



LOVE THE ONES YOU'RE WITH

May is the month of customer lovin' – take time out to appreciate the customers you already have rather than those you don't.

I AM a pretty simple kind of person. I write books that aim to simplify the process of business building and to be honest, I think the whole corporate world could do with a good dose of simplification. Unfortunately, we live in a world where complexity seems to have taken a firm grasp on all we do and as a result, we spend half our lives managing this new found complexity rather than getting on with what it is we want to do.

I want to help you to build your business with one very simple idea. For the next month, don't focus on chasing new customers. Instead, put all your focus and attention back into existing customers. Spend money on them, communicate with them, thank them and ask them what you could be doing better to help them in whatever way they need. In other words, love the ones you're with.

I can spout countless statistics on why it is easier and cheaper to keep existing customers rather than chase new ones but we've heard them all before. So, why do we neglect our existing customers in the chase for new ones?

Very few businesses are good at keeping customers and in my opinion, most are getting worse every day. I am tired of hearing reasons why a business cannot instead of why it can. Pop down to a bank, give Telstra a call or fly Jetstar if you need this message reinforced. But it isn't only the big corporations

struggling with this concept. While most small businesses are busy chasing their tails, the customer at the front of the queue is the one being neglected the most.

Now, here are a few ideas you can use to get you started in your month of lovin':

- 1.** Make this month 'The month of the customer' and explain to your staff what it means. Get their ideas and input and come up with a list of ways to really love your customers.
- 2.** Ring your customers out of the blue simply to say, 'Thank you' for their business. Tell them how much it means to you and your staff.
- 3.** Give your customers something for free and tell them why you are doing it.
- 4.** Send your customers a thank you card.
- 5.** Deliver some food – nothing says thank you better than a box of chocolates, a cake or a box of fruit.
- 6.** Have a function for your customers – something simple and informal and don't try and sell them anything. This is simply to say thank you for supporting your business.
- 7.** If your customers are other businesses, take the time to visit and possibly put a face to a name or an email address.

