

Customer Service and Social Media

I was reminded recently how much I value good customer service after visiting an all-inclusive resort in Jamaica. We decided to book this vacation – more specifically book at a particular resort after reading reviews about the quality of food, cleanliness and “excellent customer service”. Well, what we actually encountered was two extremes of service – either great customer service or incredibly horrible service. Amazing how you remember the bad over the good.

It makes me think how understanding your use of social media or how you communicate through the channels is fundamentally following the ideals of good customer service.

We start with the proper etiquette. Let’s use a LinkedIn sample for this. Look at your profile settings. First, think about your audience or your connections. Under your privacy controls, do you let people know when you change your profile, make recommendations, or follow companies? This feature has a purpose when used but some people may not be interested in seeing what you are doing.

Good eye contact – recognition. A key step in good customer service is recognizing someone in the proper time. If you were a waiter and you were experiencing being slammed with multiple tables seated at the same time; thinking OMG! – I don’t know how to handle this. The approach will always save you and its part of recognizing your guests. It’s easy to go to a table and simply let your guests know that you are happy to be of service and will be right back after servicing the two tables that were sat before them.

When someone follows you in Twitter, use recognition and engage with that follower. “Look them in the eyes” and thank them for following you. They recognized you – they chose to follow you for what you had to say or what you share. It’s easy to send them a tweet thanking the gesture.

Appropriate behavior is also part of good customer service. Make sure that you are appropriate in what you communicate to your audience. Think twice before sharing a joke on Facebook. While at the initial onset, it may make you chuckle, you may find that not everyone feels the same way about the punch line. The last thing you want to do is to offend someone who is a friend connected to you.

Listening is very important. One way of making a customer happy is listening to how you can fulfill their need. Okay – you have a presence on Google+, are you listening to what your connections are saying? If you truly are listening, then you’ll find that you also answering. Listening is totally a form of engaging in social media and fulfilling your follower’s needs.

Taking an extra step can differentiate you giving good vs. fantastic customer service. When sharing a piece of relevant information, make sure you take that extra step and research it properly and provide all the references that you used along with it. I love using Zite on my iPad and sharing articles on certain topics with my followers. I always pay close attention before sharing something that is factual, whether or not the references associated to the article are valid. That’s my extra step in sharing.

Now you’re ready...take one extra step towards recognizing, listening, engaging and providing exceptional social media interaction.