

THE NEED FOR SPEED

by John Tschohl

"Customers want high quality at low prices and they want it now." –Bill Gates

When it comes to customer service, we all want to “get out” quickly and get back to our lives. Generally speaking, just about the only time customers are going to contact you is when they need help, so *speed* counts in getting them where they’d like to be.

- **Customers value speed ... Amazon!** *“...if you wanna do more of something, make the friction less. If you wanna do less of something, make the friction more.”* —Jeff Bezos

Amazon has such an immense number of customers that care about the bang-for-the-buck value of Amazon Prime. Free shipping, free 2-day delivery and instant video are only three reasons that have helped Amazon build a reputation for excellent service. Amazon built Prime Now in just 111 days to innovate for customers around speed of delivery—customers in several cities can now get their orders in an hour or less.

NOTE: Amazon has overcome challenge after challenge by adhering to Bezos’ mission: To be earth’s most customer-centric company; to build a place where people can come to find and discover anything they might want to buy online.

- **Speed creates an advantage over the competition ... Apple!** Apple’s CEO recently asked for improvements in the company’s customer service “on hold” music after an Apple user emailed Cook about the quality of the music. The next day, the customer received a call from corporate letting them know that Tim Cook read his concerning email and that he had tested this and agreed that something must be done. What’s remarkable about this story is that Cook didn’t just reply to an unhappy customer; he took action.

*NOTE: Explain to the customer that all feedback by a customer is valued by the company. The customer will be unsure whether or not you will actually solve their problem, so be clear that you intend to **take action** to reach a mutually beneficial solution.*

- **Speed reduces costs and attracts more clients ... Starbucks!** Starbucks employees are drilled in the ways of customer service from the get-go, learning how to recognize and respond to a customer’s needs and wants. Consider the “Latte Method” that they are trained to use in unpleasant situations:

“Listen to the customer, Acknowledge their complaint, Take action by solving the problem, Thank them, and then Explain why the problem occurred”

This method allows employees to respond quickly to difficult customer situations – something that most customer service representatives find hard to deal with. In this manner, Starbucks employees are able to create a positive experience for the customer, every time.

NOTE: Express your genuine appreciation to the customer for sharing their complaint. Explain that customer complaints serve as constructive criticism and can allow the company to better serve other customers. Be sure that you include that you hope to serve them again soon.

- **Speed is exceptional service. ... Metro Bank London!** They listen to their customers. Metro Bank is known as the most customer driven company in England with the highest NPS score in the entire country. They will open an account giving new customers blank checks, debit card and online internet access with personal password...in 15 - 20 minutes! And the other banks in London take 2 weeks.

NOTE: Let your customers know that company policies and procedures have been changed to accommodate their requests, their time, and their concerns. That you are constantly on the alert for their input and that you look forward to hearing from them.

Speed involves using tools and techniques to dramatically reduce the time needed to complete a task while still placing a high importance on the level of quality. Do not sacrifice the quality of a project or task just to go faster. That is not Speed. Speed does not forgo quality for the sake of finishing faster

Remember, customers will reciprocate your helpful actions. When you resolve situations quickly and effectively, and then respond to their need, most customers will pay you back with continued or increased loyalty, goodwill and even repurchasing. Keep in mind, there's nobody more valuable than the customer.

“Today’s consumers want speed and convenience, but they also want a great customer experience.” –John Tschohl



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