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*More touchpoints does not equate to great customer service experience.*

According to an article in the September-October 2017 edition of Supply Chain Brain magazine, nearly 50% of North American and European consumers will abandon a brand if they experience dissatisfying customer service across the various engagement channels, e.g. company web site, email, in-store knowledgeable sales people, telephone customer service, and the like.

Unfortunately, too many companies equate touchpoints with customer service. For example, the belief that if the company emails the consumer a lot of information about the status of the sales order from order receipt to pick to ship, this alleviates the need for good customer service. To the contrary, what this likely does is alleviate the need for the customer to inquire about the status of an order, albeit it depends upon how clear the communications are from the company. These touchpoints do not absolve the company from providing good customer service about the reasons for order delays, short-shipments, incorrect shipments, lost shipments, delayed shipments, out-of-stock problems, pricing questions, promotional help, and other issues related to the order, item, and shipping.

The old saying that bad news travels faster than good news is intensified in the Internet age as information travels faster and broader with the advent of social media. Per the article:

>> 47% of consumers will stop doing business with a brand due to continued frustration.

>> 32% of consumers will take the time and effort to email the company to complain about poor service. (The article does not delve into whether these communications are used by the companies to improve their customer service operations and technologies.)

>> 29% of consumers will tell friends and family about their brand abandonment due to frustration.

The key to successfully engaging customers is not to merely or simply over-engage them and overwhelm them, believing that the customer has to be touched at every opportunity. The right solution is to understand where the customer needs to be engaged and how that engagement should be handled. At which junction in the process does the customer need what information? What level of personalization is necessary at each touchpoint? What is the best way to communicate the information to the customer at each touchpoint?

As we get deeper into the hectic holiday season, examine your emails and postal mail a little differently this year. Analyze which companies are doing an effective or ineffective job at getting your attention or keeping you informed, whether it is about your order or about your favorite things. How is the company you work for – or own – doing relative to your competitors, your peers, and the company's where you are doing your holiday shopping?

A very happy holiday season to one and all! Many thanks to all of those who have supported me this year and throughout all of my years!

Thanks.

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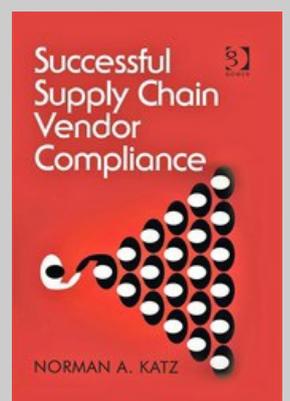
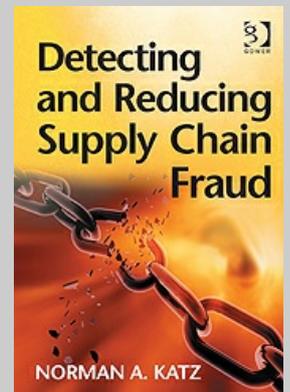


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