

The Secret To Great Customer Service Is To Never Let Your Customer's Glass Become Empty

By Tim Knox

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Tim Knox
tim@onlineprofits4u.com

OnlineProfits4U.com <http://www.onlineprofits4u.com>

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Online Entrepreneur Q&A
by Tim Knox
Founder, OnlineProfits4U.com
<http://www.onlineprofits4u.com>

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Q: Do you think a small business can really distinguish itself through superior customer service?

A: Absolutely, but it can't happen overnight. Good customer service is extremely hard to find these days. As a consumer, I'm always on the lookout for good service and am frustrated by how seldom I see it. Even when I do see it, more often than not it's the result of a single person going out of their way to provide the service and not the policies or practices of the business.

So what does this mean for you, the entrepreneur who is working like crazy to get your business off the ground?

You have a million things to think about, and this is just one of them. If you're looking to distinguish your business and offer something that will be a real competitive advantage, then I suggest you focus on customer service.

Understand, however, that if you choose this path, it has to be a long-term strategy, and you'll have to be patient to see the results. That's because anyone can claim to offer great service, and that makes it hard for customers to distinguish between the people who really deliver it and those who just say they do. If you want to make customer service a key part of your business, then you have to not only make the claim, but also consistently back it up. If you do this, over time more and more people will believe you, and they'll spread the word.

If you can establish a reputation for great customer service, great things will happen. It will be easier for you to get new customers, get more business from existing customers and increase your

prices.

Many business people seem to think that price is everything. My experience has been that people will pay more if you give them more. But you can't just raise your prices and say that you have more value. You have to prove it. Put your effort where your mouth is.

It is one thing to talk about great customer service, but quite another to provide it, day after day, for the months and years that it takes to make a difference. But there's nothing magic about it. Good customer service comes from hard work and persistence. You can provide it, I can provide it and our competitors can provide it. But most of them don't. And that opens a big door for us, if we're willing to do what it takes to step through.

Consider this: If you are at a restaurant and your tea glass never gets below half full, that, my friend, is great customer service.

And that waiter is going to get a good tip from me every time.

We should all strive to keep our customer's glass overflowing.

Here's to your success!

Tim Knox

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Online Entrepreneur Q&A is written by veteran entrepreneur and OnlineProfits4U.com founder, Tim Knox. Tim serves as the president and CEO of three successful technology companies: B2Secure Inc., a Web-based hiring management software company; Digital Graphiti Inc., a software development company; and Sidebar Systems, a company that creates-cutting edge convergence software for broadcast media outlets.

Tim is also the Ebusiness Startup and Design Expert for Entrepreneur.com, the website of the national publication Entrepreneur Magazine. As if that wasn't enough to keep him busy, Tim also writes the weekly newspaper column "Small Business Q&A" which focuses on small business startup and success.

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