



AVOID LOSING TOUCH WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS—GRAB A FRONT ROW SEAT

If You're Not Sitting Where Your Customer's Sitting, You're Not Really Seeing Your Brand

By Fast Company Expert Blogger Shawn Parr
Dec 7, 2011

The challenging economy has forced everyone to look at cutting unnecessary costs. From airlines charging for every checked bag, to restaurants not serving bread or table water unless asked, small cuts can have a deep-lasting effect.



A Fresh Look a From Your Customer's View

It's easy for senior executives to lose touch with what's important (or frustrating) to their consumers, especially when it comes to the small and important details that really affect customer perception of brand experience and value. Here are some ways to experience your brand in the real world--and remind yourself how your customers see it.

Get out of your office

It should be mandatory for every senior executive in a company to experience their brand from the same perspective that the "people" do. It's imperative to get out of the corner office and mingle among the people you serve. "Easier said than done," you may think. "Who possibly has the time to get out to the stores, into the restaurants, or on a plane?" Make the time. It's an investment in understanding what is really important to your consumers. Research presentations and statistics never paint the complete picture, and oftentimes not the right one. *(Continued on Page 3)*

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DECEMBER 2011

Special points of interest:

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2012 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Special Thanks to All Paid Memberships thus far!

Bank of Turtle Lake
Becker's SuperValu
Canyon Road Inn
Cenex
CenturyTel
Cornwall Stary Hardware
Countryside Antiques
Full Moon Dental

Hotel Bar and Grill
Humana Health
Jane's Lake Country Pizza
Jan's Custom Cakes
Johnson, Agen, Kupferschmidt and Associates
KiMark Studios
Lake Aire Insurance
Lake Country Dairy
Mosaic Telecom
New Frontier

Pearce Wireless
Polk-Burnett Electric
Sanmina Corporation
Skinner Funeral Home
Spare Time Bowl, Bar and Grill
Sunshine Fitness
Turtleback Apartments
Village of Turtle Lake
Xcel Energy
Donna Cordes
Ken and Judy Ahlberg

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(Continued from Page 1)

Get out of your comfort zone--and visit the washroom

At the start of a recent strategic brand-refresh program with a national restaurant chain, we challenged the CEO and the entire executive team to go out into their restaurants. We told them to take a good friend, order lunch, and midway through, visit the rest room with a camera, and sit on the toilet and take photos of what was around them. We told them to ask their friend to do the same thing (without the camera), and then talk about their observations over lunch. Perhaps not the most appetizing homework, but necessary--after all, rest rooms of any establishment say a lot, and customers spend thoughtful minutes in there with nothing to look at but the (empty?) toilet-paper holder. We then asked them to come to our kickoff workshop with their photos and their stories. Needless to say, the toilet talk was revealing.

Get real, and in doing so, get on the same page

The bathroom exercise forced executives to get real about their brand--experiencing it the way their customers do, not just looking at it from a distance. While it was uncomfortable for them, it set the tone for our relationship, where candor and brutal honesty are not only welcome, but expected. With the truth at the center of every challenge, unity and momentum can

be created among a team to solve almost any challenge.

10 ways to get out there and experience your brand

The following are 10 ways to roll up your sleeves and act like a customer. You'll develop a new perspective and experience true customer empathy, no matter the business you're in:

1. Sit in the waiting room of the ER with your son or daughter late at night and see how it feels to wait for more than 30 minutes, filling out the same paperwork over and over again. What would you change?
2. Buy your product, then go straight to your competitor and do the same thing. What does your company do better? What do they do better? What did you learn?
3. Order your product online and have it delivered to your home. Does the condition and appearance of your product deliver on the promise? What did it communicate?
4. Dial up your own 1-800 number, listen to the hold music for two minutes and see if that doesn't raise your blood pressure. Get angry and see how long it takes you to rattle the customer service manager. What did you learn?
5. Would you recommend your product

to your best friend? Why? Would they recommend it to their closest friends and family?

6. Offer your product to the first 10 customers you see. Ask them for their immediate feedback. Would they be willing to purchase the product?
7. Use your favorite search engine and enter the name of your company's flagship product. Hopefully you see your name at the top of the search. If it's not, why? What do the product reviews say? What else do you see? Can you even find your product? This is the information shoppers use to make their purchasing decisions.
8. After using one of your most popular products, read how your product is described online. What does it offer? What does it promise? Does the description match what the product delivers?
9. Go into your store and buy something. Was the experience memorable? Did it stand out as something special?
10. Stop someone who walked out of your store, restaurant, or whatever type of establishment you own. Ask them how their experience was. Would they recommend it? Will they come back?

Shawn Parr is the The Guvner & CEO of Bulldog Drummond, an innovation and design consultancy headquartered in San Diego whose clients and partners have included Starbucks, Diageo, Jack in the Box, Adidas, MTV, Nestle, Pinkberry, American Eagle Outfitters, IDEO, Virgin, Disney, Nike, Mattel, Heineken, Annie's Homegrown, The Michael J Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, CleanWell, The Honest Kitchen and World Vision.

HELP SPREAD WARMTH THIS SEASON

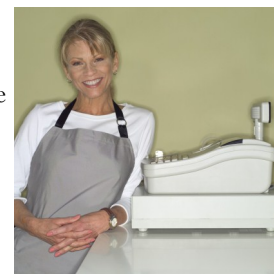
Turner Reaney Chamber 1st Vice President

Many people will be traveling over the holiday season. We may see an influx of people into our small community either here to visit family or just enjoying the "North Woods" of northwest Wisconsin.

It is important to make everyone feel comfortable as they shop in our stores, eat in our restaurants or purchase gas and supplies at one of Turtle Lake's convenience stores.

You may wish to take a minute and remind all of your employees to go out of their way to make everyone feel welcome in our community and

express that we appreciate the business



they are bringing us.

Happy Holidays to all and a Prosperous New Year!

REMINDER TO MANAGEMENT & STAFF: USE UP YOUR FSA: 5 YEAR-END HEALTH CARE MOVES

By Amanda Gengler, MONEY Magazine
November 30, 2011

Don't forget to empty out your flexible spending account and get your medical checkups before the new year. You'll cut next year's health care costs.

Empty your FSA

Flexible spending accounts often allow you to put up to \$5,000 pretax a year aside to cover medical care. About half of companies require you to use up the funds by Dec. 31. (The rest give you a grace period until March 15, according to WageWorks.)

So get new glasses, stock up on contact lens solution or get your teeth cleaned.

Starting this year, over-the-counter meds, such as allergy or heartburn relief pills, qualify for FSA reimbursement only if you have a prescription from your doctor.

Get yourself checked out

As part of the 2010 health reform law, insurers must pick up the full tab on in-network preventive care services, which might include a yearly mammogram, colonoscopy, flu shot, or

osteoporosis screening. So book your appointments now.

Not sure what you qualify for?

You can get a list of the preventive services your insurer will cover for you based on your age, gender, health status and family history at healthcare.gov.

Take advantage of a spent deductible

If you or a member of your family has already hit your insurance deductible, try to cram in the visits before Jan. 1 to take care of that aching foot, dry skin patch, or other nagging malady you've been ignoring.

Send The Help Desk your health insurance questions

Do it now and you'll owe only the co-insurance or co-pay; wait until the new year, and you'll have to cough up another deductible (which most people don't hit every year) before your insurance coverage kicks in.

Besides, a small ache or pain might become a bigger problem by then.

"As part of the 2010 health reform law, insurers must pick up the full tab on in-network preventive care services ..."

Boost your medical tax break

Has your family racked up significant health care bills this year? Total up the tab. Medical expenses above a certain amount (usually 7.5% of your adjusted gross income) are generally deductible, assuming you itemize.

If you've crossed the threshold, or are close to it, try to shift upcoming health expenses, such as dental work or new prescription sunglasses, into this year, says Barbara

Weltman, contributing editor to J.K. Lasser's "Your Income Tax."

Don't miss incentives

Toward the end of the year many large employers offer rewards such as cash, gift cards or a premium discount to employees who agree to have their blood pressure and cholesterol checked, and fill out a health risk assessment.

Often you need to act within six weeks of the offer to grab the reward, says Jay Savan of benefit consultant Towers Watson. So fill the forms out now, and set yourself up for a richer New Year.

WINTERFEST 2012 QUARTERLY MEETING

Change of Date: Mark Your Calendars!

The TLACC continues to put forth strong effort of effective business strategies, worthwhile meetings, information and networking opportunities. We have shifted from monthly meetings to quarterly meetings and information being disseminated through this newsletter each month. These quarterly

meetings are being designed to cater to fulfilling business needs which ultimately effect your revenue, staff, and customer base.

Our Winterfest meeting, previously scheduled for January 11th, will be moved to **Wednesday, January 18th, at 5:30 p.m.**



"Customer Service: Reading Between the Lines Makes or Breaks Your Bottom Line," is the theme of the meeting. This is a perfect training opportunity for your staff and refresher for management to make a true connection with the customer.

Training will be no more than 90 minutes and is absolutely FREE!

MARKETING OPPORTUNITY - FREE ADVERTISING

Free Marketing continues through the WJMC "Talk of Turtle Lake" promotion on the air every Friday morning at 7:30 AM. Contact Danielle at Village Hall, 715-986-2241 or clerk@turtlelakewi.com no later than Thursday afternoon with your event information. Advertise your special event or business promotion. This can include any and all events, promotions, and happenings that you'd like the public to attend. The best part is that it's FREE!



BIG RED BOW EVENT—Still going strong and there's still time to participate—Pick up Your Bow at Village Hall ~ Display until the end of the Month. Let Danielle know your special and she will post on the website. Another FREE advertising opportunity for your business.

Chamber Christmas: Success! We spent a little more to get a little more ~ Signs and a new Santa Suit purchased for many years of future use. Special Thank You to Our Secret Santa, Mosaic for donating the cost of the Horse and Wagon, and Tim Adamzyk for the great time aboard; Halco Press—Denise Slack and Jill Quade for donating the photos with Santa; St. Croix Casino for donating the chili, soups and fixings; Cenex for donating the cups, bowls and flatware; and All who donated the yummy cookies and Everyone who donated their time to serve, set up and tear down! Ticket Sales: \$526.00 (Up \$135.00 from last year)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Holiday Promotion: Nov. 1st—Dec. 22nd

Quarterly Meetings:

Winterfest: January 11, 2012

Spring Fling: April - Interested in hosting?

Summer Picnic: August - Picnic in Park

Fall Annual Banquet: November 2012

Mar. 22 - Apr 4: Easter Coloring Contest

May 19th: Spring Market Day

July 8th at 12pm: Chamber Parade

October 6th: Uniquely Wisconsin

Holiday Promotion Drawing:

Bring Filled Cards to Village Hall by December 22nd at 4:00pm

CHAMBER PITCH-IN



Lights in the Park—Month of December

Service Opportunities:

Contact Danielle, 715-986-2241, to Assist with the Winterfest Meeting on Jan. 11th
Offer to host the Spring Fling Meeting at Your Business Establishment

Remind Executive Committee of Upcoming Business Anniversary or Special Occasions

TREASURY RECAP

Checking Account Balance: \$436.90
Current Savings Account Balance: \$4018.26

November/December Activity:

Event & Promo Invoices to date: \$529.33

Purchase of Bows: \$243.40

Chamber Bucks Give Away: \$500.00

Other Misc. Supplies & Postage: \$62.23

Total Received in Dues for 2012: \$1255.00

Representing 29 Businesses -

2 Individual Members, 23 Small Business Members, and 4 Large Business Members.

We have a potential of over 80 Members.

FEATURED BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

A new opportunity to show off your business and to help keep the community and fellow Chamber members informed will be via the "Featured Business of the Month." We held a drawing for each business that was represented at the Annual Meeting & Banquet for which month they would

be featured. The following is a list of the those businesses and which month they will be featured. We look forward to learning more about your products and services. Congratulations!

January—Red Rock Radio/MIX105
February—Sanmina SCI

March—Mosaic Telecom
April—Jane's Lake Country Pizza
May—Country Side Antiques
June—Canyon Road Inn B&B
July—Village of Turtle Lake
August—Sunshine Fitness Center
September—TL Medical Clinic
October—Cenex Laker Country Sports

TURTLE LAKE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Turtle Lake Area
Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Turtle Lake WI 54889

Tel: 715-986-2241
Toll Free: 800-811-0338

Chamber President Alissa Coomer
Email: sunshinefitness@ymail.com



Building Community

Networking

Supporting

Local Business

Find Us Online:

[www.turtlelakewi.com/
turtle_lake_area_chamber
of_commerce.htm](http://www.turtlelakewi.com/turtle_lake_area_chamber_of_commerce.htm)



Wishing You and Your Staff a
Very Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year!



HOW TO IDENTIFY SHOPLIFTERS

Shoplifting Methods

By Shari Waters, About.com Guide

Shoplifters can be placed in one of two categories, professional and amateur. While both groups can be quite skilled at the art of thievery, ^{professional} shoplifters steal to make a living and may use force or intimidation. The non-professional shoplifter may be easier to spot.

Shoplifter Methods:

Many of these thieves work in groups of two or more to distract the sales staff while they pilfer.

Shoplifters learn to take advantage of busy stores during peak hours or they may hit at times when employees are less alert, such as opening, closing and shift changes.

Hiding merchandise is the most common method of shoplifting. Items are concealed in the clothing of the shoplifter, in handbags, strollers, umbrellas or inside purchased merchandise. Bold shoplifters may grab an item and run out of the store. Other methods include price label switching, short changing the cashier, phony returns, and so on.

Spot the Shoplifter:

Unfortunately, there is no typical profile of a shoplifter. Thieves come in all ages, races and from various backgrounds. However, there are some signs that should signal a red flag for retailers. While the following characteristics don't necessarily mean guilt, retailers should keep a close eye on shoppers who exhibit the following:

- Spends more time watching the cashier or sales clerk than actually shopping.
- Wears bulky, heavy clothing during warm weather or coats when unnecessary.
- Walks with short or unnatural steps, which may indicate that they are concealing lifted items.
- Takes several items into dressing room and only leaves with one item.
- Seems nervous and possibly picks up random items with no interest.
- Frequently enters store and never makes a purchase.
- Enters dressing room or rest rooms with merchandise and exits with none.
- Large group entering the store at one time, especially juveniles. A member of the group causes a disturbance to distract sales staff.