



## The 90 Days That Will Define Your Business Forever

You've done the hard work of winning a new customer although it is what you do in the next 90 days that determines if they will stick around.

### The first 90 days of any new relationship is critical:

- A new Prime Minister has about three months to inspire the Nation and gain the political capital he needs to govern.
- A young hockey prospect has but a few months to impress his coach before being sent down to the minors.
- A new CEO has 90 days to learn her job before the rank and file start expecting tangible leadership and results.

## The Onboarding and Orientation Window: The First 90 Days

For any company and especially a younger company, the first 90 days of a customer relationship are extremely important. Research into the "subscription business model" shows that **getting a customer to effectively start using your product in the first 90 days leads to an increase in lifetime value of up to 300 percent for these companies.**

Take a look at marketing software provider **Constant Contact, which used to struggle with the first 90 days of a new customer relationship.** In the old days, Constant Contact took a "who, what, when" approach to onboarding new customers.

**"Who"** stood for who a customer wanted to send an email campaign to; **"What"** stood for what the customer wanted to send; and **"When"** described the timing of the campaign.

After users signed up for its service, Constant Contact would ask customers to upload their email database (the **"Who"** in the three-step orientation process). This required the new user to upload a customer list--the trickiest part of the "onboarding" experience. It required the customer to leave Constant Contact's site and struggle with how to export a contact list--often from a jury-rigged database kept in Excel or Outlook. **The process was awkward, and many new customers stopped using Constant Contact because they hit a barrier before they had a chance to fall in love with the Constant Contact software.**

## What, Who, When

Wanting to stem new customer churn, Constant Contact ***changed its orientation process to focus on "What"***. Immediately after signing up, new users were encouraged to create their first email campaign. Suddenly customers were seeing their campaign come to life in front of their eyes. Constant Contact offered customers a library of stock images that looked more beautiful than anything a business owner had used in the past. **Customers could see firsthand how professional their company was going to look from using this service!**

Only after the customer having completed the "What" stage and having earned the **emotional reward** of seeing its first campaign come to life, did Constant Contact switch to the "Who" part of creating a campaign. **The difference was, now, Constant Contact had enough relationship equity with the customer to get it over the hump of uploading its database.**

This minor reordering of the "orientation/onboarding" process led to a dramatic reduction in customer churn—**which is the death knell of any subscription business.**

Whether you're in a subscription business, or still using a transaction business model, **how you treat a customer in the first 90 days will go a long way in determining their overall satisfaction. Make it easy or easier to use your product or service.** Develop an easy to use and well thought out and tested "contact us" and feedback processes. **Felling over-challenged and frustrated is not a great way to start a new relationship!**

To benchmark your customer satisfaction against world class brands, get your Value Builder Score now. **Or email me for an outline of how to build and use the "Net Promoter Score".**