



## Special Report

# Five Stop-it-Now! Customer Service Mistakes

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Losing one good customer can take the wind out of your “sales”. Your customer service is a revenue source that you don’t want to neglect. That’s why I put together this Special Report , *Five Stop-it-Now Customer Service Mistakes*, to help you focus on areas of your customer service that will help you attract, connect and engage more customers.

### **Mistake #1 – Hiring the Wrong Front Liners**

If you are in the service industry, you cannot afford to have employees who do not have strong people skills working as front liners - the people who have direct contact with your customers. They could be costing you money. Take a look at your hiring practices. Are you hiring out of expediency or hiring because you know that person understands your customer service culture? During the interview, ask the interviewee how they feel about customer service and how they would act in various service scenarios.

Uncover any customer service gaps. Secret shoppers can provide valuable feedback about your sales staff. Be willing to move staff off the front lines if you suspect that their customer service is not up to par. Sometimes, moving staff to a different department is the best solution, for you and for them. And, you have my permission to let someone go who does not fit your customer service culture.

### **Mistake #2 – Treating People Like Sheeple**

When shopping, the last thing I want to hear first thing is “May I help you?” It no longer holds any value to shoppers because they have been desensitized from hearing it so often. Instead, teach your front liners to engaging the customer by saying “thank you for calling” or “welcome to our store”, and better yet, “great to see you again” if it’s a loyal customer.

Customers want relationships. The best time to make a strong first impression and begin to build a customer relationship is the first time a customer does business with you. New customers want to know that you value their patronage. Put the personal touch back into your customer service. Send a personal thank you card to new customers. Services such as SendOut Cards help you create a special message to new customers. Or, pick up the phone to thank new customers. They aren’t expecting it so the “wow” factor will pay big dividends.

### **Mistake #3 – Avoiding Social Media**

It has been said that social media is the new customer service. A recent study shows that 85% (of social media users) believe a company should not only be present but also

interact with its consumers via the medium. It's time to turn up the conversation and use social media as a monitoring and marketing tool.

Customers are providing feedback about your products and services through social media. Are you listening to the conversation? As business owners, we are often afraid of feedback because it could be negative. Feedback is a gift, whether negative or positive. Search out the social media tools that best monitor your customers' conversations, such as Yelp.com and GetSatisfaction.com. Use this information to improve your product or services.

The flip side is that you can also use social media to engage customers through special offerings and discounts. People just want to have fun and social media tools help you to attract more customers. Which social media sites do you use to promote and monitor, you ask? It depends on several factors: your offering, your time, and your willingness to invest time. Decide based on your level of commitment and what you want to achieve.

#### **Mistake #4 – Not getting Feedback**

How do you know if you are meeting the needs and wants of your customers? One of the easiest ways is to ASK. You have to ask and ask often to stay on the pulse of what your customers are expecting from your products and services. Surveys are one of the easiest ways to gather information about the shopping experience. Choose a variety of customers to survey and let them know you value their feedback. It's best to have someone outside of your company conduct these surveys to reduce bias. Ask your customer why they like doing business with you, what they like about your products and services, how they would rate your customer service? Email campaign programs like Constant Contact allow you to stay in front of your customers through content-driven newsletters, surveys, sales promotions, etc.

#### **Mistake #5 – Missing Customer Service Plan**

What? You don't have a CS Plan? Your Plan should state your mission and vision as it relates to your customers, your customer service policies, and how you will meet the wants and needs of your customers. Show your staff and your customers that you are committed to good customer service. Share your mission and vision on your website, in your store, on your voicemail message, employee lunchroom, etc.

We have looked at several common mistakes that can be avoided. If you are like many busy small business owners, you know things need to change but you don't have the time to stop and make these changes. We at Captivated Customers are here to help with coaching, consulting and training services to optimize your customer service.

**Contact Norma with Captivated Customers LLC at (480) 694-6940 to receive a FREE 30-Minute Consultation to talk about your Customer Service challenges and opportunities.**

