Brand Advocates: Turning Enthusiastic Customers into a Powerful Marketing Force by Rob Fuggetta (@RobFuggetta) (Founder and CEO of Zuberance)

Just last week, I had the whole coffee shop turn around and give me a “look”. I think I got a little too loud and passionate when I started talking about the power of referrals and why it’s smart business and smarter marketing to run a referral system. If you want to learn more about that, read my review on John Jantsch’s [*Referral Engine*](http://smallbiztrends.com/2010/05/referral-engine-teaching-your-business-market-itself.html).

In the broadest sense of the word, there’s nothing better than referrals. After all, referrals come from happy, satisfied and enthusiastic customers. What could be better than that? Well, according to Fuggetta – Advocates are a step above your average referral.

**Think you know how to build advocates –“Fuggetta” ‘Bout It**

I received a review copy of *Brand Advocates: Turning Enthusiastic Customers into a Powerful Marketing Force* and opened it right out of the envelope and took a quick tour of the book.

Bob Fuggetta is the CEO of Zuberance, a social media marketing company that specializes in building and developing your brand advocates.

This is one of those books like [Constant Contact’s Guide to eMail Marketing](http://smallbiztrends.com/2010/01/book-review-the-constant-contact-guide-to-email-marketing.html) that is written by leaders of a company to explain the importance of their service and to get people to start focusing on the strategies they support and provide.

Based on that, you might be tempted to dismiss it. That would be a bad idea. Fuggetta provides valuable advice for businesses of all sizes. Here are just a few points that I got our of the book:

**Advocates are serious business.**

This is not just another book about a fad. Fuggetta takes the CEO approach of building a case for building and developing advocates for your brand, business, product or service. He’s not ga-ga over building advocates because it’s the next big thing. He’s doing it because it’s an untapped profitable marketing resource that most businesses are ignoring.

In fact, Fuggetta takes about 60% of the book to lay out a solid case for and “Advocate Strategy” by giving case after case and example after example of businesses large and small who have successfully implemented an advocate strategy.

**Yipee! There are practical how-to-tips**

The second half of the book (so-to-speak), is devoted to guiding the reader through the process of setting up their own advocate strategy. Here’s a tip – hopefully, you’ve been using the “Net Promoter Score” satisfaction measure in your surveys – because that is the simplest way to identify your advocates.

Here’s a quick Net Promoter Score primer: Simply ask your customers this question “How likely are you to refer (insert your company name, product or brand here) to a friend or family member?” Use a rating scale of 1-10. Then identify those customers who gave you a 9 or 10 rating and reel them in as advocates. That little tip is worth the price of the book. Since I run these kinds of surveys for clients – I can tell you that much of this data often goes to waste after the initial survey report.

**You will learn to leverage social media**

Another huge benefit of reading this book is the practical guidance you’ll get on how to use and leverage all Facebook fan pages, Twitter and Pinterest accounts that you created because you were supposed to, but weren’t sure exactly what to do with. Fuggetta shows examples and strategies that will inspire you and get you into action.

**A “Swipe Template” for your very own Advocate Strategy**

In marketing, we love to model what works. I mean why spend all this time and energy reinventing the wheel when someone is showing you something that works. We marketing folks call that modeling or adapting. And we even have a word for files and models that are worthy of adaptation – swipe files. Well, this is what you’ll get at the end of *Brand Advocates* you’ll get a “swipe” strategy outline that you can use to start developing all those raving fans into advocates.

**How do I know that an advocate strategy is right for me?**

I don’t know a business on the planet that doesn’t benefit from an enthusiastic referral. If you feel like you’re NOT a marketing expert and the mere thought of putting together fancy advertising and social media strategies makes you want to stick a fork in your eye – *Brand Advocates* might be just what the doctor ordered.

*Brand Advocates* is an ideal book for those people who would rather focus on crafting the best product, service or brand in the business and letting its excellence speak for itself.