



I'm interested in hearing from other companies whether or not they send clients a holiday gift. If you do send gifts, what is the criteria that needs to be met for a gift to be sent; sales dollars for the year, years of business with the company, etc.? How do you measure the value it brings?

Sales Representatives participate in the cost of the gifts. They pay 50% of the cost of anything with a company logo on the items – usually Promotional Type Items. Sales Representatives pay full face value for Sporting Event Tickets.

Sales Representatives pay full value for other gifts they decide to give customers and can write-off under IRS Rules for Business Expenses – Gifts; Entertainment, Etc.

Years ago we sent gifts to top customers and a just a holiday card to the rest of the customer base. We stopped the gifts about 5-7 years ago and did cards for all. The past few years it has been hit-and-miss even on the cards.

Many larger companies don't want employees receiving gifts anymore and, in my opinion, the cards aren't even seen by many contacts any more.

We base ours on sales dollars for the year. Different levels get different gifts. Aside from a few customers, who have a long enough history to stay above their levels if they don't hit on a given year.

We send a standard gift like a crock of cheese to most. To others a catered lunch . To Japanese a handkerchief or suitable gift of their country.

We stopped doing this in 2009. The only thing we do for Christmas is we try to take our largest customers out to lunch or dinner with a member of the executive group as a thank you for their business.

Our company sends holiday gifts to various customers. However, the decision is based on the amount of business the customer has brought to the company, as well as the longevity of the relationship.

It would be more applicable for me to respond to this question in my former role in sales and marketing.

We did send various types of gifts throughout the years. The items were defined and purchased by corporate/sales management. A total budget amount was defined and specific budgets were established per rep. This varied each year - grew as revenues grew or pulled back in a leaner year. The budget per gift was typically \$10 - 25. We allowed the rep and sales manager to collaborate on which customers to include.

The dynamics within an account can alter who you choose to send gifts to. Should you provide a gift to a person that's part of a team you work with closely but isn't involved with your company? Not including them may stand out to the other team members as an unnecessary exclusion and ruin some of the goodwill you are trying to establish.

Also a number of companies have started to refuse gifts, so that complicates it further. We found that providing some sort of food basket or even catering a "department" lunch eliminated the exclusion issue and typically got around the concerns companies had over the gift giving process. It also allowed for more personal interaction, which helped further the relationships.

In the past, we sent gifts to customers. The criteria used was that management set an overall budgeted dollar amount, which was distributed to each sales rep, based on his/her sales volume. The sales rep then chose which customers received gifts. The choice of gifts was varied so that smaller gifts could be sent to small accounts, and larger accounts got bigger gifts.

Since 2009, we have discontinued this practice.

We send holiday gifts annually to a couple of hundred customers with an approximate \$7-\$15 value plus shipping if required. These go to customers who we do active business with, despite the dollar value really. We will do more for our larger customers say, top ten. Our sales reps who are commission only, may improvise by adding even more to the gift value based on their relationships. Measuring value is difficult, but having your company logo on your customer's desks or hanging on their walls is the value.

We do send a holiday gift to all our customers. The value of the gift is based on that customer's sales for the year.

We send out a card with an insert listing 6 charities we support, and let the customers choose where we donate. We then tally up the results and give money on their behalf to the charity of their choice. I think we do it for almost all of our customers, we do not measure the value it brings, but we usually get several letters/notes back from appreciative people. We used to send out gifts to our top 10 or so customers, but that is a hassle, and I know personally I'd rather have lower prices than a free fruit basket.

We have sent gifts since WW2 to our best customers & friends based on sales, prompt payments, no troubles with pricing, longevity & essential friends serving our trade such as a few salesman, postmaster, police and fire dept., garbage hauler. The sales criteria do you want to spend \$30 on this customer? What can you do for \$30 to thank them for their business? We send Collin St Bakery Fruitcakes from Corsicana TX and 2 lb wood Cheese boxes made here in Wisconsin. The cakes are being phased out in favor of Cheese. We feel if we support WI products it will help our state locally & nationally. We feel \$20-30 at 1% of \$3,000 or greater is good, sometimes a Co. with large sales gets up to 3 gifts. Of course we send a calendar to all customers with each shipment during the year with our name and slug line thanking them for the order. . Govt. offices, schools are excluded due to their rules.

We just make it easy and give all employees a \$30 Visa card each year.

We have sent items to our best customers. Items we have sent in the past are wrapping paper that we ran on our presses, fruit and other individual gifts (logoed golf balls, clothing, etc.).

In addition, we have received food (cheese & sausage, cookies, etc) and bottles of wine from vendors.

We send a low cost holiday gift that is more of an advertisement & a thank-you for doing business with us. Generally we don't send it to anyone who spent less than \$300 with us. Last year we sent a coffee mug that we filled with Hershey Kisses and attached a small tag with a coupon for a discount on a future order. The tag said "Mugs and Kisses from your friends at". The promotion cost about \$7.50 per client and was very well received with many calls telling what a nice thoughtful holiday gift.
