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Tips for creating the right customer experience in the era of impatience.

The December 2017 letter from the publisher in Inbound Logistics (www.inboundlogistics.com) magazine drives home the importance of delivering the right customer experience in the era of what the publisher calls supply chain impatience. Regardless of whether the customer is the B2B buyer or is the end consumer, expectations of supply chain performance are coming together and need to be in place from one end of the supply chain through to the other to ensure a seamless execution occurs and that the customer – whomever it is – has the best experience possible throughout the supply chain.

Some tips to ensure the right customer experience occurs are:

1. Consider your processes' customer service implications from as far back in the supply chain as possible. From the point of demand, delve as deeply into the supply chain to reveal all possible failure points and consider how those failures impact who the customer is at each point. Remember: there may be more than one type of customer impacted at a particular supply chain failure point as the failure ripples through the supply chain. The customer may be the end buyer, e.g. a retailer or manufacturer or distributor, or may be the consumer. Likewise, the failure may manifest itself differently as it moves through the supply chain, so it may likely have to be handled differently as it changes.
2. Your customer experience should be considered as a competitive advantage. It is easy to delivery good customer service when things go right, but how is your customer experience when thing go awry? Showcase to new customers your competitive advantage, and leverage it to keep current customers yours and not your competitors.
3. Just because some customers are not sophisticated and "plugged-in" does not excuse the fact that they don't expect or demand great customer service. It is your job to deliver the same level of superior service regardless, so find a way to satisfy all levels of customers regardless of their level of technology embracement.
4. You cannot tech your way to better customer service, or to any business solution as I often tell my clients. People will always be the critical and deciding factor. Technology is only a tool to get a job done. Inasmuch as you need to invest in the right technology tools to enable superior customer service, you cannot rely solely on technology to deliver the right customer service: people will always be the critical differentiating factor. Invest in the right people and provide them with the right training and educational opportunities, along with the right technology tools, to ensure that they are prepared to be on the front lines as they represent your company when dealing with unhappy customers in need of fast resolutions to their problems.

We have all been in the need of customer service and faced both good and bad customer service experiences. Ask yourselves how you want your company to be represented and remembered for its customer service experience. After experiencing your company's customer service would you do business as a customer with your company again?

Thanks.

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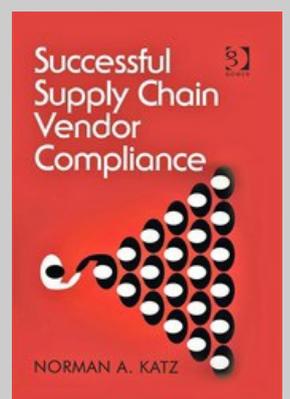
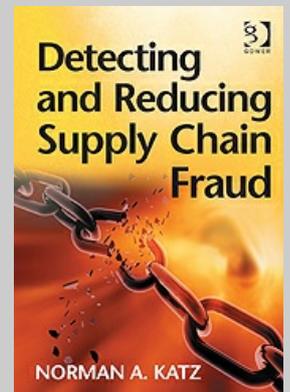


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