

Putting The "Service" Back In "Customer Service"

By Sean Cohen

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The future of customer service is here. Technology has made seeking out support faster and easier than ever. But, has your digital age company sacrificed true service in the name of automation?

Today, finding customer support is as simple as writing an e-mail or picking up the phone. But, even though you're not face-to-face with your customers, you still leave a lasting impression. Do you come across as caring and competent, or menacing and mechanical?

Offering stand-out service on the Internet isn't as hard as it is rare. Take these simple steps towards old-style service in the digital age:

- * Give Each Customer a Personal Response
- * Be Clear, But Sincere
- * Offer Live Customer Support
- * Make Sure Your Support Reps Have All the Answers

GIVE EACH CUSTOMER A
PERSONAL RESPONSE

When a customer sits down to e-mail your company, it's because he needs help. He chooses e-mail because it's quick, but his request still warrants a satisfying and personal response!

Companies eager to save time and money often take automation too far in their customer support. Each customer has a unique question, and deserves a unique answer. Even if you save time by copying and pasting stock replies, change the opening and closing to make the message sound less robotic.

BE CLEAR, BUT SINCERE

When responding to customers' e-mail, be sincere and to the point. Before sending a message, try turning the tables. Ask yourself, "Would this answer satisfy *me* if I were the customer?"

Take that extra moment to give your customer the help he deserves. It might mean the difference between a satisfied customer and a credit card chargeback!

OFFER LIVE CUSTOMER SUPPORT

E-mail has become an acceptable form of communication. But, live customer support is still necessary. The plethora of information available online can be overwhelming to customers, especially those new to the Internet!

Single your company out from the crowd by providing customers with a real person to talk to. Live phone support is an invaluable way to foster trust. When your customer has reached the end of his Internet rope, and just needs *help*, your toll free number is the answer he's looking for.

**MAKE SURE YOUR SUPPORT REPS
HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS**

The presence of phone support will do no good if your staff doesn't know your product! Customer support reps should be warm and friendly, and willing to help with any aspect of your product.

What a good feeling it is to talk to someone who feels confident in his product. It's even better if he's knowledgeable enough to solve your problem without transferring you all around the company!

**PROVIDE STAND-OUT SERVICE;
GAIN LIFELONG CUSTOMERS**

Too many e-businesses skimp on customer service, hiding behind web sites and message boards. Customer support is an integral part of every company, even those operating solely online. Be one of the few to offer stellar service, and gain customers for life!

Customer Service is becoming a lost art, but Sean Cohen wants to make sure that never happens at AWeber Communications!

Find out what service is meant to be:

<http://www.aweber.com/a/p170/lcs.htm>

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