & 30th Oct	Mitre 10 SAVIC	Colac, VIC
4th Nov, 12pm AEDT	Harvey World Travel BEST	1800 857 029, 90673653#
10th Nov, 10am AEDT	Travelscene American Express	
	QLD Conference Call	1800 857 029, 90673653#
10th & 11th Nov	BIG4 Group1	Frankston, VIC

PRACTICING WHAT WE PREACH!



Several members of the Resurg team sitting a Customer Database training session in the training room at Zetland. Pictured left to right are: front row - Sharon, Jenny, Paul and Sean. Back row - Girgis, Brett, Chris (standing), Ryan and Mark.