

STEP 11

Customer experience

It's all about a total customer experience

Attracting and keeping customers is not easy. But losing them is very easy. Studies indicate that 50% of customers will switch to a competitor after one bad experience. In the case of more than one bad experience – that number snowballs to 80%. And if they tell their friends about it on social media, untold numbers of people will think badly of your business. Bottom line... delivering great customer experiences costs you nothing. Delivering awful customer experiences can cost you your business.

What is a customer experience?

Customer service is just one part of the entire customer journey, while customer experience encompasses all the interactions between your brand and a customer. A customer experience is the total experience a customer has with your business – and it includes *every* interaction, no matter how brief and even if it doesn't result in a purchase. It includes your marketing that they see before they become a customer, the sales experience, the customer service, the quality of the product/service itself, and the customer service they get after the purchase. And never forget that just because a customer didn't purchase your product/service today doesn't mean they won't be back tomorrow! Or, if they got a shoddy customer experience when you realised they were not going to be buying, that they won't be saying negative things about your business.

The rewards of great customer experiences

When you give your customers the best customer experience in town you have happy customers. Happy customers will speak highly of you and want to return, because you made them feel good. Happy customers will recommend your business to others. Having the reputation for consistently great customer experiences will make you stand out from your competitors.

The most successful businesses deliver the most value. It is that simple. If you're not adding more value than your competitors, then you're going to lose business to them. You do this by always over-delivering on every aspect of your customer service.

Providing great customer experiences

Here are 10 ways to help you provide the best ever customer experiences. Think about the fantastic customer experiences you have had and how they can help you make the following ideas even better.

How I will offer the best ever customer experience

1. Treat every customer like royalty

Your business depends on nothing short of the royal treatment for each and every customer. How will you give every customer the royal treatment:

2. Identify customer pain points... and rectify them immediately

Pain points are frustrations, inconveniences, and annoyances that customers face while interacting with your business. Identify where these may arise in your business – and how you can resolve them.

3. Focus on the individual, not the customer

Every customer is a unique person with their own needs and expectations. Focus on each customer as an individual, not a number. How do you intend to do this?

4. Be polite, friendly, and attentive

This is the most important rule. How will you ensure it happens in your business?

5. Hire people with a service mindset

Hire people with great people skills. And train them so that they know how to provide fabulous customer experiences. How do you intend to train employees?

6. Deal immediately with problems or complaints

Remain positive, helpful, friendly, and obliging, no matter how rude or angry the customer may be. Put your feelings aside and concentrate on turning a negative experience into a positive one. How will you manage negative experiences?

7. Be consistent

Customers want a great experience each and every time they deal with you. Consistency is the key to return business. How will you ensure consistency?

8. Be transparent

Being transparent is simply being honest, ethical, and trustworthy. Saying you are those things is not enough. You have to demonstrate it. Customers deserve and expect no less. This is about values – remind yourself how you'll be clearly transparent.

9. Prove that you really, really appreciate your customers

Make every customer feel special for having done business with you. A genuine and warm “thank you” goes a long way. Customers remember sincere gratitude, and it reminds them why they chose your business. How will you show your customers that you really, really appreciate them?

10. Never stop improving

Constant improvement is vital to your success. Always look at ways of improving your customers' experiences. Don't just settle on what you've always done. Keep getting better! How do you intend to have a “constantly getting better” attitude?