

How do your customers feel?

It seems that many businesses, especially the big ones, spend much more money on memorable advertising campaigns and very little on customer service. No matter how great a business is, there will always be customer service to be done (changing addresses, paying bills, correcting billing errors, etc.). Yet, many businesses ignore the basics.

A couple of examples:

Netflix. Netflix does not seem to care much about how its customers feel. The company does not respond to Twitter mentions. It doesn't seem to be concerned about negative postings. How do I know? Well, I have had Salmon Fishing in the Yemen at the top of my Netflix queue for about six weeks or more. At first, there was a "long wait." Now, it's a "short wait." Bottom line is that I have watched several other movies while still waiting for Salmon Fishing. And I have tweeted Netflix. And I have wanted to email them—there is no easy way to do that.

ATT. I have been with ATT for years now. I recently upgraded to a smartphone and was told that I was eligible for the upgrade (which apparently means in ATT language they will CHARGE you for this upgrade). I called to see if they would take this charge off—and my argument was 1) I was not advised of such a charge and 2) I was told I was eligible for an upgrade. The customer service agent said he would give me a "courtesy one-time waiver" of this fee, but proceeded to lecture me that this fee was something all carriers do and that ATT would charge me it with every subsequent upgrade. He was combative and rude, and when I pointed this out to him, he hung up on me. I called back and spoke to supervisor and she told me the same thing about the charge (a bit less rudely). I repeatedly told her that I have been an ATT customer for years, I pay my bills on time, and ATT had given me no special

offers. Bottom line in my experience: ATT does not care.

Netflix and ATT appear to be utterly unconcerned with how their customers feel about them. I am just one more customer.

In contrast, I flew **Delta** last month and was amazed by the airline's interest in my customer experience. After the first flight I was sent a survey to measure what I thought of the boarding process, etc. The return flight was badly delayed due to weather in Washington. Delta sent an apology for the delay (even though it was truly not at fault) and asked how the gate agent and flight attendants acted during the delay.

Customer service and experience should be an integral part of an organization's overall marketing strategy. If your organization does not know anything about how your customers feel, and does not respond to customer issues, you are well on your way to losing those customers.

Marketing should be both about ATTRACTING customers and RETAINING them.

Thoughts?