

NEW KID ON THE BLOCK AND MAKING WAVES



Service Hero Of the Month

Ms Jayclin Lim, ESTILLIA DEN, No 8, SS2/61, PJ

The Centre for Customer Care (CCC) Malaysia has been conducting numerous surveys on customer service throughout Malaysia and Singapore, and our findings revealed that the Retail sector is the most critical. A couple of years ago, it has been the financial sectors namely the banking and insurance sectors. However, both the banking and insurance sectors have become more customer-focused ever since and have started to invest in customer service initiatives to please their many customers. This is most definitely in response to intense competition and the increased expectations of customers.

Surprisingly, the retail sector has hardly made any progress. They are still fighting continuously on pricing, hoping to bring in the customers through their sales campaign. Many have resorted to putting out **BIG** advertisements in the newspapers daily, incurring millions of ringgit every year. Reason – to draw in the crowd and hopefully they will visit their shops and buy something. Sad to say, all these efforts and costly pursuits may bring customers to their shops but what most of us can testify from personal experience is that customers walk in and then make a U-turn out without buying anything. **THERE IS NO SALE DONE!** Those customers were not converted into \$\$\$\$\$\$ because the employees practically shooed their customers away with their poor service delivery: *indifferent attitude, unwelcoming expression, unhelpfulness, poor communicational skills and lack of selling skills*. There goes your millions of ringgit in promotion and sales campaign. Yet, many retail operators still do not realise their folly and continue to spend incessantly.

Because of this failure to please customers, many customers favour shops that are run personally by the owners. **Estillia Den, a boutique based in SS2** and owned by **Ms Jayclin Lim**, is one good example. Customers visiting that boutique know for sure that they will be given the attention and respect as a customer who has money to spend. There is no lack of boutiques or shops for customers with money to choose from but there is definitely a lack of places where customers are treated with some respect and kindness. Estillia Den is making waves in SS2 because Jayclin understands this simple business concept: customers need to feel good at the end of their shopping experience.

For retail business, if you are keen to remain in business and making more profit than before, despite competition, here are some SUCCESS secrets for you:

1. **Hire customer oriented staff who can SMILE and shows courtesy.** Of course you need to pay them more salary + incentives, but they will bring in more sales for you and happy customers go out and advertise for you FREE OF CHARGE. You can now cut down on your advertising costs. Making sense now?
2. **Invest in training programmes to develop the customer service skills + selling skills of your staff.** If a customer walks-in intending to buy 1 item and ended buying 3 items and still going home happy because he/she had a good experience, that's your Return-on-Investment (ROI) for developing your staff. Remember: always recognise your staff for their good work and reward them accordingly.
3. **Practise MBWA (Management by walking around) and serve customers as well.** The service culture, the secret of every successful service leader organisation, starts from the top. If you as bosses and managers do not demonstrate to your frontliners what is service excellence in action, then don't be surprised if your frontliners fail in delivering service excellence to your customers. Bye-bye business!
4. **Measure continuously** using Mystery Shoppers and Customer Satisfaction Surveys. You need to know where you stand in the eyes of your customers. Everyone hates to do a bloodtest but they HAVE TO!

Dr. Allen Teh
CEO, Centre for Customer Care (CCC) Malaysia

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Touchpoints

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- Wim Elfrink (Cisco Systems Inc)