

How to alienate people and lose customers

Some companies just don't get it. They actually seem to want to lose customers. Here are two examples.

Citibank

Just one day after I wrote my last post on alienating customers, I got a letter from Citibank informing that my credit card account is changing. But not to fear, these changes include several "enhancements." But the changes are not enhancements. They are making the card even more useless—no more picture ID, no more 2% cash back for supermarket and drugstore purchases, AND, they are changing the name of the card and issuing a new number. The thing about the account number was in the last paragraph.

You know what this is: it is a way of further alienating me as a customer. Why? Because first, it insults my intelligence. I know an enhancement when I see one—it usually involves something positive for me as a customer. Second, it forces me to do some work. Now, I have to call places where I have recurring charges to change my card number. And third, it is giving me something I didn't ask for nor did I want AGAINST MY WILL, WITH NO OPT-OUT.

Verizon

Although I have few service issues with Verizon, when I do, it is a nightmare to deal with this company. Its customer service truly is atrocious. I dread having to call them for anything. I usually get a phone tree, followed by an inept customer service rep who then drops the call when transferring me to the correct department. Just ugh. So, the idea of adding any services with this company is unthinkable.

Verizon seems to think that if they send me enough direct mail, I will buckle in and get FIOS. So, every single week, I get a minimum of one piece of direct mail with an offer to install FIOS. This week, I got three pieces. This has been going on for two years. Every time I see a letter from Verizon it goes in the trash and I think what a stupid company this is. Spending millions of dollars on direct mail, killing trees and for what? If they had an inkling on how to get customers they would figure out what customers want, and work on serving those needs first (better customer service comes to mind). Instead of doing real work, Verizon keeps sending useless direct mail. How many people are signing up? I bet not many.

How to alienate people and lose customers? Keep hitting them over the head with offers they don't want, insult their intelligence and make them do all the work. On that end, Citibank and Verizon, you are doing a great job.

