



## ***WHAT DO GUITAR PLAYERS & SALES REPS HAVE IN COMMON?***

My wife and I had a few friends over the other night. My friend Jerry saw one of my guitars sitting in the corner and asked if he could play it. We players are very respectful of other people's property and would never dream of just picking up the guitar and playing without permission. I quickly discovered that Jerry, Mick and I played and enjoyed similar music styles so in no time at all I had three guitars out and we played for hours. Most self respecting guitar player own more than one or two guitars. Now you may ask what does this have to do with sales. Bear with me for a moment.

The next day I was talking to Mick and his comment was he had not played in so long that his fingers were still burning from the workout. Now for those of you who do not play guitar I will let you in on a secret. Guitar players who practice regularly develop very strong hands and calloused finger tips. It makes holding down the strings easier and more effective. I'm sure you have heard the old saying, what's the best way to learn guitar? Practice, practice, practice.

This brings me to how guitar playing and sales fit together. Later that same day I was on a phone call with a sales person who had just changed jobs. He was complaining that he had spent years building up his client base at this former employer and then moved to a new industry with completely new clients. He had to start from scratch, cold calls, warm calls, prospecting activities, learning new products and skills. It was not foreign to him but he was out of practice.

Good musicians will always take some time out of their routine to practice scales, cord progressions and the "technical" side of playing. You can't always expect to play the songs; you need to constantly revisit the fundamentals. Good sales people need to do the same to stay in top form. Practice, practice, practice. Go back to the basics. Make some cold calls, knock on a few doors, and get back to the common objections your clients use. Build up the calluses so you can perform better. I like to think of prospecting in the same way I think of practicing the rudiments of music. I need to do them both regularly to keep my basic skills strong so I can work at a higher level. Fielding objections and learning about my customer concerns builds up the calluses and improves my technique.

Did you take some time out of your day to work on the most basic aspect of your selling – prospecting? Remember if you are not taking care of your customer there is always a competitor ready to do it for you. Are you prospecting for new customers or waiting for your company marketing efforts to find them for you?

Ricardo Pereira of Klout Consulting wrote; "customers don't break a buying habit, they replace it with a new one and always with a reason". Do you have the right reason to land that customer? It's really quite simple; you must solve a problem, provide a solution or satisfy a need.

### **Aim Higher!**

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Robert is a managing partner in B2B Sales Connections Inc. He has over 25 years of experience in B2B sales, sales management & training. He helps clients achieve greater sales success in the B2B marketplace by focusing on recruiting, training and marketing services for sales organization & sales professionals. B2B Sales Connections hosts Canada's premier niche job board and career website for business to business sales professionals. For more information, please visit [www.b2bsalesconnections.com](http://www.b2bsalesconnections.com).