

staffdigest

SINCE 1984

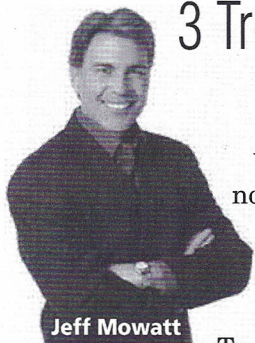
JUNE 2011

VOL. 27, NO. 8

The Future Of Customer Service

3 Trends That Will Change The Way You Serve Customers

By **Jeff Mowatt**



Jeff Mowatt

You have no doubt noticed that technology is changing the 'face' of customer service.

Traditional ways we used to interact with customers, win their trust, and keep them coming back are becoming irrelevant. Here are three of the most significant trends in customer service, and how you can position your business to capitalize rather than capsize in response.

TREND #1: Self Serve Slavery

What apparently started with self-serve gas stations has now become the norm. Customers are now booking their own travel, doing their own

Your Move – Shift From Order Taker To Trusted Advisor

In most organizations, there is virtually no role remaining for employees who merely act as order takers. When customers have done their homework on Google and have decided exactly what they want, then with today's technology there's no longer any need for employees to process simple transactions. The place where companies need employees is with more complex purchases. The role of staff here is *not* to provide customers with lots of information. Information is free on the internet – and free is perceived as worthless. The role of staff with complex purchases is to analyze the possible options that are available, then interpret which ones might be the most suited to that customer's unique needs and finally, advise the customer on up to three options that will solve the customer's problem. Companies will prosper by having a *Trusted Advisor* for clients and as much of your processes automated as possible.

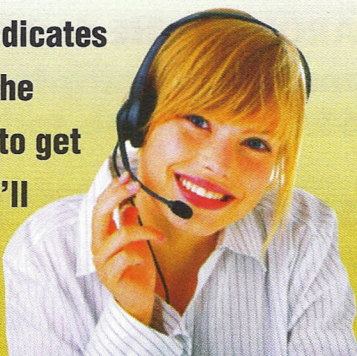
plugged into wireless devices; effectively insulating ourselves from our immediate surroundings. What that means is that good customer service is no longer talked about – it isn't even noticed! Good customer service has become wallpaper.

Your Move – Become Remarkably Different

In my seminars I suggest to managers, "Don't be better, be different." In other words rather than trying to beat your competition, try to change your service so that you become **REMARKABLE**. Fortunately this is easier than most people think. In most cases, this means equipping employees with a few customer communication tips and strategies that get noticed. For example, when a customer asks an employee to do something, the average response might be 'Sure' or 'OK.' We suggest that instead employees respond with, "I'll take care of it." That response indicates that not only is the employee going to get it done, but they'll do it literally *with care*. Your service gets noticed not because you're working harder, faster, or cheaper, but because you learn to convey greater value.

We suggest that instead employees respond with, "I'll take care of it."

That response indicates that not only is the employee going to get it done, but they'll do it literally *with care*.



TREND #2: Driven To Distraction

banking and even scanning their own groceries at self serve checkouts.

It used to be that good customer service would generate positive word of mouth advertising.

TREND #3: The Amplification Of Anger

Social media has become the new form of "word-of-mouth." Traditionally, if your organization's service