

Most of Your Potential Customers Are Confused About What They Want

The beliefs of potential customers can be deceiving. Here's an example of what I mean: Many people mistake what their interests truly are by framing the issue in the wrong way. Given the choice between flying and driving from Las Vegas, Nevada, to El Paso, Texas, few people would choose to drive except to save money. After all, a discounted one-way air ticket is usually available for just a little over \$100. The distance is more than 700 miles and would require over 10 hours of driving, which excludes time for rest and refueling stops. For an individual, flying seems to have a clear advantage. At some point, enough people in a family are involved that driving starts to have the cost edge. If you change your perspective, the question looks a lot different. Between Las Vegas and El Paso you can see some of the most beautiful natural wonders and delightful anthropological sites in the world.

You can go to the Grand Canyon and the large meteorite crater in Arizona to start. From there, you can take a side trip north to see the gorgeous vistas of Monument Valley and the stunning ruins of Mesa Verde. Swing east from there, and you can go through Canyon de Chelly to see a sort of Southwestern Eden before heading south towards the subterranean splendors of Carlsbad Caverns. On your way to Carlsbad stop for a UFO milk shake in Roswell, New Mexico, and read the road signs that make jokes about the Roswell incident. From Carlsbad Caverns, it's just a short drive to El Paso. Naturally, such an amazing trip requires some advance planning, takes more time, and costs more money than flying or driving through as fast as possible. But for those additional investments in time and money in taking the road less traveled, you can have the family experience of a lifetime. The only thing you will miss is the magnificent aerial view of the Grand Canyon. But you can make up for that oversight on your next cross-country flight to or from Los Angeles by flying during the daytime . . . or you can take one of the many tourist flights for this purpose from Las Vegas before you start your drive. Whenever we believe that we know exactly what we want, chances are that we are selecting a route through life that misses all the best choices. Both as suppliers and users of offerings, we owe it to ourselves and one another to overcome our facile beliefs and become aware of more choices and act on any better choices. We need to believe that there's a better way than the best way we know today. Otherwise, disbelief owns our destiny and will guide us down less rewarding roads. Here are questions to help you identify the major sources of disbelief about your organization and its offerings so you can amend your marketing in appropriate ways: What does each current and potential customer and beneficiary believe are the major benefits and drawbacks of your offerings? Where those beliefs are incorrect, what are the reasons for the incorrect beliefs? How have your actions and communications fed those incorrect beliefs? How can you make current and potential beneficiaries and customers aware of the true benefits and drawbacks? How can you make your actions and communications more credible?

About the Author

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