



Google™ Custom Search

Ads By Google [Customer Service](#) [Customer Care](#) [Customer Feedback](#) [Customer Survey](#)

EzineArticles For Authors

- ▶ [Submit Articles](#)
- ▶ [Members Login](#)
- ▶ [Benefits](#)
- ▶ [Expert Authors](#)
- ▶ [Read Endorsements](#)
- ▶ [Editorial Guidelines](#)
- ▶ [Author TOS](#)

For Publishers

- ▶ [Terms of Service](#)
- ▶ [Ezines / Email Alerts](#)
- ▶ [Manage Subscriptions](#)
- ▶ [EzineArticles RSS](#)

For Everyone

- ▶ [Blog](#)
- ▶ [About Us](#)
- ▶ [Contact Us](#)
- ▶ [Article Writing Shop](#)
- ▶ [Advertising](#)
- ▶ [Affiliates](#)
- ▶ [Privacy Policy](#)
- ▶ [Site Map](#)

Search EzineArticles

[Advanced Search](#)

Ads By Google

[Customer Service](#)
[Customer Care](#)
[Customer Feedback](#)
[Customer Survey](#)
[Customer Loyalty](#)

New Article Alerts

Would you like to be notified when a new article is added to the Customer-Service category?

Email Address:

Your Name:

We will never sell or rent your email address

Prefer RSS?
Subscribe to the Customer-Service
RSS Feed:

[HOME](#) » [Business](#) » [Customer Service](#)

Dealing With Customer Complaints - B.L.A.S.T

By [Albert Barneto](#)

Article Word Count: 1079 [\[View Summary\]](#) [Comments \(0\)](#)

Ads by Google

[Vital Skills & Knowledge](#) Top Rated Call Center Mgmt Course May 17-18, Toronto, ON [icmi.com/Training](#)

[Customer Experience](#) Gain Valuable Insight with SAS Customer Experience Analytics. [www.SAS.com](#)

[Customer Complaints](#) Answer Your CRM Questions. Customer complaints, Tips & Tools. [searchCRM.TechTarget.com](#)

In a restaurant, not so far away, in the not so distant future, a telephone rings, a customer complains... and the battle begins!

Handling customer complaints doesn't have to always be a battle, with the right tools and responses you can use complaints to your advantage; to help you build your business. B.L.A.S.T is a great tool that is used by companies such as Yum! (Parent company of KFC, Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, A&W, and Long John Silvers). Training their employees in the basics of handling customer complaints. The acronym stands for:

Believe

Listen

Apologize

Satisfy

Thank

How does your company deal with customer complaints? The easiest way to find out is to pick up the phone and play the role of the complaining customer. What happened? If you were an irritated customer, would you return? Using the B.L.A.S.T guidelines, allows you to create a standardized method for dealing with your complainers and turning them into loyal customers.

Believe

This is the cornerstone of handling a customer complaint. Yes, the customer may be lying and be incorrect about their situation. It is important to understand that your customer believes that your establishment has wronged them.

Listen

Stop and listen to your customer's complaint. I'm not certain whether it's natural instinct or just plain stubbornness. As soon as a customer starts to complain, we start to think of how we will respond to the accusation before we are done listening, and too often the case, already have the response ready to fight back. Take a second, relax, and listen. On occasion a complaining customer will be rude, angry, and use vulgar language, stay the course

Ads by Google

[Customer Satisfaction](#)

Measure Satisfaction and Prioritize Improvements by ROI. Find Out How! [www.CFIGroup.com](#)

[Do Not Sign Up for a CRM](#)

Until you've had a chance to look at all that Zoho CRM has to offer [zoho.com/CRM](#)

[Restaurant Management](#)

Get info on classes for starting a restaurant & learn the business. [FrenchCulinary.com](#)

[Customer References Prog](#)

Do More with Resources You Have. Free Assessment & Helpful Tips. [www.Point-of-Reference.com](#)

[This CRM has Everything](#)

Manage Leads, prepare Quotes, help customers, projects, emails, more.. [www.360EnterpriseSuite.com](#)

[Customer satisfaction](#)

Increase Sales Across All Channels Free Retail Sales Whitepaper [www.Informatica.com/Customer](#)

[Seattle Coupons](#)

1 ridiculously huge coupon a day. It's like doing Seattle at 90% off! [www.Groupon.com/Seattle](#)

[Retail Touch Points](#)

Strategies To Optimize Every Customer Interaction [www.retailtouchpoints.com](#)

[CallScoreLive](#)

Call Quality Analysis Monitoring Quality Assurance Services! [www.contactservicesinc.com](#)

[FrontPoint Security®](#)

5-Star Rated Wireless Home Security System. \$0 Setup + Free Shipping! [www.FrontPointSecurity.com](#)

[Need Customer Feedback?](#)

Use Customer Feedback Solutions to improve Customer Satisfaction. [www.tellusaboutus.com/solutions2](#)

and remain calm and level headed.

When the customer is done venting; in a calm, non-judgmental tone, repeat their problem. An example I used in my KFC for a mispacked order:

"What I hear you saying is that, you came in ordered and paid for 10 Pieces of chicken and when you got home, you only received 8, is that correct?"

By repeating the problem at hand, you've demonstrated your ability to the customer that you heard and understood their problem.

Listen and clarify. Never defend or justify. The customer doesn't care if you were shorthanded or if you're having a bad day, they only care that they get taken care of. No excuses, just solutions.

Apologize

Always apologize even if you did nothing wrong. From your customers' perspective, they have a legitimate complaint, and they expect an apology. It could be as simple as "I'm sorry we've inconvenienced you." or "I'm sorry I know how frustrating it is to buy dinner for my family, only not to have everything there when I get home" A sincere apology will usually diffuse a lot of frustration that the customer has. There is an exception to this rule though, if a customer calls with a critical complaint, such as food poisoning, don't apologize, it may be construed as an acceptance of guilt, instead refer to your company's procedures for such events.

Satisfy

Make it right. Ask the customer "What can I do to make this right for you"? Be the judge of what is fair of course, but allow them the opportunity to feel empowered over the situation. Many times they may ask for the problem be taken care of on their next visit or maybe that you talk to the person who made the mistake and correct them. We used a great system of sending out a personalized postcard apologizing for the mistake, it was a couple of handwritten sentences (yes, many times with spelling mistakes from my team members), but it was personal and always well received. We always gave them the unexpected as well, maybe a free dessert or an extra side dish just to show that we cared about them.

Thank

At the beginning, at the end, in the middle; it doesn't matter, thank the customer for calling and complaining.

Why? With the simple act of complaining, your customer is telling you "I care about your business and your success". They are giving you the opportunity to fix the problem and invite them back so they can give you more of their money. Puts a different spin on it doesn't it? Thank them for giving you that second chance, for letting you know that something in your restaurant didn't work like it normally does, for giving you the chance to make it right, and for the opportunity not to damage your reputation!

Reputation? I had to throw that one in. You work hard, day in day out, trying the best to make your business the best, and yet one unhappy customer can take it away from you. A happy customer will tell two or three friends about a good experience, but an unhappy customer will tell at least ten friends about their experience and it always multiplies through word of mouth. Case in point, when I moved cross country to my new hometown, I was at a Chamber of Commerce event and being the new person in the group, I introduced myself and what we did. No sooner than five minutes passed did I get a list of 10 restaurants in my area that in their opinion were in "need of my services". Only one person gave me a good restaurant. I didn't ask, I was told. To this day I still haven't been to those restaurants as a customer, why do I want to give them my hard earned money, when they made my new friends unhappy? It may not be a rational thought, but it is human nature.

Will some people take advantage of your kindness? Of course, a rule of thumb I used in my restaurant was:

First time shame on me,

Second time shame on me, but I'm watching you,

[Customer Service](#)

Workshop materials to teach customer service workshops.

[CorporateTrainingMaterials.com](#)

[Improve Customer Sat](#)

Learn survey best practices to optimize your customer sat

[responsetek.com](#)

[Customer Service Centers](#)

Compare Rates & Services and Save Visit Now for Free Price Quotes!

[BuyerZone.com/CustomerServiceCenter](#)

[Refinance at 2.8%](#)

\$160,000 Mortgage for \$659/mo. No SSN Req. 3.1% apr. Free Quotes!

[www.Lendgo.com](#)

[Customer Service Career](#)

Get free info from career schools offering Customer Service Training

[www.do-something.com/Cust-Service](#)

[Online Market Research](#)

Actionable Customer Insights via Private Online Communities.

[thinkpassenger.com](#)

[#1 Business Plan Company](#)

Award Winning MBAs, Perfect BBB Record, Fast Turnaround. Free Quote

[www.Ethos360.com](#)

Third time... Shame on you and I will make the decision on how I will deal with you as a customer. Keep track of who calls to complain, names, phone numbers for follow up, addresses for your postcards. Using a binder and tracking your complaints, you will be able to detect and deter those that would take advantage of your new complaint procedures.

Adding B.L.A.S.T to your expanding toolbox of customer service tools will help you in dealing with customer complaints and turn them around so they can tell their friends what great service you have!

Albert Barneto is a managing partner of CustomerTrend Mystery Shopping and Customer Satisfaction Surveys at <http://www.CustomerTrend.com> and has more than 15 years of professional experience as a front line manager evaluating the "pulse" of customers and employees. Customer satisfaction survey services are offered to restaurant and retail chains including Video Mystery Shopping, Telephone Mystery Shopping, and Employee Feedback Solutions. Albert Barneto may be reached toll free at 1-(866)-509-9888

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Albert_Barneto

Searching for **handling customer complaints over the phone?**



[Complaint Management](#)



Flexible, Powerful, Easy to Use Software Windows or Web,
www.lynksoftware.com



[Sprint™ Phone](#)

Find Great Deals on Sprint Phones & Plans. Get it On The
www.sprint.com



[Consumer Complaint Agency](#)

Want Revenge? File an Official Complaint.
www.ConsumerComplaintAgency.org



[Complaint Mgmt Software](#)

Compare Top Ranked Complaint Mgmt Software for Free.
www.Capterra.com



[Ask a Lawyer: Consumer](#)

13 Lawyers, Advocates Are Online! Ask a Question, Get an
[Consumer - Law.JustAnswer.com](http://Consumer-Law.JustAnswer.com)

Sponsored Results

Ads by Google

[Attention Brand Marketers](#)

Drive deeper engagement & ROI w/ content. Download free whitepaper
RodaleCCM.com/Content_Ma

[The Fish Philosophy Video](#)

Buy The Official "Fish Philosophy" Customer Service Videos & DVDs
www.EnterpriseMedia.com/I

[Looking for a Franchise?](#)

Find Your Dream Business - Search New & Existing Franchises for Sale
www.FranchiseAdvantage.ci

[Newspaper DB Marketing](#)

Manage every customer and prospect communication with G2 Discovery.
www.Marketingg2.com

Share This Article



- ▶ [Add A Comment](#)
- ▶ [Send To Friends](#)
- ▶ [Print This Article](#)
- ▶ [Add To Favorites](#)
- ▶ [Suggest A Topic](#)
- ▶ [EzinePublisher](#)
- ▶ [Report Article](#)
- ▶ [Academic Citation](#)

Rate This Article: ★★★★★

Most Recent EzineArticles from the [Business:Customer-Service](#) Category:

- [Customer Service - 8 Customer Service Principles To Live By](#)
- [How an Airport Can Achieve Its Best Performance](#)
- [Complaints - The Tip of the Iceberg](#)
- [What Does Going "Green" Actually Mean?](#)
- [How to Hire the Best Customer Service People](#)
- [Virtual Receptionists' Top Telephone Etiquette Tips](#)
- [The Customer Is King - 8 Important Questions That Will Transform How You Treat Your Customers](#)
- [Plush Stuffed Toys - The Benefits of Upselling](#)
- [Keys to Customer Service](#)
- [The Benefit of a Phone Answering Service for Small Business](#)
- [Customer Service](#)
- [A Tale of Two Inns and the Importance of Good Phone Sales Skills](#)
- [Is Differentiated Customer Service Worthwhile? Part Two - The Case Against](#)
- [Banks Need Social Media Skills to Improve Customer Experience](#)
- [Customer Service: Improving Customer Loyalty](#)

Customer Advisory Boards

Retain and grow your top customers, Achieve powerful business results!
www.GeehanGroup.com

[More...](#)

Most Viewed EzineArticles in the Business:Customer-Service Category (60 days)

1. [Good Customer Service - 6 Basic Rules](#)
2. [How Companies Can Measure Customer Satisfaction](#)
3. [5 Ways to Ensure Customer Satisfaction](#)
4. [Dealing With Angry Customers](#)
5. [On Customer Experience: Benefits, Best Practices, Truths](#)
6. [Excellent Customer Service To An Ungrateful Customer](#)
7. [How to Take Your Customer Service to the Next Level - 3 Easy Steps](#)
8. [Customer Service Requires Effective Communication](#)
9. [Easy Steps To Improve Your Customer Service](#)
10. [CRM Software - Complaint Tracking and Creating Excellent Customer Service](#)

[More...](#)

Most Published EzineArticles in the Business:Customer-Service Category (60 days)

1. [Customer Retention for Small Businesses](#)
2. [Fragments of Facts and Benefits Connected With Offshore Call Center Outsourcing](#)
3. [Instant Popularity and Growth of Artificial Grass](#)
4. [Mystery Shopper Companies Maximize Customer Satisfaction](#)
5. [When to Hire an Electrical Contractor](#)
6. [How to Avoid Common Mistakes When Measuring Customer Satisfaction](#)
7. [Good Customer Service - 6 Basic Rules](#)
8. [Improve Your Online Customer Service by Thinking Like a Customer](#)
9. [CRM Software - Complaint Tracking and Creating Excellent Customer Service](#)
10. [Twitter Chat for Customer Service](#)

[More...](#)

Searching for **handling customer complaints over the phone?**



Complaint Forms



USLF offers over 50,000 Legal Forms Download, Edit, Print
USLegalForms.com

Cable Deal Finder



Find Great Deals in Your Local Area. Order Phone Service
www.CableDealFinder.com

Sprint™ Phone



Find Great Deals on Sprint Phones & Plans. Get it On The
www.sprint.com

Consumer Complaint Agency



Were Your Wronged? File an Official Complaint.
www.ConsumerComplaintAgency.org

Complaint Mgmt Software



Compare Top Ranked Complaint Mgmt Software for Free.
www.Capterra.com

Sponsored Results

This article has been viewed 14,355 time(s).

Article Submitted On: August 07, 2006

Ads By Google [Customer Service](#) [Customer Care](#) [Customer Feedback](#) [Customer Survey](#)

Ads by Google

What Are Your 3 Credit Scores?



The **FreeScore** Score Guys

FreeScore.com.

TransUnion.

310 340 450 550 650 750 840

351

Experian

310 340 450 550 650 750 840

364

EQUIFAX

310 340 450 550 650 750 840

382

Find Out Today!