

**Chat Contributions from CSL In Session - Taking the Blinders Off: Customer Service Lessons from Other Industries – with Jim Duncan, Colorado State Library**  
**December 8, 2011**

**Welcome Exercise - chat about recent customer service experiences (non-library)**

- i drove up and the customer service rep took 1 look and was able to call up what my name was, last service date and other details about my vehicle
- REI - they went out of their way to track down a GPS unit that I wanted for my husband. Called all over the country to find the right one for our area.
- I had a great REI experience a while ago, too - a thermarest I'd had for over a decade popped, and REI honored a warranty that thermarest's new parent company wouldn't have, and gave me a store credit for well over the value of the original thermarest. got a new one and... some other stuff. :-)
- I just had a great experience at Albertson's last night. Extremely helpful. Greeted me promptly. Super friendly. They are a little more expensive but the customer service is totally worth it. They helped me find a sale item . When they were out of one of the items they gave me a different, more expensive item for same price, plus an extra filet of salmon on the house.
- Had a great experience at AutoZone on the super cold night earlier this week. Had a dead battery, a nice young man sold me a new battery and installed it efficiently, despite the cold and his busy store
- recently took my car to Subaru for 30000 mi tune up. Had a coupon for \$300 less than regular price. When I got there they said it would be \$50 less than the coupon. They honored it for much less than I expected to pay.
- Grocery shopping at Safeway this week the cashier always asks if we need anything or found everything and they always ask if we need help out.
- Bad/good recent experience with Comcast: round and round on the voicemail loop--press this, press that, a real pain, but when I finally got to talk to a customer service rep she was most helpful
- I have trouble with our health insurance. We have a mailing address and physical address. they keep sending our mail to our physical address. I have literally called 6 times to have them correct the problem and they still have not done so.

## **Brainstorm - Chili's Drive Through - How would you apply in a library setting?**

- bring holds out to the customer
- ways to contact us in the stacks-- a red target phone
- drive-up book drop
- add a web page feature to readily get help
- for folks picking up holds maybe.
- Have more book drops throughout the city
- delivery for homebound folks
- online ebooks available any time of day or night
- kiosks at the airport
- Throughout the city would be a great idea, especially at the Go Stations
- kiosk at mall
- have phones in the library to call a librarian for questions/needs (but the key is the phones have to work lol. The ones at the city library rarely do.)
- I work with scientists in a research setting so we often take books they have requested to their offices - gives us a chance to talk with them

## **Chili's Drive Through - Pros, Cons and Costs brainstorm**

### **Pros**

- customer doesn't have to pay for parking
- customer doesn't have to search for parking
- so convenient not to get out of the car for pickup
- Can talk directly to patron.
- people do not have to get out of their cars
- Faster service for the customer
- doesn't have to walk through bad weather
- Opportunity to present other services available

- people don't have to get out of their cars at night
- a lot easier for parents toting kids/car seats
- Convenient in bad weather/icy conditions
- much more accessible for those with disabilities
- help the elderly or handicap
- self service holds makes the library staff remote - this would add a personal interaction
- potentially not having to go out of your way to pickup or drop off material
- handheld scanners could work well - car rental companies already use them

### **Cons**

- not enough staff to do this
- makes us more lazy - I mean society in general, not librarians (being more lazy)
- Physical adjustments to physical building
- creating a location do offer drive up service
- bad for the environment
- traffic hazards
- mobile checkout would have to work at the car
- patron misses out on other great lib experiences
- Not able to deal with hold errors with a person
- costs
- Service not available to those without cars
- we are a small library and don't have a drive up return.
- customer not browsing shelves
- People only see the item that they wanted - no opportunity for browsing
- Handle fines on the go
- if people have issues with their library account, you could have a long line of cars

- Chili's has an interest in not having tables held for an hour or so, so this saves them and enables increased business. Libraries don't have the same impetus.

## **Costs**

- more staffing
- hours to staff this service
- can sometimes interfere with handicapped parking
- The need for more staff - a place for people to park
- may have to remodel
- what's the ROI for this service?
- some sort of automated check out- so that the library card can be scanned there and then
- May be more cost effective to encourage downloadable books
- For virtual reference service, may have to institute chat software
- Would have to install a drawer like a bank push out drawer. Could be done but would be costly.
- Not good in bad weather.

## **Brainstorm – Pampers Community Site - How would you apply in a library setting?**

- Provide space on our website
- customers could submit ideas for books to purchase
- How do we do forms - go electronic
- Provide the option for a survey on the catalog computers- letting librarians know how easy/difficult it is to do material searches
- we could generate buzz for a book/s ahead of time
- It would be a great way to get patrons to discuss a library issue - public domain docs, privacy issues, etc.
- patron can post questions about their holds and the response back could be about hold policy for example
- maybe to find a like-minded reading group

- Can be used as an online focus group - receive lots of feedback on many topics
- Ereaders, eaudio devices - patrons always have questions and problems and other patrons maybe of more help than staff at times
- Bibliocommons already has some aspects of this interactivity
- Book reviews and recommendations from patrons where they can discuss together
- i see more decisions for purchases online being made on the basis of the 'stars' reported by others. libraries need a way to generate 5 star service...and promote it.
- Libanswers also offers similar forum and KB for FAQs
- There are a number of non-library people who are really passionate about libraries and their own libraries.

### **Pampers Community Site - Pros, Cons and Costs brainstorm**

#### **Pros**

- Even if the libraries response is ok, we'll look into it, still feel more instant than no reply at all
- A lot of good feedback from patrons
- easy way to gathering honest feedback
- more immediate community involvement with the library
- Can let us know if they are having data base issues off site
- can address problems transparently - educates others
- a good way to determine what other services the patrons need
- yes, could easily create a "FAQ" page
- Way to offer service 24/7
- Could answer the same questions that get asked a lot.
- A means for members of the community to advertise their products and services.
- Evidence-based stats on what is impt to community
- may also generate opportunities for customers who are passionate about same topic to locate each other

## **Cons**

- Might need to have a moderator to prevent too heated discussions
- privacy is a concern, but can insist on customers using aliases only
- people are bombarded with emails and online surveys
- people want to talk to a real person
- Librarians may have a lot of "stuff" to sift through to find quality feedback
- also people sometimes waste time w/notes, etc. , but you'd need to read them all
- Moderating - lots of staff time
- one other e-resource to manage
- we live in a small town. Patrons like physical interactions with others
- Privacy issues in terms of books requested or reference questions

## **Costs**

- Takes staff time to set up and monitor
- Where to set these surveys up so that patrons can find the feedback sites
- need to have enough staff to respond on an immediate basis
- Its hard to get patrons to participate in anything that sounds like a survey - they have to be passionate about something
- Problem with one or two patrons dominating discussions

## **Brainstorm - Other Service Examples?**

- in person interaction at a gas station
- a common experience at stores being asked "did you find everything". they generally dont know what to do when you say no. generally, nothing happens.
- clothing store clerks are too helpful, asking too many times if your doing okay.
- Subaru has a coffee shop and fruit free while waiting

- good in-person interaction at Honda Fisher - cleaned scrape off my car for free with special solution
- Amazon provided excellent customer service over the phone responding to a problem I had with an order
- i regularly go in to get cash from atm, and buy something to get change - the attendant made nasty comment about ppl coming into get change, and suggested i go to another place to get my change
- starbucks knows my name and order as i am a regular
- Toyota bakes fresh chocolate chip cookies while you are waiting
- I agree about Amazon - very EZ to return items and track account
- I find they ask but do not have any intention of really doing anything about it if you say you couldn't find everything you needed
- Honda calls me after each service visit to see if I am happy with the service
- netflix exc response to damaged dvd
- called the Hampton Inn for a gift certificate. I was told that the reservation line would not take the call, to call the hotel itself. I called and was told I had to speak with a manager the next day. I called the next day and the manager was unavailable. I finally called again and the person who answered COULD, in fact, help me.
- Tried to modify a reservation made on an online travel site, and had read their policy carefully, but had to be referred to the supervisor and to the supervisor's supervisor to get them to live up to it.
- Whenever I go into a certain store to buy my unmentionables, I get bombarded by sales women who bombard me with stores specials, etc. It takes forever to get any shopping done there
- being able to get cash back from debit card at many retailers (no more ATM hassle)
- post office employee who offered to pay for postage i needed when i forgot my money
- Went to new IKEA store in Denver. Was amazed that they have a place for children to play while parents shop.
- "did you find everything" A: no. response "oh, sorry"
- If you answer the question truthfully, I normally get "well, maybe you will find that next time".

- The president of our online library software company makes calls to companies asking if they are happy with product and have any complaints.
- Checking out in grocery and asked "did you find everything you need?"
- target roaming customer service employees are helpful
- Poor service - on hold forever or no one answers
- Yes, it always very helpful to have a roaming salesperson to answer questions, just so long as they're not too pushy
- Free wine while waiting for dinner
- Christmas shopping at JCPenneys in the mall - cashier made sure I got full use of all the sales and coupons that were available for that weekend.
- Pizza parlor in Connecticut gives everyone free slices of pizza while waiting
- phone menus that make it difficult to reach a person
- Pretending to be helpful until you realize they are trying to potentially sell more items
- Einstein's has my order ready the minute I walk in the door.
- Hobby Lobby-- clerk seemed annoyed when I asked where something was located
- powells bookstore - asked about a book took me to area and explained how that area of store was set up
- Dyson Vac Company-1-800 help line and person spoke of a great new tool and I said that I did not have the money for and I had received it in the mail for FREE
- store employees talking to each and ignoring you, the customer. we don't CARE when you get your next break!
- Shutterfly - I had a groupon but I missed my deadline by 30 min - they honored it and even gave me an add'l credit
- Tracphone - calling every month because the same billing problem can't seem to be fixed
- Store saying they don't sell or offer some service and not giving any suggestions of where I might go next to find [blank] item or service
- A library software company calls me and asks if I am happy with service - I haven't been a customer of theirs in 5 years!



- bad experience in London hotel--when guests complained about rooms, the manager said "if you don't like your room--find another hotel!"
- Lens Crafters looked for the best deal for me for buying new glasses
- flight attendants speaking badly about other flight attendants, any employees making pejorative remarks about others
- follow-up from Dr and Dentist after procedure to find out if all was ok
- Clerk walked away in the middle of helping me because they were supposed to go on break--ugh!
- hmmm...free wine in the circ line could give a new impression of libraries!
- Body Shop clerk was giving suggestions on how to maximize my saving
- Reminder from Dr. office about getting a physical.
- Don't keep people on hold longer than 5 minutes

### **Roaming Service - one service example chosen to look at Pros, Cons and Costs**

#### **Pros**

- alleviates theft
- You have people helping patrons that are sometimes timid about asking for help.
- Desks are no longer barriers to excellent customer service
- This could be accomplished with shelveers in the stacks to provide that customer service touch.
- Employees could take 30 minute shifts - probably no added cost
- patrons don't have to track down librarians, which in bigger libraries might be important
- makes customers feel more important
- more available to answer questions
- service at the customers point of need, instead of having to track down staff
- Staff appears more helpful and caring
- Anythink does this already from what I have witnessed with their book store model. Great opportunity to connect with members

- patrons are just more likely to ask in this scenario than walking up to a desk, i think
- More readily available to help find items.
- conversations on floor often create more "business"
- Shelves can walk with the patron to the service desk for additional help. I think this would need to be handled in the initial training.
- reach more patrons who don't approach the desk
- Roaming - staff are where the patrons are

### **Cons**

- Finding the right devices to connect to the catalog
- I hate it at home depot when the roaming staff ask me constantly ask me if I am finding what I need.
- lack of staff
- staff would be away from service desk
- if you're thin-staffed it may be impossible to really do this (or hire a student or someone at lesser cost)
- Not enough staff to stay on top of
- i can see some of our staff "wandering" around, not really helping patrons and not really doing anything, then
- often cannot find an employee when you want to find one
- not enough tools for librarians to use to provide service well - mobile tools
- you could approach people who do not want to be approached

### **Costs**

- Need MOBILE tools to help us help folks
- Need staff training to learn how to approach customers

### **Further ideas for roaming**

- Don't need to approach but if staff are easily identified by a vest/tag/something, then people can approach them

- What about roaming with a hand held credit card machine to customers didn't have to wait in line to pay a fine
- Give us iPads to help us roam!

### **Themes that emerged today**

- staffing needs for these changes
- Going out into your communities. Get out of the building!
- sharing all of these experiences = be alert to anything you could do in your library that might work
- I think most libraries will have a hard time letting go control - they have been controlling for so very long
- Personal service
- more interaction with patrons
- costs of implementation
- Look around you and adapt good ideas from other service industries
- More public interaction and a part of the content
- More community interaction online
- Ask questions
- charge when appropriate; look outside libraries for ideas; train front line staff to do the job; consider "delighters"
- value added service
- Listen
- Get out from behind your desks
- It is ok to "steal" good ideas from for-profit and non-profit businesses - look beyond other libraries
- Book a Librarian>>>Book a Genius