



Supply Chain Operations & Technologies
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Since January 1996

The summertime storms have returned to their daily frequency in South Florida. I've recently invested in new umbrellas and spent a few extra dollars on ones with larger and sturdier canopies that offer more protection and resistance to the strong winds that usually accompany the torrential downpours.

The rains also signify another regular occurrence I will experience this time of year: that of the water-soaked newspaper.

Yes – I'm one of those people who like to read the newspaper, and I really enjoy doing so while eating breakfast. I've done this my whole life and I really feel like I'm starting the day off right by this little ritual.

I remember a time not that long ago when my newspaper would be double-bagged during the summertime with a special outer bag that would help protect the paper against the elements. It's been several years since I recall this being done.

So for the savings of what I'd have to believe is some very tiny fraction of a penny per weather-resistant newspaper bag for each newspaper that is delivered and left outside and exposed to the elements, I am now required to make one if not two telephone calls to my newspaper's customer service center who then alerts a carrier – which may not be the same one who delivered my newspaper – to take the time and expense (notably gasoline) to deliver yet another newspaper to me at no charge some two hours or more later.

These independent newspaper delivery carriers make little money enough without having to redouble efforts all for the lack of a weather-resistant outer bag!

At a time when newspaper readership is on a decline, ensuring a positive customer experience may be a key strategy for customer retention. And if one tactic to ensure a positive customer experience is to double-bag newspapers during the summertime I'd call that a smart investment.

The tough economy has forced countless sacrifices in order to survive. Look elsewhere to trim expenses because cutting quality and service are simply sure-fire ways to alienate customers. It is typically less expense to retain a customer than it is to acquire a customer.

Disconnected organizations that only see the pennies saved are those that also fail to see the dollars bad decisions cost. No matter what product or service you or your company offers, keeping the bar raised high on quality and service is the right strategy for longevity and success. Pinching the wrong pennies will very likely result in disintegrated dollars, not unlike what happens to newsprint when it sits out in the rain.

Thanks.

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