Customer Experience

Customer service, customer experience, customer support, and customer satisfaction are inextricably intertwined. Customer experience differs from customer service in that customer service is the experience given to the customer whereas customer experience is the feeling received through the customer service provided.

Good customer service yields a positive customer experience. The better the customer experience, the more likely that customer will return for repeat business, tell others who will patronize, and build trust in the business leading them to likely purchase other services or products offered.

Although there are surveys that can help tune your practices to give your specific customer demographic a better experience, the most obvious method of developing a positive customer experience for your business is to simply consider what you would consider a positive customer experience. Like the old adage says, “Treat others how you would like to be treated.” In general, smiling, greeting customers, and being knowledgeable about the products and services your business provides are a few general ways to provide a good customer experience. But if your customer demographic are women over the age of 60 looking to purchase crafting supplies, that warrants a different approach to customer service than a customer demographic middle aged men looking for fishing equipment.

Knowing what your customer demographic wants to experience can improve the methods by which your staff can provide those experiences to them. Customer surveys are one way to do that, another is to get feedback from staff, while another is use success stories from similar businesses. The better the experience, the more likely the customer will discuss their experience with others, the more likely that customer and those he/she spoke to will patronize again and again.

In other cases, positive experiences can inspire a customer to write a positive review. These days, everyone looks to the Internet for information. Having 5 stars can make or break a business these days. The more customers with a positive experience, the more positive reviews you can build for your business.

Customer experience is related to customer satisfaction in that the better the customer experience, the more satisfied they are likely to be. The better the experience, the happier the customer. The happier the customer, the more satisfied the customer.

Techniques to provide the best customer experience possible:

* Smile
* Mirror the customer
* Be aware of nonverbal behavior
* Listen and reassure
* Timing and efficiency

Most common causes of negative customer experiences by ranking:

1. Wait times
2. Untrained or unknowledgeable staff
3. Inability to address concerns or inability to resolve issues
4. Too much automation, no staff to talk to/get service from
5. Service not personalized
6. Rude or ingenuous employees

Customers have innumerable options to choose from along with the resources necessary to educate themselves and make purchases on their own. Research shows that customers will actually pay a higher price for a better experience. This is what makes providing a memorable customer experience all the more critical to make them want to continue doing business with you. Customers are your moneymakers. Providing the best customer experience is a critical tool toward building and ensuring the success of your business.