

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



255 Creative Ideas in Serving Your Customers

Most organizations look at customer service as a process where you smile a lot, try to take care of customer issues as best you can, and hopefully not get yelled at. I'm Jerry Roberts, today we at another side of it that can build business. That's next, on The Extra Point.

First off, there's nothing wrong with smiling a lot and taking care of customers. Great service takes in a lot more territory that too many organizations ignore. One aspect is where service connects up to your marketing strategy. Let's talk about a company that doesn't do business in Guam — Chick-fil-A.

Whereas most fast-food operations place most of their focus on launching new items, Chick-fil-A's menu has been relatively stable for many years. While they certainly do add or modify products, much of their effort goes into figuring out new ways to serve their customers, getting a leg up on their competitors.

One such strategy has been to make their offerings more attractive for moms, particularly Millennial moms between the ages of 18 and 35.

Chick-fil-A managers noticed how hectic ordering could be for parents of young kids, particularly if the mom had two or more she was trying to control. The company began to research the issue and saw an opportunity to make a big difference for the mothers, and to increase business.

What they came up with is called *Mom's Valet* and it works like this...

The mom pulls into the drive-thru to place their order. The kids may be making noise but at least they're not running around or wandering away, with the mom having to corral them.

Once the order is placed she parks her car and comes inside the restaurant to a prepared table, and their order ready to eat. Parents can spend less time dealing with their impatient kids inside the restaurant, and kids are happier. It's the first time a major restaurant brand has offered a service like this.

The Chick-fil-A website carried a story about a North Carolina mom who wrote, "Our local Chick-fil-A does 'Mom's Valet' and they know us by name now!"

Chick-fil-A has made a concerted effort to really understand its customers, and every angle of their experience in buying food from them. No doubt that had added thousands of loyal buyers for their business.

So my question is, how can we do a better job of improving the overall experience for our customers? Are there obvious things we can do? Sometimes, these opportunities are hiding in plain sight, such as what Chick-Fil-A saw with kids driving moms crazy while they were trying to make an order.

Look around, ask everybody on your team what they think, and then ask your customers. You may just come up with some ideas that can add an extra level of profitability, while giving people more reasons to keep coming back.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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