

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE JAM SESSION

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The Greatest Customer Experience Scene Ever...



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Goals

- Talk through the idea of customer experience
- Engage you to infuse public transportation reality into the discussion
- Create a working customer experience plan for your system

Why do we care about customer experience?

- Build stronger, measurable relationships with your customers
- Riders can help shape your operation for the better
- You can adjust and adapt your business and provide better value, whether that be in terms of new offerings, better engagement, etc.

Where do we start?

- Need to understand what is a realistic customer experience for your system
- Do we have comparisons?
 - ▣ Do they need to be same sector or is it OK to choose from outside public transportation?
- Do we have competition?
- What if we thought of public transportation as a for-profit business?

The challenges of creating customer-focused experience

- Forcing organizations to build their teams in a very open, non-siloed fashion requiring multiple departments to buy into these strategies and ultimately provide resources.
- Once overcome, it can provide immediate and powerful rewards.
- Ambiguous or unrealistic expectations

Who owns customer experience?

- It really depends on the organization. If the main goals and opportunities are customer-centric or even revenue-focused, then it often makes sense for it to be owned by Marketing.
- Marketing owns the role of being the lead cheerleader for the consumer experience.
- Most organizations have the goal of building better relationships with customers, even if simply to know them better, and building relationships with your customers will usually require this kind of integration.

Good/Bad Examples



Examples of Excellent Customer Service

Trader Joe's Braves a Winter Storm for an Elderly Customer

- An 89-year old Pennsylvanian was snowed in around the holidays, and his daughter was concerned he wasn't going to have enough food to last the inclement weather. The daughter called multiple stores trying to find someone who would deliver, and finally learned that Trader Joe's doesn't normally deliver, but it would in this special instance. It took the order, and also suggested other items that might fit the elderly man's special low-sodium diet.
- After the daughter ordered around \$50 worth of food to be delivered, the Trader Joe's employee told her that she didn't need to pay for it, and to have a Merry Christmas.
- The food was delivered within 30 minutes of the phone call, and the holidays were saved for one elderly man and his family.

Examples of Excellent Customer Service

Free Tickets From the Jet Blue People Officer

- If you fly Jet Blue, you might just run into the mystical People Officer. One such passenger reports of the People Officer standing up mid-flight and announced that he had free tickets to give away to anywhere that the airline company flew. The man played trivia games, and handed out tickets to anyone who knew the answers. In all, around a dozen free tickets were handed out during the mid-flight games.
- The Jet Blue employee then went on to ask if anyone had any suggestions or concerns with Jet Blue, and answered questions about upcoming possible promotions.
- Think he made any life-long Jet Blue customers from that one plane ride?

Examples of Excellent Customer Service

United Airlines Saves Your Seat, Books a Flight

- New York Times best-selling author Steven Levitt wrote an article about how United Airlines turned him into a customer for life in a couple ways. Steven was running late, and unlike other airlines, they actually saved his seat until the last second. On another occasion, United Airlines called him and informed him that his flight was delayed by a few hours, and they saw that he was in the airport. The call went like this:
- “I see that you’re at the airport and your flight is delayed a few hours. A seat opened up on an earlier flight, so I grabbed it for you in case you wanted it. It leaves in 40 minutes, so you’ll have to hurry.”
- These two events, Levitt explains, turned him into a life-long customer of United Airlines.

Examples of Excellent Customer Service

Starbucks
Wants You to
Have an
Experience
"Nothing Short
of Fantastic"

- ❑ Disgruntled Starbucks customer Jason called in to the company's corporate offices after a mix-up with a New Jersey branch's barista.
- ❑ Instead of simply giving him a refund, the customer service representative told Jason that they needed to "make him whole, and give him an experience nothing short of fantastic." They promptly filled his rewards card with \$50 of store credit.

Examples of Excellent Customer Service

CVS
"Samaritan
Vans"

- Did you know that CVS has been patrolling the streets and highways for the past 30 years, looking to help stranded motorists?
- The Consumerist has a story of a woman stranded on a busy highway with a flat tire, and a CVS Good Samaritan van rolled up five minutes later and helped change her tire. The cost for the service? Only her sending in a comment card to CVS.

What's the role of technology in the customer experience?

- Website/Mobile/Apps
- Real-time service status/Next Bus
- QR codes, SMS updates/notifications
- Trip Planning
- Nearest stop/route
- Fare Collection
- Vehicle amenities (e.g. WiFi)

What else contributes to a positive customer experience?

- Education - How to Ride
- Interaction – Social media
- Product offering/development
- Employee training – empowerment

Enable employees, settings and processes to convey your quality service commitment.

Can that complaining customer become your next advocate?

- Customers want to be respected
- They want attention
- They want to be appreciated and recognized
- Most of all – they want to be understood!

Can that complaining customer become your next advocate?



How do you measure good customer experience?

- What are the benchmarks?
- Identify what data you rely on to measure customer service
- Design quality service standards and processes to raise the level of customer satisfaction
- Create metrics to gauge the needs, perceptions and expectations of your customers
 - ▣ Concrete measurements vs. generic expectations

How do collect customer feedback?

- Channels
 - Call center
 - Online
 - Email
- Panels – consumer advisory

What principles are required to build a customer experience plan?

□ Accessibility

- The philosophical foundation on which customer service must be based is accessibility. Whether in person, by telephone, or by email, customers must be able to contact staff when assistance is needed, and be sure of a timely response.

□ Accountability

- Customers can be frustrated if a business or service offers, or even promises, to complete a task but fails to do so. The philosophical principle is that the customer should not feel that she is dealing with a nameless, faceless corporate entity, where nobody can be held to account for failings.

□ Attentive responses to complaints

- Customer service begins with providing a positive experience, but its philosophy must incorporate willingness to respond to negative situations. There are two basic elements to the response. The first acknowledges the problem and--where appropriate--makes apology for it. The second seeks to correct the problem. Good customer service takes ownership of complaints and problems.

□ General Helpfulness

- Many customer service philosophies go beyond the provision of a positive experience within the terms of the goods or services purchased by the customer, proposing that customers should be provided with additional, wide-ranging assistance. If unable to assist, staff members may direct the customer to other sources of help, including providing telephone numbers or web addresses. Individual businesses will vary as to the extent of such helpfulness they wish their staff to provide.

□ Training and Monitoring

- Extra benefits can sometimes be offered. The context for an effective customer service philosophy is staff training. In addition to training staff in the provision of the goods and services expected by customers or guests, staff members must demonstrate courtesy, sincerity and attentiveness, especially in listening to and answering individual customers rather than giving generalized responses. A sophisticated approach to customer service also requires monitoring outcome.

So what's the plan for creating a positive customer experience?

