



# Regular contact is the right touch



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## AN INSURANCE MARKETING SURVEY

determined that 40 percent of investors who are dissatisfied with their financial advisor say the No. 1 reason is because the advisor doesn't stay in touch. In a related study, 72 percent of those who made the decision to leave their advisor for a competitor cited broker "indifference" as grounds for change.

Survey says: Client loyalty is the lifeblood of any business and requires regular communication on the advisor's part, which is the key to any lasting and successful relationship.

Studies show that a vast majority of dissatisfied customers will never come right out and tell you they're dissatisfied. They simply leave quietly, later telling everyone they know not to do business with you. Consider the following information:

- Repeat business premium averages 33 percent more than first-time premium.
- Referrals among repeat customers are 107 percent greater than non-customers.
  - It costs six times more to sell to a prospect than to a client.
  - It costs 30 times less to maintain a current client than to acquire a new one.

So what can you do now to give your clients the service they deserve? Greg Woodbury of San Diego-based Emerald Publications, a 12-year veteran in the client communication industry, is a firm believer in an educational approach to client contact because it greatly enhances an advisor's professional image while satisfying the client's thirst to stay informed. He says that "a mix of conventional and state-of-the art electronic methods gets the best results; all can be completely automated and has never been more affordable."

Woodbury suggests the following must-haves for advisor success:

- Personalized Web site: Pre-loaded sites are available that contain a wealth of financial updates, newsletters, research articles, financial calculators, market watch indices and more.
- Personalized newsletter: A monthly stream of information establishes you as a valuable information source. Pre-written formats are available; you choose the design and content, and be sure to include your photo.
- Special occasion wishes: Delivery can be set up to run on autopilot and can be as simple and inexpensive as periodic e-mails or, for a slightly higher cost, direct mailings.
- Phone calls: Follow-up calls show genuine appreciation and give you a chance to answer questions and ascertain current needs.

Woodbury states, "It takes a minimum of 12 to 15 communications a year to keep clients informed and happy," and that thousands of advisors nationwide agree that having "happy clients has its rewards in knowing that in addition to repeat business and countless referrals, you have really established yourself as a valuable information resource to your community."

So think back. During your initial sales process, did you promise to keep your client "informed" and that you'd stay in touch? Maybe it's time to keep that promise.

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