

## Understand the Buyer's Cycle

Written by Steve Marr  
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Often customers buy products on a pre-decided schedule. For example, I had the responsibility for corporate purchasing years ago where an office machine might have a three-year lease. The company holding the lease would typically come in three or four months before the expiration time to renew or sell me a new or upgraded machine, likely at a more expensive price. Other salesmen might also try to interest me in a new machine, but at the wrong time. I turned them away because I wasn't currently in the market for another copy machine. Not one ever asked me what the renewal date was so they could schedule a call before I signed with somebody else.

I am amazed at how few real estate agents stay in touch with customers and prospects after a sale. The average homeowner moves every 5 to 7 years. Each instance will require a real estate agent to sell a home and possibly assist with the acquisition of a new place. Real estate sales are very competitive, and the commissions are rather substantial so investing time to keep in touch with former customers is smart. By asking how the family is doing, if the family is growing or whether kids are leaving home; the wise agent can be first in line for an additional commission.

Amazon does a good job of sending reminders suggesting buying a product again. While I tend to find these annoying, I believe they are effective in selling product.

A temporary employment agency would be wise to connect with landscape companies in late winter to ask about being able to furnish short-term labor rather than sitting back and hoping the phone rings.

Isaiah wrote, "I, the LORD, watch over it; I water it continually. I guard it day and night so that no one may harm it." (Isaiah 27:3, NIV) Part of watching over and watering your business is understanding the buying cycle decisions of your customers and getting in front of those decisions rather than reacting to them. If you wait for a reaction you may never have an opportunity to sell. They will take their business elsewhere.

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