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FC Expert Blog

They Got It! PLUS: How to "fire" a customer and keep them coming back for more.BY FC EXPERT BLOGGER [LYNETTE CHIANG](#) Wed Jan 27, 2010

This blog is written by a member of our expert blogging community and expresses that expert's views alone.

The stars in my Gmail are aligned ...

Not only has my \$29.95 been swiftly refunded in the wake of my veiled threats to mentally blow up pallets of translucent polypropylene laptop covers (see [2010: The Year of Saying: "I Got It!"](#)) but [this recent NYT rant about being e-snubbed](#) has gotten the equally e-gnored out in the streets, poking their pitchforks HR-ward.

In my post I described in graphic detail what I believe goes through the average customer's mind, synapse by synapse, when a vendor fails to respond, either personally or even, "droid-ally" (auto-responder).

I confess my plea that finally hit paydirt included a link to my [post](#), and a promise that I'd amend my pyromaniacal ways if refunded immediately.

I wrote: "If you refund me right now, I will honor your decency by posting an update stating that I finally was able to get through to you, that I received customer satisfaction, and that I can, once again, feel proud to be Chinese in a world where there is increasing distrust of doing business with people who look like us."

Ouch! Did I just stick a pin in everyone who looks vaguely Chinese? Well, cases like this don't help anyone who looks like me, what with the China product-recall stories on CNN of late.

Like Mr Hirschfield, I received an immediate response, including a bonus personal note:

Hi, there

Your \$29.95 has been refunded.

Your return item may not get processed properly due to too many orders coming in during the back to school season.

Moreover, I believe you are the most nasty lady we have ever met or imagine after we read your blog.

Why? Because you think every person you trade online are liar or cheater or whatever.

I think somehow you must have a very ugly mind inside.

As a reputable power seller on eBay and Amazon, we have served over 100,000 satisfied buyers so far.

Unfortunately, you are just a doomed customer which we can not make you satisfied because God damaged the package we sent to you during the transportation process.

We ship thousands of orders every month, why was only your package damaged?

Because you are NOT blessed by God as your mind is full of evil.

No matter how much you try to ruin our reputation in your bullshit blog, you can NOT damage our reputation at all with your single exception as we are seeing our sales increasing every month.

Here are our recommendations to you:

- 1) Trust every person you meet is good
- 2) Read the bible every day as you will find the peace inside your heart
- 3) Blog less and spend more time to enjoy your life, not trying to teach somebody else like an expert.

Wow!

Ironically, a Customer Evangelist - doomed or otherwise - is not offended by this kind of reply. It shows there's a bod, not a bot pressing keys somewhere out there, getting carpal tunnel syndrome just like me.

Now if only they'd responded four months earlier to my pleas, everything would have been different. Of course their sales will continue to soar, which I applaud, but if, like Mr Hirschfield, my post made just one company more conscious about the importance of responding, my work is done.

So what's a softer way to tell a customer off?

This is how my [current employer](#) fired me - the prospect from hell - several years ago:

Dear Lynette

I'm really sorry we haven't been able to meet your needs. We're a small company and though we are pretty good at doing custom orders, there is only so much we can do with our limited resources. We're refunding your deposit, because we believe in under-promising and over-delivering, and we can't promise we can make you happy. We hope you understand.

Sincerely ...

Now, that's a company that "get's it." I immediately quit my nitpicking and ordered the most expensive model in the catalog. It got me from downunder to upover today.

[The Galfromdownunder](#) is currently in the [Bahamas with a customer](#) (separate rooms of course), but is cutting her trip short and donating the rest of her holiday funds to Haiti. Including the \$29.95. Thank you iPearl Inc for enabling me to do that.

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Rick Langlois 02/03/2010 08:41 AM

Good God! What must go through some people's minds to make them type a letter like that? Well, from time to time I run across a person who must feel as though the whole world is against them and I seem to be the last straw. You could answer a dolt like this with an even more pious reply and teach them something about "what Jesus would say". Or not.



Laurence Wade 01/31/2010 06:15 PM

Gee, God is carrying a heavy burden these days, what with having to wait patiently at the FedEx depot until YOUR parcel comes along the line, then smote it a few times to deliver unto you the evil you deserve. Not so evil though that these folks didn't want to take your money.

Its a great customer service story!



Hugh Larkin 01/28/2010 01:42 AM

Lynette:

Its too bad that internet operations seem to be the worst. They think that because they get 'good' remarks as a retailer, they are GREAT - NOT! I don't order online very often, but when I do, I'm like you in that I expect to be treated as if I were there in person.

For this guy to rant about what an un-godly person you are only shows what an arrogant a**h*** he is. Like you, I know that a few kind words of humble pie as the retailer's rep brings in LOTS of rewards.

Keep up the rants calling for good service.

Hugh



Robert Harrison 01/27/2010 01:40 PM

And, once in a great while something gets done quickly and with a bit of style...

This past weekend, while doing a bit of bicycle camping, I had a bit of camping gear fail. It didn't ruin trip, but did require I take some extra care bedding down for the night.

I'd purchased the item long enough ago that it was a few months outside the one year warranty period. It was only the second time I'd used the article so I was a little taken aback, but things do happen.

Yesterday I emailed the service department of this small company with photographs of the damage. I politely stated that I realized the failure occurred outside of the warranty period and that I was willing to pay for the repair. I also noted that it was only the second time I'd used their product but that I really like the darn thing and wanted to know what to do.

This morning, which means they answered me first thing, I got a reply stating that the damage I documented is very rare and they'd be willing to send me a new replacement if I'll send back the old one so they can take a look and figure out what went wrong. The only thing I'll have to pay is the shipping which, as I recall was pretty minimal.

That's service.

The upshot is that it's generating another sale for them as well because I'll be including a check for another piece of gear from them they offered to send along with the replacement to avoid my having to pay twice for shipping.

As for your refund, I'm really tempted to order from the company in question to see if my item arrives damaged. It seems like a pretty good way of finding out if my mind is filled with evil!

Aloha!