

Treat complaints as opportunities

Turn dissatisfied clients into loyal ones with a good customer recovery system

HERE'S the truth: Your organisation simply cannot get your customers' experience right every single time, so there is no shame in anticipating, measuring and examining shortfalls in service and then focusing on improving your customers' experience.

The needs, wants and desires of your customers and potential customers are always evolving to a higher plane, and are an opportunity for you to increase your value proposition and gain a greater competitive edge in your marketplace.

I'm sure you have heard numerous times that a good customer recovery system can turn unsatisfied customers into loyal advocates.

Loyal advocates lead to higher profitability, one of three cornerstones of every successful organisation, the other two being performance and fulfilment.

To profit from this information, your company must first appreciate that it takes time, effort and energy on the part of your customer to complain — and frustration is often the fuel propelling the complaint.

Therefore, you should thank your complaining customers — they are telling you what doesn't work for them and, possibly, your other customers.

It is only when you see complaints in this perspective that you can truly look upon them for what they really are: an opportunity to improve. Only the best leaders in organisations welcome, measure and examine customers' complaints (and complements



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too) and use them as an opportunity to improve further still.

Sadly, many companies view complaints as a nuisance — pushing complaining customers from pillar to post — and delay, diffuse or discard all responsibility for their customers' unhappiness.

When this is done, your organisation will miss out on the chance to improve and end up dealing with falling customer numbers.

Yes, service recovery costs, time, resources and energy, but

bad service and systems have the habit of causing you even more time, resources and energy.

In reality, your organisation can ill afford the price of not having satisfied customers. The fact is that it costs more to acquire a new customer or replace a lost one than it does to retain an existing one.

So, when you are creating technologies to measure your customers' experience, you are not only investing in discovering what disgusts your customers but

also what delights them.

You can then strategically channel more effort into what makes them happy, and what angers them, towards a mutually beneficial outcome. — Source: Singapore Straits Times/Asia News Network

■ **ARTICLE** by Manoj Sharma, an organisation strategist who assists organisations around the world to boost their profitability, performance and fulfilment levels.