

How To **WOW!** Your Customers To Keep Them For Life

collected and edited by
**David Goldsmith
& Wanda Loskot**

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47 Business Stories Demonstrating How To **WOW! Your Customers To Keep Them For Life**

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1

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WOW! People By Giving This E-book Away!

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About The Publishers ...



David Goldsmith

... believes it's not money, and it's not the customers themselves that drive business, but, instead, it's the relationships that companies form or don't form that drive everything else.

As an entrepreneur, himself, he's had more than a fair-share of experience with the practical and insightful concepts and practices he now shares with others.

A graduate of Cornell University, a frequent speaker, and a Master Certified Coach, David brings to his work an aliveness, and an easiness with his work and with others that his own customers appreciate. David is told, regularly, that it's that very same easiness that allows them to open to the possibilities of his methods for corporate reengineering as a result of closely fostered customer relationships.

David is the publisher of Daily Service, an email newsletter which is read daily by thousands of subscribers around the world who want to learn more about the importance of customer/vendor relationships. He lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico with his wife and two children.

Visit David's website at <http://CustomerEdge.com>



Wanda Loskot

As a business coach, she works with clients on four continents. Her articles are published every week in countless publications.

She offers teleclasses, seminars, corporate training and one-on-one coaching for sales professionals and small business owners

If you go to altavista search engine and make a search for "Wanda Loskot" you will find nearly 2,000 references -- she is considered one of the *authorities* on the subject of the Internet and attraction marketing ...

In the past 10 years, years people from all walks of life have taken part in Wanda's workshops. For two years she produced a monthly TV program "Success Connection" interviewing many outstanding entrepreneurs who shared their strategies and her "Success Connection" website at <http://loska.com> was selected as one of the Ten Best Women Owned Small Business Web Sites.

You will like Wanda's sites - all of them are full of rich content:

- <http://InternetSuccessCoach.com>
- <http://MakeYourBusinessWork.com>
- <http://AdvertisingCoach.com>
- <http://AttractionMarketing.com>
- <http://webfixreview.com>
- <http://SaneMarketing.com>
- <http://LOSKA.COM> (Success Connection- mother of all!)



If your bank could start over ...

I wanted to apply for a home equity loan, and was, frankly, not looking forward to the process -- if you've ever applied for a mortgage, you know how difficult and annoying the process can be! After doing some research, I decided to apply for one with Wingspan Bank (www.wingspan.com), on the internet. Their slogan says it all: If your bank could start over, this is what it would be."

Isn't that terrific? And they're right!! I was blown away by the ease with which they responded to my application and request for a mortgage! As I said, I applied online. Someone called to tell me that the loan had been approved. All of the details were worked out, very easily, by phone.

They faxed three documents to me that needed to be signed, *and* sent the notary to my house to witness my signatures. They did a drive by appraisal, too -- talk about convenient and simple! Our mortgage had minimal closing costs, a terrific interest rate, and I couldn't be happier with the mortgage *and* the very simple process I went through to get it!

This is the way getting a mortgage should always be! It was clear to me that Wingspan had thought about the process the customer goes through and had decided that they would put systems in place to take away, or make easy, all the things that are usually difficult or time consuming, or generally annoying.

What they created really does serve everyone -- they get the information they need, and the customer gets a pleasant process

and a great mortgage. This is the kind of win/win every company should be going for with its customers!

David Goldsmith



Hand written thank you notes

I regularly and happily buy skin care from a company, DHC in San Francisco. It all started when they sent me a few samples almost 2 years ago. Since they don't have a brick and mortar location, samples were the best way to try them out.

After sampling their products, I started to order from them. Every order I have received from them comes back with a hand written thank you note, addressing me by name!!! After a while, they sent me information about a program where I could set up a recurring schedule. I would pick several products that I regularly use and the timeframe I wanted them to be shipped and they would ship them and automatically charge my card for me.

I thought this was a great idea so I signed up knowing that there was a minimum commitment to four recurring orders. After the first three orders I found one product I had opted for was bothering me and I wasn't using the others quite as quickly as I had originally expected. So I called their customer service, almost expecting to have to do battle over the issue since I knew that I hadn't completed the required four shipments.

But the rep to which I explained my situation was fantastic. She went over my options; to cancel the program or change the program to include something else I might use. She even went over the cost savings, if any. It turned out that it was better for me to just cancel participation in the program, which she did happily. I then went on to explain that I had two bottles of a product that bothered my skin.

She helped me arrange an exchange without any hassles. After this experience I knew that I would be with them for life for three reasons:

- They have excellent products (my skin never looked better!!)
- They have excellent customer service and reps
- They show me that they appreciate me as a customer (how often do you get hand written thank you notes when you buy something?)

DHC has shown me that they know how to run a business and keep customers happy, too.

Mindy Law

We Want YOUR Story Too!

Have you been recently delighted or disappointed by the customer service you've received? We want to hear about it!! Just send your story to <mailto:story@customeredge.com> -- tell us what made it the kind of experience it was for you.

If we use it, we'll be sure to give you credit for having shared it, so be certain to give us your name! We reserve the right to edit for appropriateness, length, and style.



Stay in touch to win them back!

I don't believe that a single long distance service provider is a "best" choice for everyone. For our purposes, my wife and I decided to use AT&T on one of our two lines and Sprint on the other. We made a commitment to use one line for local calls and the three particular numbers we call the most, one from each of the qualifying areas.

When we moved from eastern Ontario to Toronto, we opted to have only one line put in. But, after our move we got the following letter in the mail from Sprint Canada:

Dear Customer,

Congratulations on your move! Have you forgotten something? THE MOST savings plan is available to you in your new home.

We understand that you have recently moved but have not taken THE MOST savings plan with you. Did you know that Sprint Canada offers the same great savings and service in your new home? Please call to reactivate your long distance services at.....

If you have any questions, please feel free to call our customer service associates, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at.....

We look forward to welcoming you back to Sprint.

Yours truly, Michael Sharp
Sprint Canada Inc.

I was impressed! I can't help but feel loyal to a company that actually "misses" me, when I don't use their service or buy from them in a while. And with all the sophistication we can get with a \$2000 PC these days, it is so easy for even the smallest of small businesses!

Robin C. Johnston



Beyond the standard low price guarantee

It's pretty standard for a store to offer what they call a "low price guarantee." If you purchase an item and then find it for a lower price in another store in the area, the store from which you purchased it will give you back the difference between what you paid and what you would have paid buying it from their competitor.

Some even offer a percentage *over* that difference in price. All this in an effort to not be undersold and keep your business.

However, there's no *effort* on their part at all. *You* need to watch for ads, or look around to see if there's a lower price elsewhere. *You* need to then take the receipt (and sometimes the item) back to the store where you purchased it in order to get the refund. And for what?? By the time you jump through all those hoops, your refund is probably not worth the amount of time you spent getting it.

Who needs the hassle? Not me, that's for sure. But here where

I live, we have a company that sells TVs, VCRs, and such which is growing quite rapidly because they do things differently.

They watch for sale ads. They have their employees looking at competitor's prices. And if they find that someone has a lower price than you paid, they'll simply issue a check for the difference, and put it in the mail to you. Wow! What a major difference!

And I know it's not just a gimmick. I received such a check just the other day. \$47.25. With it was a personalized note, which thanked me for choosing to buy from them in the first place, explained the refund, and made the offer to assist me further if I needed anything. *And* it was hand-signed by the store manager - not a stamp... not a computer generated copy of his signature. I'm not impressed by much, but this was quite the exception.

David Goldsmith



**Pick up a phone
and just call ...**

A while ago I received a call from Lane Bryant store. It was quite surprising. I just was at their store a couple of days earlier and thought they called to let me know that there was something wrong with the item I purchased or that I forgot something. I was wrong. Here is how the conversation went:

"Mrs. Loskot, this is Stephanie from Lane Bryant store, may I take a moment of your time?"

"Sure."

"You signed up to receive information about our special sales. Did you visit our store recently?"

"Yes, I did." I said. "Just a couple of days ago."

"Oh great! Did you see something you liked but for some reason you didn't buy?"

"In the matter of fact I was considering a dress, but it is a bit too pricey and I need to think about it for a while."

"Mrs. Loskot, I have something that you might like", she said. I could hear a smile in her voice and I liked it.

"I am calling to let you know about our upcoming special next week. For every 50 dollars you spend at Lane Bryant we will give you 25 dollar gift certificate toward your next purchase. So, you might want to wait and buy this dress next week ..."

"Thanks a lot!" I said. This is very nice news", I smiled back.

"Is there anything else I could do for you today?" Stephanie asked.

"No, everything is fine - thanks for asking".

"Thank you for your time Mrs. Loskot - we are looking forward to seeing you at the store."

This short phone conversation left me smiling and made me think. Years ago I trained salespeople in the large department stores chain and thought them to do the same kind of calls. Unfortunately, I don't think many of them really did those calls, once they left my training course....

Come to think about it, this was the first call of that sort I received...That is precisely why calls like that are SOOOOO rare - and so effective. I didn't take advantage of that sale at Lane Bryant, but I certainly will shop there again.

Wanda Loskot



Invite them for simple snacks

I have been shopping at Ann Taylor (women's apparel store) for a while now, and they typically have good customer service - which is part of the reason why they've kept me as a customer for so long.

Yesterday, I went in to return something after work, and just wanted to get in and out of the mall quickly, because it's usually so crowded in the early evenings. To my surprise, Ann Taylor had set out some hors d'oeuvres and sparkling cider near some comfortable chairs in the center of the store.

They were inviting people who were waiting to pay, waiting for a friend in the dressing room, or just plain browsing, to sit

down and relax with some snacks. It changed the whole atmosphere of the store!

I wasn't in such a hurry to get out of there, and neither was anyone else. Salespeople were chatting with customers, people were lingering much longer than usual. I asked the salesperson if this was a company-wide effort, and she replied, "I don't believe so - not yet, anyway! We just thought it would be a nice for our customers."

She was right. The snacks were simple - just some crackers, cheeses, grapes and cookies - but the effect they had on their customers (and no doubt on their sales numbers) was tremendous. It was obvious to me that they cared about our shopping experience, and not only taking in our money. It just goes to show that providing good customer service is an ongoing creative effort.

Karina Wollesen



Accommodate them well... at your cost ...

I'm just back from a wonderfully delicious vacation. Ten days of sun, riding in a convertible from San Diego to San Francisco. I enjoyed every single second of it :)

Arriving into Santa Barbara for our stay there, we went to our hotel. The desk clerk advised me that they'd had some guests decide to stay longer than anticipated and that they wouldn't be able to accommodate me as planned. Before I could open my

mouth to ask any questions, he told me that they had a sister property across the street, he'd like to accommodate us there, for free, *and* give us both dinner and breakfast the following morning either in their restaurant, or we could do room service - - their restaurant provided the room service for the sister property as well.

How could I say no? The room across the street was just fine, dinner and breakfast were fantastic, and I genuinely have no idea what I missed by not staying in the room I reserved, nor did I really care.

I felt well taken care of, and I'll remember to call them again, next time I'm going to be there.

Stacy Brice



Don't lose like this local store (ouch!)

Two months ago, I left my executive level job in high-tech to start my own internet based business. One of the items, I needed was a digital camera.

First, I visited the local computer chain store. They would not meet the prices available on the web, so I decided to buy my product via a virtual retailer. Based on my current camera, my brand name allegiance was slanted towards a Canon. I called the 800 number was transferred twice, spoke to a woman who could not describe the simple functions and was insistent about

sending information rather than answering simple questions like what resolution does the camera have. I decided, I did not have time to waste and moved on.

I looked some more on the web, and noticed an Agfa - not a common name in the US, but a popular brand in Europe. Their web site was well organized. The sales rep was informed and articulate. She even offered to have the camera sent to me by 10 AM the next morning so I could have it for my flight to Europe. I received the camera and the customer service I expected.

The moral of the story, the disinterested local store has already lost \$5,324.00 at last count by not meeting prices and having a surly manager. I've purchased my PC, my scanner, printer, fax and camera via various web businesses. Canon lost only \$700 dollars, but I still think I'll take pictures of my smiling face and send them both Canon and the chain a letter about what it means to be a contented customer.

Jill Harrison

Passion Or Market Needs?

Conventional wisdom says that success in business depends on finding a need in the marketplace and filling that need with your own product or service. That makes a lot of sense.

It is incredibly important to sell what people need. However, you will sail much farther in the sea of business if you begin your venture by discovering first what YOUR needs are - what is that YOU love and feel passionate about? - THEN find out what market needs you can satisfy by supplying the product or service aligned with your life's love and passion.

Continue reading at...

<http://www.makeyourbusinesswork.com/a-passion.html>



Your fault, their fault - it doesn't matter!

"I have an older *Nikon Story*. Mine has to do with the now defunct Pan Am airlines. I was in London at the airport (Heathrow), and I had to go through security. I was worried about my camera passing through the x-rays. I went through, and I didn't realize that they took my camera out of my bag and put it on a separate tray because of my concerns.

I went through the metal-detector and picked up my bag, Then I got on the plane and flew home *without* my camera. I noticed it mid- -flight. When we landed in Portland, they called London. No luck. Bye bye Nikon. I called Pan Am a week later. Still no luck.... Three days after that, it arrived home, by mail, with a note:

"We aren't sure if this was your fault or Heathrow's fault. It doesn't matter. We want our customers to be happy, so we insured your camera for \$300, no charge to you, and got it back to you as quickly as we could.

Here it is; we hope you continue to fly with us."

Think about it. Think how many acts of honesty - by the airport employees, Pan Am's employees, etc.... - it must have taken to get my camera back to me

Think of all the phone calls, the cost, and it wasn't even their fault. *That's* customer service.

Kip Pascal



Such a little thing and matters so much!

Preferring to be in control, I like to book my flights over the web, instead of using a travel agent. I used a service called Preview Travel (www.reservations.com) to buy tickets last Christmas for the first time.

It worked well, so I bought tickets to go to Maine about a month ago. Everything was fine, and I received my electronic ticket confirmation in the mail a few days after I bought the tickets. I leave for my trip to Maine in less than a week. It is entirely possible that I could have lost my ticket confirmation in the last month.

My problem, right? Wrong.

This morning I received an e-mail from Preview Travel titled, "Bon Voyage from Preview Travel". They thanked me once again for my business and gave me all the information I need to take to the airport next week: My flight numbers and times, number of passengers, names of passengers, and my confirmation number.

I was quite surprised, to say the least. I know that the e-mail was probably sent by a computer, with an automated e-mail system, but it still felt good that they remembered that my trip was upcoming. How many travel agents send you a reminder a week before your trip with your travel information? The value of Preview Travel's service just went up, in my view. Such a little thing, but it made such a difference.

Kathy Smith



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Pontiac and vanilla ice cream

A complaint was received by the Pontiac Division of GM:

This is the second time I have written you, and I don't blame you for not answering me, because I kind of sounded crazy, but it is a fact that we have a tradition in our family of ice cream for dessert after dinner each night.

But the kind of ice cream varies so, every night, after we've eaten, the whole family votes on which kind of ice cream we should have and I drive down to the store to get it.

It's also a fact that I recently purchased a new Pontiac and since then my trips to the store have created a problem.

You see, every time I buy vanilla ice cream, when I start back from the store my car won't start. If I get any other kind of ice cream, the car starts just fine. I want you to know I'm serious about this question, no matter how silly it sounds:

What is there about a Pontiac that makes it not start when I get vanilla ice cream, and easy to start whenever I get any other kind?

The Pontiac President was understandably skeptical about the letter, but sent an engineer to check it out anyway.

The Pontiac engineer was surprised to be greeted by

a successful, obviously well educated man in a fine neighborhood. He had arranged to meet the man just after dinner time, so the two hopped into the car and drove to the ice cream store. It was vanilla ice cream that night and, sure enough, after they came back to the car, it wouldn't start.

The engineer returned for three more nights. The first night, the man got chocolate. The car started. The second night, he got strawberry. The car started. The third night he ordered vanilla. The car failed to start.

Now the engineer, being a logical man, refused to believe that this man's car was allergic to vanilla ice cream. He arranged, therefore, to continue his visits for as long as it took to solve the problem. And toward this end he began to take notes: he jotted down all sorts of data, time of day, type of gas used, time to drive back and forth, etc.

In a short time, he had a clue: the man took less time to buy vanilla than any other flavor. Why? The answer was in the layout of the store. Vanilla, being the most popular flavor, was in a separate case at the front of the store for quick pickup. All the other flavors were kept in the back of the store at a different counter where it took considerably longer to find the flavor and get checked out.

Now the question for the engineer was why the car wouldn't start when it took less time. Once time became the problem -- not the vanilla ice cream -- the engineer quickly came up with the answer: vapor lock. It was happening every night, but the extra time taken to get the other flavors allowed the engine to cool down sufficiently to start. When the man got vanilla, the engine was still too hot for the vapor lock to dissipate.
Even Insane Looking Problems Are Sometimes Real!

'Doc' Don Taylor



**"I can only imagine
how happy I will be ..."**

I'd taken a print to a local shop to be custom framed. They told me it would be done by a certain date, and that they would call me to let me know when I could come and pick it up. The "promise" date came and went. No call.

So I called them a few mornings later. The person I spoke with put me on hold and went to check on the print. Back on the line came the manager of the shop who apologized and told me that she couldn't find the finished job, the print, or the paperwork. She said she'd need to do some checking, and asked if she could call me back later that day. I was pretty annoyed as I waited.

The print had been purchased at another store in town, and was to be a gift for my wife.... and I needed it in just three days!

The manager called me back, again apologized, but still couldn't find *anything* relating to the print I'd left with them for framing. It was as if it had disappeared off the face of the earth. I could feel my blood beginning to boil ... but here's what she did to calm me, and to make the very bad situation better:

She asked me about the print and where I'd gotten it. Then she asked me to fax her a copy of my paperwork so she could see what sort of frame and mat I'd chosen for the piece. Once she had that information, she sent someone to the shop where I'd bought the print to get another. Then she personally framed it, and delivered it to my house... that same day!

There was no charge for the print they bought, of course, and they also didn't charge me for the framing. Delivery was something she did on her own (this shop doesn't deliver) so

that she could personally make sure the picture got to me safely, and so that she could once again apologize.

I had the picture in plenty of time for my wife's birthday, and I was, in the end, more than happy with the service I'd received. If I have any more framing to do, I'll be going back to this same establishment - if this is how they handle mistakes, I can only imagine how happy I'll be with their regular service!"

John Frankston



Ten dollars can buy a customer for life!

I ordered some flowers from Calyx & Corolla -- my favorite flower company. They were sent to my friends Cheryl and Michael as a way of thanking them for their hospitality this past weekend. Cheryl loved them, as I knew she would. She laughed as she told me that the card they'd sent was a Mother's Day card. She thought it was a cute mistake.

I wasn't as amused. I called the Customer Service people at C&C just to urge them to tell their folks to be more careful as they ship orders this weekend - not all orders are Mother's Day orders.

The gentleman in customer service was deeply apologetic and amazingly gracious. I felt, in a sense, foolish - like I was making a big deal over something that didn't have any negative consequences. He, on the other hand, let me know how

distressed *he* was that it had happened, and assured me he'd take care of it right away. Then, without missing a beat, he credited my card for \$10.

Stacy Brice



Give them a free ride - make them stay

The other day, my husband noticed a small pool of gasoline under his car in our driveway. Fearing a leak in his tank we took the car to the service station closest to our home.

We hadn't ever been to this place because we'd always assumed their mechanics weren't as skilled as the mechanics at the car dealership, but this time we were too afraid to drive the car any further (and truth be told, we probably shouldn't have driven it at all!). The folks were incredibly nice. Friendly welcoming and although they had other cars to take care of they looked at ours right away.

An hour later they came to tell us that besides having a gas leak we also had an oil leak and a couple of other problems they noticed as they were underneath the car. They told us that due to the serious nature of the gas leak we really needed to have the car serviced at the dealership and that their tow truck would take the car there for us.

Then we found out that not only were they not going to charge us for the work they had done, but they also were not going to

charge us to tow the car to the dealership. Granted the dealership was only a mile away, but still that was quite a gesture!!

As we were riding in the tow truck. we asked the mechanic what sorts of work they routinely handle there.... we wanted to be sure we knew what kind of repairs they could do, because we've decided to absolutely have them handle anything they can from now on.

Geraint Mad



Just for their inconvenience ...

I called a company called Load Llama (1-970-476-5511) to order some replacement parts for my Load Llama rack that I had ordered from Bike Nashbar last year. It is a special type of bike rack that has interesting arms on it so that you can use a special bungee cord to hold bags and other odd shaped objects on your bike.

My commuter bike has been hanging in the garage all winter, and every now and then would bump into the corner of my truck. A week ago I was pulling out of the garage and part of the bike got caught on the end of the bumper of my car. Usually I just kept going out and it would untangle somehow and swing away, but this time, there was a loud "pop!" when it released.

Upon inspection, I found that I had broken one of the arms and a screw off! I was able to find Load Llama's number (in Vail,

CO), and told them the story. The guy there apologized for the inconvenience and said he would send several spare parts of each part I had broken, NO CHARGE!

It was under warranty, so even though it was my own fault, it was covered! He apologized again and said he'd get it in the mail that day. After hanging up, I remembered that the special bungee cord I had was also broken (in a separate incident) so I hit the redial and asked the same guy about the cord. He said that they did sell those, but would send me a new one no charge just for the inconvenience!

No charge, no shipping cost, same day service, and an apology for my inconvenience when it was totally all my own fault! Do you think I'm going to tell everyone about that company?

You're reading this e-mail...This is what I call "developing your loyal advocates" and this is precisely why your time and money invested in servicing your existing customers is so much better investment than spending it on advertising!

Ernie Medina, Jr.



**Treat *their*
customers like yours**

My friend and I were staying at the Hilton Hotel in Burbank, California. We asked about the location of the Media City Center and we were told that a shuttle would take us there whenever we wanted, and would pick us up with 10 minutes notice. Very nice.

During the evening, we were shuttled to the restaurant of our request, again without any fuss, and we were told that the shuttle service would stop at midnight. My friend and I lost track of time, finally deciding to return to the Hilton after midnight.

We walked a half-block to the Holiday Inn, and asked if they could call us a cab. When I told them that we wanted to get to the Hilton, we were told, "No problem - we'll drive you there." My friend and I were very pleasantly surprised. Although we weren't guests of the Holiday Inn that evening, we were treated as if we were. And, we will be in the future.

Carl Wolf



And When The Customer Is Wrong ...

Lee Valley Tools is a small specialty tool manufacturer and retailer, with several retail outlets across Canada. They have a 90 day "no questions asked" return policy, and I've had occasion to take advantage of it.

I had a woodworking project requiring a special router bit and went to Lee Valley to purchase it even though they're out of my way and occasionally a little pricey. Ten minutes into my project the bit broke. Disappointing, but at least, I figured, they'd replace it for me. I took it back and they cheerfully gave me a new one.

When I broke THAT one, 10 minutes further into the project, I realized it was probably something to do with the way I was using the tool. I went back again - not even planning to get a replacement, but looking for advice.

I explained to the man behind the counter what I had done, and that since I'd broken two bits I figured I was using it wrong. He gave me some good tips, and then replaced the bit. I protested that it was my fault, and I didn't expect them to replace a \$40 tool again, but he said that was their policy, and that was that.

So even after we'd agreed that the customer was wrong - the customer was right! Needless to say, I'm a dedicated customer.

Derek Broughton



Lexus Accelerator & Designer Shoes

The following example of customer service actually happened at a Lexus automobile dealership in Louisiana.

A female customer had owned her new Lexus for about a week when she returned to the dealership in distress. She wore only one brand of designer shoes, and the heel of the right shoe would get wedged below the accelerator pedal, causing her to have difficulty with the accelerator and, ultimately, to break the heel off the shoe.

The service manager at the dealership recorded the problem and offered to make restitution for the shoes. The woman assumed this would be the last she would hear from the Lexus dealer. A week later, however, a design engineer from the Lexus factory in Japan showed up at her doorstep. He asked to see the shoes, and he made measurements and drew sketches of them. The engineer left without saying a word.

A month later, the woman was contacted by the Lexus dealer and asked to bring her car in. The engineer had redesigned the accelerator pedal to ensure that shoe heels would not get wedged any longer. They replaced the accelerator pedal in her car, and that retrofit pedal is now standard in Lexus production.

Tom Taorimina



Even The Eye Drops To The Rescue!

I was at a three day training session in Kansas and was staying at the Ramada Airport Inn. On day two of the intense training, I developed dry eyes, and my left eye was extremely red and sore. I had forgotten to bring my eye drops and knew I needed them in order to function and to not look like I had been crying all night!

I went to the front desk and asked where the nearest store was. The front desk person said it was more than three miles away

and I could wait for a shuttle. I told her that I was exhausted after being in training all day and I needed eye drops badly. I asked if it was at all possible that the shuttle driver pick eye drops up at the store if he was making a trip.

She said she would check and let me know. I went back to my room and about ten minutes later the front desk person called me and said that the driver wasn't busy and would be happy to make a special trip for me! Ten minutes later, delivered to my door were the eye drops, and the driver was so proud because he got them on sale for me!

Needless to say I tipped him generously and phoned down to the front desk. I asked for the manager, she said "I am the manager." I thanked her and the driver for wonderful personal service and she was very casual and said it was nothing. To me it made all the difference! I would stay at that hotel again just because of that experience.

Cheryl Cran



Serve Them First - THEN Sell!

I had the most pleasant surprise yesterday! A few days earlier I had visited Kodak's website (<http://www.kodak.com/>) and after checking it out (it's very good, btw), I filled out one of their feedback forms. I went to the site with a specific question: What to do with a roll of film (unexposed) that had been left in

my car all day? I was worried about the effect of heat on the film.

I admitted my stupidity and mistake and just wanted to know if I should bother using it or if I should remove it from the camera and toss it in the trash. I received an email from a gentleman in customer service. First, he said what you might expect: Thank you for your comments on our website and here's what to do with the film (discard it). Of course, he said it in a lot more words and was quite friendly and polite.

But then he took service one step further and did the unexpected: He told me he was sending me a complimentary roll of film to replace the one that was ruined. Wow!!! I certainly didn't expect that. After all, it was my fault that the film was ruined. I just needed some technical advice. What a nice thing to do! I hate to waste things, so it's really hard for me to just throw away a roll of film. By sending me a new roll, he really helped.

I thought my husband's (the cynic) response was pretty funny. He said that he was really surprised - he figured that a company would tell me to buy a new roll of film so that they could make more money off of me. This wasn't a criticism of Kodak in any way. It's just that in this day and age, he's so used to feeling like most companies see nothing more than dollar signs when they look at their customers. And, for the most part, I think he's right. But luckily, some companies, Kodak included, make an effort to SERVE their customers, not just increase their profits.

Of course, by serving me in such a nice way, I will continue to buy their film in the future and tell everyone about their generosity. So they might increase their profits too!

Kathy Smith

Do you like these stories? If so, you will like "Daily Service"!

Out of his passion and knowledge about Customer Care, David Goldsmith published a Daily Service -- where you can find more stories like these.

As President of Customer Edge, David works with individuals and organizations to further their understanding of how relationships with customers impact the bottom line. In his daily broadcast, he shares his wit and wisdom along with practical tips that anyone can take advantage of -- whether one has customers, or is one.

To subscribe to Daily Service visit David's website: <http://www.customeredge.com> or send email to our autoresponder <mailto:info@customeredge.com>



Just One Clever Idea ... (and another)

Sometimes the best customer service goes unnoticed and is found in the most unexpected places. I have been frequenting a local store and noticed something one day. They had installed paper towel dispensers on posts throughout the store. When

someone spills something, the staff can clean it up immediately instead of going to the "broom closet." What a clever idea" I thought.

Well, today I went into the same store, and next to the paper towels they now have price check stations! If you get an item and can't find the price, you just scan the label at the station and it tells you the price! I actually used this since a label had fallen off the shelf. Because I knew the price I bought the item.

The most amazing thing is that I am in Key West, Florida where we are the last to get new anything, and the store is KMart - a big store that needs no gimmicks to survive.

Customer service is not dead, just sometimes hard to find!

Jim Sewell



Jiffy People Know How To Keep Them!

I recently wrote to the manufacturer of "Jiffy" baking mixes, Chelsea Milling Company. I told them I use and enjoy their products, but was unable to locate one of their muffin mixes in any store in my area.

When I was younger, my mother used to use that muffin mix to make one of the recipes on the side of the box, and I really wanted to make it, as I hadn't had it in years.

Several days ago, I received a wonderful letter in response. They were happy to hear I enjoyed their products, but distressed to hear I couldn't find the one I wanted. They said that one of their representatives is working on that aspect for me.

They included a recipe booklet for their products, as well as information on ordering the muffin mix in question, by the case, directly from them.

Then they took that extra step, telling me they were sending me a "gift package" of their products to try. What a great surprise! I received it today, and included in it were two packages of the muffin mix I've been looking for. They certainly know how to keep a customer!

Linda Ditz writes:



Inexpensive Shoes and Superb Service

I recently bought a pair of pretty inexpensive shoes through a catalog a friend gave me. They arrived in the time promised, and were beautiful. Unfortunately, they didn't fit. They were SO much too small (despite being marked the size I requested) that they had to have been mismarked.

I called the company, and explained the situation. I almost expected them to take the stance of "What do you expect when you buy cheap shoes?" but that was anything but the response

I got. The woman I spoke to was incredibly apologetic, told me that she would send another pair, overnight, at their expense, and include a return ticket I could attach to the box holding the shoes that didn't fit, so that they could be returned at the company's expense.

Wow! Sure enough, the shoes arrived the next morning, fit like a glove, and the return slip was there, just as she said it would be. What I really liked was the way she handled the call. She listened to me, didn't tell me that I was wrong, made sure she completely understood my point, and then made the situation right. I especially appreciated her willingness to send another pair of shoes before getting the ones I was exchanging -- I needed them for a special event, and would never have had the time to do a return *then* an exchange.

Monica Franks

The Life Value Of Your Customer

Treating people like they are the most important thing to your business is common sense. But the majority of business owners very seldom realize that the game of marketing is not only **getting customers**, but **keeping** them. It is all about keeping them for life!

Here is a question some of you will find provocative. Do you know what is the residual value of your customer? Yes - residual. Because the value of a good customer - like any other good investment - can grow with time and create a residual income. The life value of your customer is how much money he or she brings to your business in the entire time you run your enterprise. Most people never think about it, did you?

Continue reading at...

<http://loska.com/columns/life-value.html>



You are Invited to **MasterMind** at Success Connection!

Awesome things happen when people with similar minds get together. Steven Covey wrote about it in "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" calling it synergizing. Napoleon Hill devoted the entire chapter of his "Think and Grow Rich" to this subject. And Newton Gaynor called it "The Mega Brain".

Every Wednesday successful internet entrepreneurs share their tips and strategies during a **weekly MasterMind Chat** hosted by Wanda Loskot at <http://loska.com> -- if you cannot attend, subscribe to I-MasterMind newsletter. You will find there edited transcripts of those online conversation with some of the most resourceful consultants, writers, coaches and business people like you.

**No two minds ever come together without
thereby creating a third, invisible, intangible
force which may be likened to a third brain.**

For a sample issue of MasterMind newsletter send e-mail <mailto:I-MasterMind@loska.com> -- you will receive it immediately in your e-mail box. And if you'd like to subscribe <mailto:I-MasterMind-subscribe@topica.com>



No Wonder They Love Franklin Covey!

No wonder all of my colleagues love Franklin Covey:

I ordered my first Franklin Covey planner two days ago. I paid for the binder, but the planner pages starter kit was on backorder, and so I would have to wait another month to start my new planning system. I was too excited to wait until October for my backorder!

The next day, I called customer service to ask if their stores would do a charge send. The rep said no. But she asked for my order number and said that there was one starter kit in stock which came with a binder already. She said she would have that disassembled, and I would have my starter kit with my binder!! Yeah!"

Jennifer Keller



Disneyland & The VIP Treatment

My wife and I, with seven year old daughter, had planned a vacation to Orlando, Florida. We had high expectation for visiting the MGM Studios theme park where all the really wonderful movie theme rides were. We knew exactly the ride we really wanted to go on as it was our favorite movie and the description in the park brochure peaked our excitement.

36

How To WOW! Your Customers To Keep Them For Life
© David Goldsmith and Wanda Loskot

<http://CustomerEdge.com>

<http://AttractionMarketing.com>

After parking the car and the tram ride, we walked at a fast pace to go right to the ride. Imagine our disappointment when we found out that it was closed for maintenance. We must of looked like the weight of the world was on our shoulders....

A young girl approached us (she had a park uniform on) and asked what the problem was. We told her of our misfortune. She told us that she was sorry for the inconvenience and that if we would just follow her, perhaps she might help a little. She took us to a large building and through several doors and stairwells. You could hear people laughing and screaming on some sort of a ride.

When we emerged from the maze, we were at the loading point for the park's newest attraction. She went to the operator and asked if we could be placed in one of the next cars on the ride. We went right on and enjoyed a ride that people were standing in line over 60 minutes for. We felt that people were wondering who these VIP's were that were personally escorted past the waiting line of people. To say that we were thrilled at the special treatment would be an understatement. This young girl turned our disappointment around and we talk about that experience five years later. Now that's a Customer Service!

Bob Becket

We Want YOUR Story Too!

Have you been recently delighted or disappointed by the customer service you've received? We want to hear about it!! Just send your story to <mailto:story@customeredge.com> - if we use it, we'll be sure to give you credit for having shared it, so be certain to give us your name! We reserve the right to edit for appropriateness, length, and style.



"No Charge" Service Goes a Long Way

My husband gave me a beautiful ring. The band was engraved. When the jeweler did the engraving, he made a mistake. One of the letters was engraved at a strange angle. Rather than doing something to really fix it, he simply engraved over top of the badly engraved letter, and it's very noticeable in good light.

Unfortunately, my husband didn't see it when he picked the ring up from them.... I found it after I received the gift. We called the jewelry store the next day, told them about the problem, and asked them what they could do about it. They asked us to bring it in so they could take a look.

They patently told us that we weren't really seeing what we were seeing (and boy, did that make me angry!). They claimed that the letter wasn't, in fact, engraved twice, but was engraved on top of part of the maker's mark, causing it to *appear* as if it had been engraved badly.

They went on to say that in order to engrave a ring band, it's often impossible to avoid engraving over at least a part of the maker's mark. And that's what had happened in this case. Of course, they told us, there was nothing they could do about it.

I thanked the woman and took the ring to another jeweler. This store has an engraver on-site, so the jeweler and the engraver looked at it with us. Both agreed that we'd been correct, and that the other jewelry store was trying to get away without having to correct its mistake. Seeing that I was so clearly angry, and that I wasn't sure what I should do next, the jeweler offered to take care of the ring for us - no charge.

I was dumbfounded. No charge? The jeweler said he'd be happy to do that, to save my aggravation, time and energy of having to deal with the other place. And the feisty part of me wanted to deal with it. But the calm side of me knew that getting it handled with a minimum of fuss was really the best course of action.

So the jeweler had it taken care of, the engraving looks gorgeous, and we buy stuff nowhere else, anymore. I did write a letter to the jeweler who originally engraved the ring, telling them that we'd not be buying anymore jewelry with them. Do you know, they never even commented?

Susan Abrams



Rainy Days Service Opportunity

On rainy days, I always forget my umbrella! That's why it means so much to me that my dry cleaner has started offering a special service on rainy days. He has two of his employees do nothing other than walk customers to cars with umbrellas.

They give the customer an umbrella, the employee takes the clothes under another umbrella, and they go to the car. Once the clothes and the customer are in the car, the employee takes both umbrellas and heads back to the store.

Such a little thing... but for me, it's wonderful!

D. Miglioretti



**"I really felt heard
and taken care of ... "**

I love using TurboTax to do my taxes. This year, for the first time, however, I needed to go back and look at LAST year's tax file. Of course, the 98 software doesn't let you do that (that would be too easy! OOPS!

Does that make me a whiner because I'd like to easily be able to see my tax return?. I looked and looked in my office for the '97 version, and simply couldn't locate it. So I called the Intuit and asked about the possibility of getting a copy of it. All they did was ask my name, address, and whether I needed the replacement on floppies or CD-ROM.

No charge. Not even for shipping! She didn't even care that I didn't buy it directly from them. My copy arrived in four business days. I was impressed! More so, I was impressed by the customer service rep who asked me if I thought it would be a good addition to the software if you COULD view your last year's return. My answer, of course, was an overwhelming YES!! She said several people had suggested it, and she was going to take the suggestion to her manager personally.

I really felt heard, and I felt well taken care of, even though I had to take extra steps to get the care I wanted."

Mark Holloway:

"All the well meaning advice in the world won't amount to a hill of beans if we're not even addressing the real problem"

Steven Covey



"Her husband ... was mad as bull!"

My wife opened a store a few weeks ago (it's an off-spring of another business she had started about a year ago). She sells wedding invitations, announcements, generally speaking, all sorts of printing services. About a week ago someone came in, and she fell in love with some Christmas cards Susy had in display, however, the client wanted them personalized (have something printed in them).

Unlike the cards from albums and catalogs, these are preprinted, and in order to personalize them you need to have a printer do it for you, which we do. The customer paid for the cards, Susy wrote down the text she wanted and sent them off to the printer. When they returned, there was an error in them, so Susy called the client and asked if she still wanted to order the cards, as Christmas was already practically on top of us. Susy ordered another bunch of cards and sent them again to the printer, and had them back on time for the customer.

A day later, her husband showed up at the store, mad as a bull. There had been another error on the cards and they were not acceptable. Part of the problem was Susy's fault and part was the printer's, but at this point there was really nothing that could be done to save the situation... or was there? After apologizing through her nose, it occurred to Susy to tell the client that it was all our fault, and unfortunately, since it's so late, there is nothing that could be done about the cards except give them a full refund, which was very fair.

As a courtesy, she also let them choose ANY other cards from the store and give them to him free of charge. The customer left the store with a smile on his face. I don't know what will come out of this, but Susy's made a point to treat her customers exactly as she likes to be treated when she's a customer herself, and so far everybody that comes to our store has left very satisfied. Oh, the store's on the web at <http://www.yesido.net>

Alex Wieder



Baby Mouse, Stretch and Patch ...

I was recently on a business trip to Baltimore, Maryland, staying at the Courtyard by Marriott in Hunt Valley. I had just read that you should take a small sentimental item from home when you travel to make you feel more at ease. A good friend had just given me the beanie baby mouse, Tiptoe, as a birthday present, so I decided to take her.

She stayed by my bedside every night and lived in my suitcase during the day. Upon arriving home after my trip, I discovered that Tiptoe was missing. I had fallen asleep with her on the bed the night before and assumed that I left her in the bedclothes...

I called the Marriott, gave them my room number, and asked them to look for Tiptoe. After a couple of weeks, I called back, only to be told that no one had turned in a beanie baby mouse. I was rather upset at myself for having lost my new gift, and at the hotel for not being able to find it. I imagined that one of the

staff must have stolen it because of how hot the beanie babies are right now.

After several phone calls over the course of a month, my mouse had not been found and I was very angry with the hotel. Almost two months after my visit to Baltimore, I received a box in the mail. Seeing the Marriott symbol on the box raised my hopes; perhaps they had finally found Tiptoe! I opened the box, tossed the letter aside, and opened the plastic bag. In the bag I found ... a beanie baby ostrich and a ratty old stuffed dog in a patchwork vest.

"What is this?" I yelled. "Don't they know the difference between a dog and a rat?!" Now I was very angry. Not only had the hotel not sent back my mouse. They sent something completely wrong.

I grabbed the letter, daring it to give me an explanation. The letter was written on Courtyard Marriott stationery in a font that looked like a second-grader's handwriting. Here's what it said:

Dear Jennifer,

We heard that you are missing your baby, the beanie mouse. We are so sorry that you were separated. We know how that feels because we are also separated from our 'people-mommie'.

We are sad and lonely... And our next step is in the trash bin unless we can find an adoptive home. Can you be our new mommie? We will be quiet and not eat too much. We only need your love like our old mommie gave us. If you don't want us we can understand and maybe go to a little kid or someone else. We hope if your baby mouse were found

hat she lives in a good home as someone special's lovey also.

Help us Jennifer please. Thank you and peace be with you.

With hope and anticipation,
Stretch and Patch

Above each name was a "footprint" or "pawprint". Attached to the letter was the business card of the General Manager, Laura Kyle.

My heart melted after reading the letter. I laughed at Laura's cleverness and smiled at the orphaned animals. She couldn't locate my friend, but she didn't ignore my request, either. She sent me two new friends, with a letter designed to entertain me and touch my emotions. She changed my attitude. I had already been looking at other hotels, but now I will probably choose to stay with the Marriott again.

Pam Wyess

Good Coffee and Your Bottom Line...

I'm sure you'll agree that it's hard to judge the quality of some services until we experience them. Most of the time before deciding whose service to use, the only basis for our choices are our conversations with service providers, their printed materials, perhaps testimonials, and -- if we're are lucky --someone we know and trust, who is willing to provide advise (sometimes even more than willing).

Even in the best circumstances, we wish we could have more reasons to be confident when entering a new business relationship...

Continue reading at...

<http://www.makeyourbusinesswork.com/a-coffee.html>



"I beamed ... I knew I'd be coming back ..."

These are two stories that happened within an hour or two of each other and shows two ends of the service spectrum: I went to Northern Hydraulics to take back a part that I had been mistakenly given by the store.

I went to the service counter and waited patiently as a customer was ahead of me - one person was working the counter. Another man, not the clerk, came out and said "Can I help you, I believe our clerk is going to be longer." Immediately I liked that he wanted to help. I spoke of my problem with a drive shaft part and he took my weed-eater to the back.

I wanted to chat first because there was a sign that said \$40 minimum work order, no exceptions. I was getting a little nervous and was trying to think what I would say if they tried to charge me.

After a few minutes, the man came back and said, "Yes, looks like we gave you the wrong part. Here is your weed-eater." I went ahead and put the shaft in and tightened it. I thanked him and asked (I was ready to argue) "How much?" He said "No charge" and thanked me for being patient.

I beamed -- I knew I would be coming back...

David Alderman

"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."
Ralph Waldo Emerson



Another unique disney experience

I recently made a large purchase from the Disney catalog - after placing my order I was told one item was on back order and I would receive the item in three weeks.

After only five days I received the back order item (a pair of children's pants) but not the rest of in stock items, which included some collectibles from the Disney catalog. I waited five more days then called customer service. I was told the items would be arriving within the next two days. I waited three more days then called customer service again and was told the items would be there in 2 more days. On the fourth day the items arrived.

When I contacted customer service I was never upset or angry that it took so long to receive my order, I was just concerned because I had ordered several collectable pieces to use as Christmas gifts. I wanted to make sure the order was not taken by someone if it was left on my doorstep.

Everyone I spoke to was VERY polite and professional. I felt, they were sincere, when dealing with my issue. Three days after I received my order I received also a letter from the Disney catalog expressing their concern the order took so long for me to receive and they were upset that I needed to call twice to track down the package. The letter included a coupon for \$10.00 off my next catalog order!

This is the reason I shop through the Disney catalog and will continue to do so!! It was unexpected and a pleasant surprise to receive such a token from them.



Fix the problem before they even ask

I know that it will come as no surprise to many folks that I've always received great care from Amazon books. Often, when I order books, I use their handy "one click" service, which provides for incredibly quick ordering and shipping. You click, they ship. It's perfect!

The other day I ordered a book using one click, and about ten minutes later, a friend called with the name of a book I also needed. I ordered that one with one click as well.

I really didn't want them to send me two separate orders that would have me paying two separate shipping charges. I was preparing to call them when I received the email confirmation of my order -- and found that they had smartly combined my two orders into one!

In an age where most in-person transactions can't be handled in a way that allows one to add an item if the subtotal button has already been pushed, I marvel at a virtual company like Amazon that seems to, almost instinctively, get it right every time without even having even seen me!

Veronica Durning

Care more than others think is wise.
Risk more than others think is safe.
Dream more than others think is practical.
Expect more than others think is possible!



Instead of babbling or music on hold...

I am an avid Earthlink fan. For those who don't know Earthlink, they are a national Internet Service Provider with a fantastic reputation.

I had to call this afternoon to get a question answered about Eudora Pro (yes -- they even support tech questions about various software applications!), and I was alerted, right away, about a system problem making the receipt of email slower than usual.

I punched my way through that announcement to the queue where people wait to get email help. And there, rather than stupid music on hold, or a boring, monotonous, pseudo-infomercial, was what sounded like a radio station. Soon, however, I realized it wasn't a radio station.

So what was it? It was a broadcast, for sure... however, with a difference. The radio personality for this broadcast, instead of babbling on about something of no consequence, talks about Earthlink things.

While I was on hold, he conversationally talked a bit about why the email was slow, and what users should do to not make it slower. He gave an estimate of when the situation would be resolved. He told everyone in the queues how long their wait time would be, and then, he played a song.

This continued... the breaks between songs were full of truly helpful information about Earthlink and how I could get the most from the service. I actually learned two or three things I didn't know before! And before I knew it, the tech support

rep was on the line and helping me with my problem.

Total time on the phone? About thirteen minutes. My problem is solved, I've learned some new things, and I am actually sorry I can't just sit and listen to the broadcast... it absolutely made my experience today a fantastic one!

Stacy Brice

What These Best Selling Writers Have In Common?

- Rob Burg - "Endless Referrals"
- Debra Koontz - "Outsmarting Goliath"
- Jim Sterne - "What Makes People Click"
- Azriela Jaffe - "Honey, I want to Start My Own Business"
- Janet Attard - "Business Know-How"
- Lindsay Collier - "Get Out of Your Thinking Box"
- Kevin Nunley - "How Websites Sell?"
- Marlon Sanders - "The Amazing Formula"

They all agreed to participate in MasterMind Chat hosted by Wanda Loskot at <http://loska.com> -- how about you?

Too busy to come? Subscribe to "I-MasterMind" e-zine and receive edited transcripts by e-mail! To subscribe: <mailto:I-MasterMind-subscribe@topica.com>

Would you like to read a sample before subscribing? Send a message <mailto:I-MasterMind@loska.com>



She took apart 6-7 pair of sunglasses to help

Last Thursday evening, my 12 year old son lost the screw from his glasses and couldn't wear them. The next day he was to go to Hershey Park on a school field trip. He needed his glasses repaired right away in order to be able to go I hurried to the eyeglass store where we purchased his glasses .. they were closed. I had a Sam's Club Card so off to Sam's we went.. you may have guessed, they were closed, too! By then my son was upset, thinking we were not going to be able to fix his glasses for his field trip the next day.

My next thought was Wal-Mart. So off we went to the local Wal-Mart store. We went directly to the jewelry dept. We were waited on almost immediately by Kim. For the next 20 minutes she took apart 6-7 pairs of sunglasses to find a proper size screw for my son's glasses (which were not even bought from the store).

After fixing the glasses I was prepared to pay for the sunglasses priced at \$3.99. But the clerk said there would be no charge since the screw she used came from a defective pair of glasses. WOW Kim sure made my son's day!!!!

Jim Griffin

"Your rewards will be determined by the extent of your contribution, that is your service to others."

Earl Nightingale



They replaced the entire set at no charge

Just had to share this!!! Several days ago I finally got around to calling Sounds True Catalogue to replace a set of Carolyn Myss's " Spiritual Madness" tapes.

I had lent them to someone and one of them was chewed up in their tape recorder. Well I happened to mention this was a reorder....and they replaced the entire set at no charge to me!!!

I had been flirting with a large tape set ... maybe a \$50.00 purchase and was going to wait until July to buy... but of course you all know what I did :)

Harriett Simon Salinger



THEY would not honor warranty but

A few weeks ago, my car started to have serious knocking noises in the front end. I took it in to the local Toyota dealership, thinking that the 195,000 miles on the car had finally taken its toll.

Expecting a call that my CV joint or something more serious would be the result (to the tune of \$300-1000), I was extremely pleased when they said that the problem was most likely a bad

tire. They suggested I buy two new front tires and see if the noise continued. They did not even charge me for the diagnosis. A good start to the story!

I took the car into a Northwest tire company called Les Schwab - known for their fast, friendly service. They took a look at the tires, suggested some that were on sale, and within 45 minutes I was on my way and there was no noise! As I was paying for the tires (\$97 total!), we realized that my old tires that I had purchased from their company were still under warranty with 40,000 of the 80,000 left. He explained that usually two front tires wearing down meant that my tires had not been rotated and that technically, that would invalidate the warranty.

However, he suggested I bring my warranty paperwork in and talk with the manager and he would hold onto the tires until then (he also said that if there was anything due, it would be a credit, not cash).

Within a week, I brought the paperwork in. A manager talked with me and after explaining that the tire company they bought from would not honor the warranty, he said that he would on behalf of Les Schwab.

Imagine my surprise when he printed out a receipt giving me \$43 back on my warranty - in cash. This, after I agreed with him that I probably shouldn't receive the money back since I didn't follow their recommended procedure...

I floated out of the store after thanking him several times.

They now have a lifelong customer, and I've told everyone I know about their wonderful response!

Marilyn Schwader



What she did next was more impressive

I do all my personal banking through my employer's credit union. I moved to a new address several months back, but decided to use up all my old checks before ordering new ones. Time sort of got away from me and last week I discovered

I was on my last book of checks. I filled out the order form with the change of address and included a coupon asking for express delivery and mailed it to the credit union.

Today I got a call from a lady at the credit union, asking if I had asked for express delivery with my check order. I said yes I had. Then she asked what type of express delivery I had asked for. I had to think a bit, then told her the 2-day delivery, wondering why she was calling. "What's the matter, did I forget to enclose the coupon?"

"Oh no" she said, "We got the orders mixed together and didn't know who enclosed the express coupon, so I've been calling all the customers that ordered checks to find out who it was for." I thought that was pretty impressive, but what she did next was even more so.

She commented on the fact that I had ordered 4 boxes of checks and asked if I really needed them ALL express delivered. She explained that the express mail charges by package, and if I wished, she could save me money by ordering one box now with express delivery, then waiting a few days and ordering the other three boxes for regular delivery.

She explained that if she didn't wait the extra days, the orders might end up getting processed together and all sent express. So, she would check to see the first order had gone out before sending the second order, just to save me the shipping charges.

Now that's personal service and initiative!

Betsy A. Riley



She just took it upon herself ...

While planning for our Fourth of July outing I found myself running out of time. I decided to pick up my last minute groceries at an unfamiliar supermarket that was on my way, rather than travel the four extra blocks to my favorite store.

When it was time to check out I found only one cashier open, aside from the Express Lane. To my delight, and surprise, I heard another cashier being called when I joined the line of shoppers. After all, I was the second person in a three person line, not a long line by any means.

Within minutes I was greeted by a happy clerk as she pulled my cart over to her line. As she rang up my items she mentioned that they had a twelve pack of sodas on sale for less than the six pack of sodas in my cart. I said that sounded great and she sent the box boy for the twelve pack.

After all my items were totaled, and while I was writing my check, she searched through the newspaper advertisements on

her counter, found the coupon she was looking for, and patiently cut it out. She never mentioned that the soda discount needed a coupon. She just took it upon herself to offer me the best deal, regardless of the extra effort it would require of her. How easily it would have been for her to ring up my six pack of sodas and send me on my way.

Chances are I will be shopping at this market more in the future because of the kind manner in which I was treated on this unscheduled stop.

Wendy Parker



They found exactly what I was hoping for!

Last Christmas, my boyfriend purchased a Jean Patou Joy gift set for me. One part of this set was a beautiful brass perfume compact. The first time I used it, it slipped from my hands and the clasp broke. Needless to say, I was very disappointed, not so much for the perfume but for the sentimental value the gift held for me. After attempting to have the compact repaired by a jeweler, I decided to contact Jean Patou and see if I could have it repaired by them or purchase a replacement.

The Jean Patou customer service representative listened to my story and asked me to mail the compact to her. She explained that the original style compact was no longer in production and asked if another design could be substituted if an exact replacement was not available. I said that would be fine and thanked her for her help.

I mailed my compact back and 5 business days later I received a package from Jean Patou, a brand new exact replacement of my original compact, enclosed in a beautiful black fabric pouch. I couldn't have been happier. They went the extra mile for me and found exactly what I was hoping for, and they did it free of charge. Their personal service made my day and they have earned my business for life!

Elaine Greene



**Without any hesitation
-- no question asked!**

I've just recently returned from attending the 3rd Annual gathering of the International Coach Federation (ICF), held at the Doubletree Paradise Resort in Scottsdale, AZ.

While attending the conference, the entire staff of the resort was especially considerate of guests, and went out of their way to be helpful, courteous and efficient. They not only delivered things in a timely and secured fashion (a very real concern given my computer and printer were in plain sight) -- but left me notes in my room that "thanked me" for letting them be of service!

Finally, when checking out at the desk last Sunday morning, I was asked about the service. Not only did I commend the staff, but asked whether or not I might negotiate my telephone charges. Whenever I attempted a long-distance call to log-on to my ISP in order to obtain my email, it never verified (for whatever reason)

Yet I soon learned that I was being charged \$5.44 per attempt! I finally went to the hotel's business center and obtained my email for \$5.00 via my HotMail account which taps in to my ISP account -- and was able to respond to necessary items in a timely fashion. Without any hesitation, the woman behind the desk "got it", and began adding up the long-distance telephone charges of \$5.44 over a 2-day period on my bill -- which ultimately resulted in a savings of \$105.17 on my entire hotel bill -- no questions asked!

Will I recommend that resort an/or hotel chain to any others doing business? Absolutely!

Jim Vuocolo Smith

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"Our priority is taking care of the patient!"

My wife Diane has been hospitalized multiple times for chronic intestinal blockages. She has sat upright in the Emergency Rooms for over an hour in severe pain when she'd have been much more comfortable lying down. She has been denied access to her specialist when the medical group changed. She has walked 200 yards from an ill-designed parking lot to a brand-new doctor's office when she could barely stand up.

This summer, during a camping trip, she experienced another blockage. We rushed to the closest hospital, Tahoe Forest Hospital in Truckee. From the moment we walked through the door, we knew this place was different.

Diane was immediately taken to a bed and attended to, before any forms were completed. When we commented on this, the ER nurse proudly explained, "Our first priority is taking care of the patient!"

We soon realized he was not the only one who believed this philosophy. All emergency room personnel were friendly, helpful, and lacking that stuffy, too-professional attitude we too often associate with medical personnel.

When Diane was asked to consider surgery, we were immediately skeptical of having major surgery in a 45-bed hospital in a small town. Those doubts were soon alleviated. Tahoe Forest Hospital is staffed with experienced, big-city doctors who have moved to the Lake Tahoe region for the beautiful environment and relaxed atmosphere. All of the nurses are experienced registered nurses. Because of the

hospital's reputation, more nurses are clamoring to get in, but the attrition rate is almost zero.

Diane was in surgery and recovery for five hours. Meanwhile, the receptionist, who already knew me by name, insisted I take my cell phone and go get some fresh air. He'd call me if anything came up.

Recuperation could never be "pleasant", but Tahoe Forest did their best to make it so. Each nurse treated Diane respectfully. They honored her wishes and listened to her opinions. The doctor visited several times each day, taking plenty of time to address her concerns. Even the emergency room nurse visited her room once a day to see how she was doing.

After seven days Diane came home. Her doctor called the next day. He has called three times since her release, just to check on her recovery. Her experience with Tahoe Forest did not end when she walked out the door.

Quentin Steele



Wonderful addition to the service

As a new home-based business owner, I made the decision to use my local Mailboxes Etc. as my business address, and to have all my mail delivered to my box there

One of the features I love about having a box there is that I can call and have them check to see if I have mail, which saves me from having to run up there to check it every day.

Since I've only had the box since Monday, each day this week the reply has been the same -- no mail. Today, however, I was told that I did have mail (yippee!), but then I was graciously told that it was only third-class bulk advertising.

Letting me know that there was mail, but probably not mail I'd want to make a trip up there to collect, was a wonderful addition to a service I already thought was great!

Henry Link



No other ever noticed a missing button!

I recently moved to a new neighborhood. I asked my next door neighbor which of the dry cleaners nearby she thought was the best. Based on her recommendation, I dropped my shirts off there Monday morning to be cleaned.

On one of them, a button had come off. I forgot to mention it to them, but they noticed and replaced it. I've moved a great deal in my life and used many many cleaners. Never once has one noticed a missing button *and* replaced it without being asked.

I was completely impressed.

Mark Cohen



Taking the only package to the airport

I had a customer call very late in the evening to order a business opportunity kit that I sell (medical billing program). I could tell that they were very anxious to get the package of software and training as soon as possible. I told them it would go out the next day so that I wouldn't disappoint them by over promising on delivery. It was 6:50pm and of course FedEx had already

stopped pickups by that time. I hurriedly prepared an invoice for them and then grabbed the FedEx shipping box; label; and label pouch and asked my wife to drive me to the FedEx office while I addressed the label and put everything in the package. Despite my wife's fast driving, we arrived at the FedEx office at about 7:07 PM; which was past their 7pm cut off time for packages.

The FedEx clerk behind the counter could see that I had rushed to get the package by the 7 PM deadline and yelled to someone in the back of the building. A driver came up and the clerk asked him if the truck had left already... he told her it had. They could both see how dejected I looked for not getting there in time.

Then the clerk asked the local delivery driver if he wanted to make a run down to the regional airport (about 40 miles away); he said SURE, and proceeded to take my ONE and ONLY package with him to the airport so that it could leave that night!

Now THAT'S service!

Harry Selent



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He changed the way they thought

My office mates and I planned a party/shower for a friend having a baby. She loves pizza, so we called a local chain that delivers, explained what we needed (nine pies) and that we needed them delivered at 12:30pm. They assured us that would be no problem.

We made sure they knew where we were located, and they let us know that they did because they told us they deliver to our security office (we work in a hospital). At 12:30, we sent someone to the security office to get the pizzas. They weren't there. At 12:45pm, we called the delivery place, and were assured that they were on the way. At 1 PM we called again, and again were told they were on the way. At 1:15pm, we called and told them to keep their pizzas.

We also called another (different) place, told them what had happened, that we were short on time, and asked them how quickly they could get the pizzas to us. They had them to us in 20 minutes. It was amazing (this was, by the way, Pizza Boli's).

While we were waiting, however, the delivery guy from the first place called from his car to tell us he was just about to arrive at the hospital with our pizzas. When we told him to take them back, he was incensed! An hour late at that point, and still amazed that we didn't want the pizzas. Can you imagine?

Our office manager also called the district manager from the first place and explained what had happened. He said, "I'll take care of it and call you right back." In ten minutes, he called... from the store. He couldn't apologize enough. He asked how

much we paid for the pizzas we were, at that point, eating. And in ten minutes, he was in our office, giving our manager the money (\$27), and coupons for five free pizzas. Needless to say, he changed the way we thought about the situation!

Dominic Brice



He said he couldn't afford to NOT fix it!

I was asked by the "Pool and Spa News" to write a profile on a Phoenix pool builder. This builder built a \$25,000 pool for a first time customer. When the pool was completed, the customer was unhappy. In many ways, it was the customer's fault. He had been vague in communicating with the pool builder. Of course, the pool builder didn't have a Ph.D. in mind reading...

Even so, it was important to the builder to make this customer happy. He tore out the pool and rebuilt it to the customer's specifications at his own expense. The customer was shocked... and pleased. So pleased that he called the Phoenix newspaper and said, "You're not going to believe this."

The paper did a front page story about the builder.

Guess what: The free publicity generated about \$200,000 worth of new business for the pool builder. Rebuilding that pool was the best \$25,000 he could have spent!

I asked him how he could afford to rebuild a \$25,000 pool. He said it was his iron clad rule of business to never leave the job site until the customer is happy. When he started out, he could only make good on \$100 mistakes. He said he learned then that he couldn't afford to NOT fix it, no matter what the cost!

The pool builder's service ethic is: make it right for the customer, no matter what the cost. Clearly, it's worked well for him - he is one of the most profitable pool builders in Phoenix.

How about you and your business?
What is your service ethic??

Beth Ellyn Rosenthal,

If you feel inspired by this publication, be sure to share it with your friends and co-workers. And visit web sites of the publishers -- their pages are packed with valuable content!

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Our Deepest Fear...

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

It is our light, not our darkness,
that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant,
gorgeous, talented and fabulous?

Actually, who are you NOT to be?
You are a child of God.

Your playing small doesn't serve the world.
There is nothing enlightened about shrinking
so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We were born to manifest the glory of God that is within us.
It's not just in some of us: it's in everyone.

And as we let our light shine,
we unconsciously give other people
permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear,
our presence automatically liberates others.

Marianne Williamson

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