



## LOVE Your Customers & They Will LOVE You Back!

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### Client Spotlight:



#### Horton's Produce

We would like to extend a special welcome our newest client Horton's Produce.

This business was started by Dee Horton's father and passed to her and her husband Blake. Blake met Dee working as a young man for Mr. Horton and fell in love with her and developed a deep and lasting loyalty to the business. Their love for each other and their love for their company benefitted all other supermarkets and grocer's stores, so they might access the very best in produce.

Each season, I have the luxury of visiting their business and seeing the abundance of gorgeous vegetables, fruits, nuts, etc. that each time of year has to yield. They are honest and forthright and the relationships they have built with their suppliers and clients will last for their lifetime and will most likely pass to their children for safekeeping.

#### Horton's Produce

44 Winding Ridge Rd  
Hillsville, VA 24343  
(276) 728-9962

### Where is the love? It is all around this community of ours.

It's easy to get wrapped up in the day to day business activities and allow it to shape our "business persona". We go home and unwind into our personal relationships and become another version of ourselves, a little more laid back, and a little more tolerant. When the work piles up, and the late nights eat into our personal time, the heart hardens a little. This makes empathy and patience so much harder to access. But sometimes, you are given a gift by the world at large – a miracle if you will: something that recharges the heart and inspires faith in humankind all over again. That nudge can have a profound effect on the way you dedicate yourself to others, in your business and in your personal life. For me, that miracle is Sutton Smith, and I am an avid follower of his adventure to crush his leukemia.

When Anthony and Mary Smith learned their five year old child, Sutton, would be battling leukemia, they made the decision to fight it as a family. As they continued down the path of treatment, they extended the invitation to their friends to join the fight via the Facebook page at: [Super Sutton's Great Adventure](#). From there, this team expanded into



the community and the awareness of this little boy's battle, and of all the other children inflicted, began to rise. The most recent event occurred at Radford University's team event launched by the [Highlanders' Baseball Team](#). Sutton's chemotherapy treatments inspired over 100 people to participate in shaving their heads in the "Shave for Sutton" awareness event. The heartwarming participation was caught on camera by [WLSL news](#).

In the cold months, where we work so hard, it's good to stop and notice how amazing we are as a community. It helps to become involved in something that makes a difference to the life of another, to go beyond work, and see people at their best. This recharges the spirit and makes you far more effective at extending graciousness towards your coworkers, your clients, and your fellow man. Give your heart what it needs and please join Sutton in his great adventure. If he inspires you as he has me, give him a "Like" on his Facebook page!

## Did you know...

...your network may be getting you blacklisted and preventing you from sending emails!



Have you ever received an email telling you that your message couldn't be sent because the recipient or their server rejected your message? This could be because your mail server has been blacklisted.

Reasons you could be blacklisted and blocked from sending mail could vary from something as simple as not having a reverse (PTR) DNS (Domain Name Service) record set up for your mail server's IP address to a device on your network sending bulk unsolicited emails or Trojan/viral traffic.

PTR records are usually an easy fix, just contact your ISP and they'll usually be able to get you set up with one.

Unsolicited bulk or commercial email (UCE) originating from your network is a bit trickier to clean up. The solution might be as simple as configuring your firewall to only allow SMTP (Simple Mail Transport Protocol) traffic from your mail server instead of every device on the network. It also helps to have an active monitoring system and logging in place to watch for bursts of heavy traffic so you can easily see where the problem is stemming from.

When you receive a notification that your mail has been rejected, the website **mxtoolbox.com** is an invaluable tool in determining why. There you can perform blacklist checks, perform diagnostics to test the hardness of your mail server or firewall rules, do dns lookups and more.

As always, Pronets is also glad to offer our assistance and expertise with email issues – we're here to help!



*All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt. – Charles M. Schulz*

## Eight Ways to Modernize Your Sales Strategies

An effective approach to sales takes into account changing technology, communication channels and customer preferences. Here are eight tips to help bring your sales strategy to the next level.

1. Think like a consumer: In order to effectively reach customers today, you need to think like one. A modern consumer does their homework. They expect to have information readily available to them to guide purchasing decisions—think customer reviews, real time access to information about products and services, and easy online transactions.
2. Balance virtual and in-person connections: Some will say there is no substitute for face-to-face sales meetings because they foster connections and build relationships that don't always occur with virtual meetings. However, more and more customers are becoming increasingly comfortable with virtual means of connecting and are even demanding it, due to the flexibility and convenience it affords them. Striking a balance is the key.
3. Identify consumer preferences: One size does not fit all when it comes to marketing to customers. Whether your company uses catalogs, direct mail, email marketing or a website to reach customers, find out what your customers want to see and when—and adjust accordingly.
4. School your sales team: Today's consumer expects a certain level of expertise from a sales rep. It is important that salespeople are able to help consumers make better purchasing decisions; customers will not settle for simply being sold. A sales force that consists of technical experts will better position your company as an expert.
5. Use predictive analytics: Using data, rather than gut intuition, to generate sales can lead to better, more qualified buyers entering your sales pipeline. Training your sales people to collect data on consumer preferences via customer feedback can be a great start to implementing predictive models designed to upsell current customers and increase sales.
6. Adopt social selling: Social media can be a great way to interact with both existing customers and potential ones. Social media outlets such as Twitter®, Facebook®, LinkedIn® and Pinterest® can provide great opportunities to utilize connections for relationship building and to gain valuable insight into the behavior of targeted consumers.
7. Utilize inbound marketing: Inbound marketing uses valuable company content such as blogs, podcasts, videos, e-books, e-newsletters, white papers and social media marketing to gain the attention of sales leads.
8. Go from cold to warm calling: While some believe that cold calling is a thing of the past, others swear by it. Either way, using tools such as the Web and social media to learn as much as possible about prospects before contacting them can help warm up the coldest of calls.

Revamping your sales strategy allows your company to better target the customers of today. Striking a balance between traditional sales approaches and modern sales strategies can be a great way to reach your customers when and where they're ready to buy.

*Adapted from 4imprint Small Business News article "Eight ways to modernize your sales strategies"*

## PRONETS, Inc. Charitable Causes

### HOPE, Inc.

A monetary donation was made to our friends at HOPE, Inc. in Wytheville, VA that will help provide support for families in need of rent or utility payments, or other basic needs that are often taken for granted.

### The Battleground

A monetary donation was made to The Battleground in support of the Carroll County High School Prom to be held April 25, 2014.



### TUESDAY TECH TIPS

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