



MAKING IT EASY FOR CUSTOMERS TO RETURN



One of our most precious resources is time. We can always make another dollar but we can never retrieve the moment just gone. People are becoming more time conscious as their worlds become noisier and busier.

The smart company both grasps and factors this in as to how customers are better off in dealing with their business. This in return causes customers to keep coming back.

- Easy
Virgin Australia online booking system
- Tedious
Bank tellers on lunch break the same time as a million other people are
- Difficult
Outsourcing by telecommunication companies to people I cannot understand; long call waits; people who have script knowledge only

Streamline Business Process Around Customer Requirements

Start by asking "what do my customers want?" There are generic requirements and then particular requirements to certain industries and customer types. Do my customers want:

- fast delivery of orders?
- on call availability?
- ease of payment options and transaction efficiency?
- additional time and care taken? An example here would be boutique clothing
- increased personal engagement and patron recognition? Restaurants and hotels come to mind
- brevity?

There are probably a hundred others I could add here but the key is in understanding your customer and creating your business *around them*. Where many companies get it wrong is in the streamlining of business processes from an internal efficiency perspective only. Health care is a classic example. In efforts to streamline internal efficiencies and remove the bottlenecks of wait times they may choose to send people home earlier thus freeing up extra beds. It can be both damaging to the patient and create excessive internal costs due to multiple return visits.

The Power of Observation

There is nothing like the power of observation. I was in a printing company last week with a line of fifteen people with one person servicing the line. The manager should have spotted this and acted immediately. I reported this as unacceptable. In contrast another long wait was expected at an RSL restaurant where I was a guest speaker for the evening. The manager here had noticed the long line and while they couldn't put anymore servers in at the counter they did have a waitress out with a fruit platter servicing the line and apologising for the delay with an explanation that they had not anticipated this amount of people.

In your organisation, stand back and observe. Look for length of customer lines, wait times, delivery times, schedules, delays, errors and so forth. Then, deal with the bottlenecks - reengineering to suit the customer. If you make it easy and enjoyable for the customer to work with you, they'll then return with others.

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