

Lush cosmetics essay sample

[Business](#), [Customers](#)



People who know about LUSH Cosmetics are surely know about its unrivaled passion for customer service. They are one-of-a-kind high-end retail company that specializes in producing high quality, natural, fresh and handmade beauty products. Besides the products alone, they also display their products in such a way that it reflects a fruit marketplace.

Whilst LUSH's innovative and unique products may be enough to attract customers in, it is only by treating their customers in a certain manner that makes the brand able to keep customers coming back and sustain its success.

LUSH has managed to build a uniquely special relationship with its customers by retaining complete transparency regarding their products, providing tailored in-store advice and help, and honoring its company values of simplicity, honesty and trust, which only few other companies have been able to replicate.

This report will give a deeper understanding of the methods that are implemented by LUSH, which makes them one of the top company in providing customer service and experience. In addition, a recommendation have been stated to show that there is still room for more improvement.

Introduction

LUSH Cosmetics is a highly ethical and all natural cosmetics retailer company that thrives to give customers an incredible, different type of cosmetic. Headquartered in the United Kingdom, it was founded in 1995, with over 800 stores in more than 50 countries across the globe. (Kayla, 2014). The company manufactures and sells various handmade cosmetic

related products ranging from bath bombs, skin tint, and dusting powders, mostly without packaging or also known as naked packaging. (SOMO, 2013).

Their products are constantly creative and always focus on the health of their customers. Their innovation products range from bath ballistics, body lotion with ecstasy floral orange, banana and real butter. They also produced their products to resembles food. Apart from the physical appearance of their products, LUSH named their products creatively such as Demon in the Dark, Chou Chou I Love You toothy tab, Honey I Washed the Kids soap and even series of fragrance uniquely named Gorilla Perfume. (Lush. 2014)

Listed by many sources as one of the top company with best customer service, LUSH's staffs are widely known for being helpful, knowledgeable and attentive. Chapter One Achieving Customer Satisfaction

While more and more companies are starting to realize the importance of making customer satisfaction as one of their top priority, many do not fully understand what is required to achieve high levels of satisfaction. Customers often considered their interactions between the employees as part of the service itself. Besides the service outcome, manner in delivering the services is also as important to the customer. (Parasuraman, et al. 1985). A company with an excellent customer service and relationship is more likely to have loyal customers, which lead into getting repeated business from its customers.

Dr. Jan West (2014) highlighted that there is a direct relationship between customer's repurchase intention and employee job satisfaction. The diagram below illustrate and facilitate conceptualization of the interrelation.

In this case, LUSH has received more-than-enough awards across the globe to prove this theory. Those awards includes Top 100 Best Companies To Work by Sunday Times, for the eleventh times this year, winning the number one slot for ' fun' in 2005 (The Quays, 2014) and Canada's 50 Best Employer 2014 for the third time (Pianezza, 2014). 1. 1 Integrity

LUSH has built a high level personal trust within their customers. Their highly ethical company values are shown through their products, campaigns, people and service. People working in the company held up the company's values and truly believe in it.

Their employees are formed by people who has a passion for their products and the company's value such as against animal cruelty, ethical sourcing and responsible packaging. (Customer Service Guru, 2013). They look for these qualities as top priority when hiring employees before they finally train them. Due to the passion that their employees have, they tends to engage more with the customers and give them advice for the sake of pure helping. These reflect their sincerity, which resulting in customers feeling truly valued.

1. 2 Resolutions

LUSH has always taken training very seriously, and set a high expectations from their employees worldwide. For products knowledge, they are using an

interactive localized game-based digital platform to train their employees in an engaging manner. (DCS Awards, 2013). This training program is known as Lush Quests, where staff could complete quests level-by-level to test their knowledge about LUSH's products. In just three months it helped train 1, 200 people. To date, more than 2000 employees to carry out this exciting new online training program. (DESQ, 2014).

The availability of this platform prepare the employees to be ready to answer any questions thrown at them and solve problems that customers may have.

1. 3 Expectations

LUSH is completely aware of customer's expectations; wanting a fun, seamless and positive business experience. (Clark. 2013). The shopping experience with LUSH is widely known as very enjoyable, dedicated and personalized. LUSH's sales representative are mostly young women under 25 years old, who are energetic, and don't seem to look like they are working. A customer described it as " It looks like they are just hanging out, having fun and showing friends a bunch of stuff they love, they are not pushy". (Retail Customer Experience, 2014).

1. 4 Personalization

LUSH's staffs are trained to adept in diagnostic skills. Understanding the customer personally is in their top concern, and they invest their time on that matter before making recommendations for any customers. (Iqbal. 2013). Rather than over selling, staffs are also trained to engage more in conversations with their customers about their personal needs and finding

the most suitable products for them, which resulting in better relationship built with the customers.

The top management in LUSH maintain a close relationship with their shop assistance. They believe that no one knows better about their customers and what customers want rather than their floor staff. They listen to their customers voice through listening to their shop floor staff, and make changes when as needed.

1. 5 Differentiation

The manner in which LUSH display their products is truly unique. Despite the fact that LUSH is highly concerned about their store placement, and only put their store in a high-class environment, they display their products as if a fruit sellers display their wares, which gives customers a new and exciting experience. (Retail Customer Experience, 2014). Similar to fruit vendor, the customers will also be hit by a fragrant wave of cleanliness, which comes from their ‘naked’ concept products, even if they are just passing by outside the store.

Besides than the in-shop experience that LUSH offers, they have also innovated in the way they identify their products. Rather than a normal identification number, they put a little sticker on their products, which includes a headshot illustration of the person who made that particular product and the date the product was made. For products with packaging, customer will get an extra surprise when they peel the sticker off the

packaging. Under each sticker, there is a little phrase or pun about the product. (Georgina. 2013).

“ Walk around its (Lush’s) remarkable stores that reject every instruction of scientific retailing and create instead a warm, messy space that screams differentiation.” – Mark Ritson, Associate Professor of Marketing, Melbourne Business School, in 2005.

According to Nunwood (2012) there are 6 pillars of great customer experiences, which includes the aspects that LUSH highly value, such as integrity, resolution, expectations, and personalisation. Nunwood also stated that personalisation is the most important driver (27%) of commercial value followed by integrity (18%). LUSH high standards on delivering especially these two aspects has succeed them to be in the top rank for customer service.

As demonstrated in Which? 2013 customer service survey, LUSH has undoubtedly made themselves known for their outstanding customer service by achieving 88% for satisfaction score, which place them among the top customer-oriented retailers in the UK. (Customer Service Guru, 2013).

Chapter Two

Customer Experience Excellence

Most organizations provide customer experience relying only on the conscious parts of an experience such as how quickly a phone call is answered, and the speed of delivery, not realizing that subconsciousness also play an important part on creating customer’s experience with the

company. In most cases, they are not even aware that the emotional and subconscious experiences exist. (Beyond Philosophy. 2014).

Subconscious and emotional experiences given by a company is not necessarily done by choice. Without knowing the existence of the subconsciousness in customer's mind, company is not in control of them.

For instance, most bank have their pens attached to chains, while this may not mean anything in customers conscious mind, the subconscious message prove otherwise. In the customers subconscious mind, it might translate into “ We don't trust you. You are most probably going to steal our pens”.

Sending the wrong message to the subconscious mind could negatively affects customer retention and loyalty.

Unlike most companies, LUSH seems to be aware of this fact. With naked products lying around the stores in an attractive way and its aromatic smells, store staffs that welcome you with their smiles and excitement, and the absence of security alarm attached on the products, their shops are designed to make their customers feels relax, trusted, and also valued.

Customers are also able to experience with their products through in-store demonstrations. In some cases, the salesperson would come over with a bucket of water for demonstration to gives the customer a truly unique experience. (Customer Experience Matters. 2010).

LUSH were ranked number 7 in the UK Customer Experience Excellence award 2014. (Lush. 2014). This award was achieved due to their outstanding

performance, which differentiate them with their competitors, making them one of the leading company for this matter. Chapter Three

E-CRM

As a multinational organization, depending only on face-to-face method to deal with customers is not the best choice. LUSH hunger on creating the best customer service experience has pushed them towards expanding into the online world, providing a new platform for customers, even the ones outside their territory. Besides being able to deliver more services across the globe, the perks of having better customer relationship management, stock control and expanded payment offerings has attracted them even more.

In 2011, LUSH partner up with an organization called Demandware to enhance its e-commerce experience. The Demandware platform offers cross-channel merchandising capabilities and variety of customer experience applications. The main goals of the implementation include increasing site efficiency during peak traffic and creating a better experience with a more content-rich especially for loyal customers. (Fiorletta. 2011).

Adam Forrest, a senior product marketing manager for Demandware stated that in E-commerce, a retailer's competitive advantage comes from the ability to meet consumer expectations. (Fiorletta. 2011).

LUSH has realized that customer's expectation of wanting a fun, seamless and positive business experience does not only apply for physical store, but as also when navigating through online website. (Clark. 2013). Therefore, by

relying on an advance technological solution, LUSH is able to create a unique online shopping experience with them, which reflects their company value.

There are currently 47 localized LUSH online platform. Those platform have been adjusted accordingly to the local languages, preferences and cultures. Besides the customization towards individual countries, LUSH also offers customized online experience for its users based on each user's profile database. While websites are being managed by both main and local managements, social media platforms are left alone to the local management in order to enhance and enrich the relationship with each customer more efficiently. (Clark. 2013). Chapter Four

Online Reviews

Online reviews have become a major factor in the customers buying decision. In a survey done in the US and Canada by Anderson (2014) in, 88% of the consumers read online reviews to determine their quality, 85% of those consumers read up to more than 10 different reviews, as well as 88% saying that they trust these reviews as much as personal recommendations. Anderson (2014) also mentions that 72% of the consumers say that positive reviews will also affect their decision to do business with the business or not.

This is a fact that Lush doesn't seem to realize fully. In this case, Make up Alley is an important platform they should look up. It is an online platform that specializes on make up and make up stores reviews. While Lush has been getting good reviews, there does not seem to be any response from

them towards their negative reviews. Negative reviews can have a large impact on a business.

Negative reviews, depending on its severity, can lead to a loss of customers, sales, and future sales. A survey in Boston, 2011 by Cone shows that 80% of people have decided against buying a product because of a negative review (Reed, 2011). The power of a single negative review can overwhelm a dozen positive ones, depending on severity.

Be that as it may, positive or negative reviews don't really matter. For a business, sometimes the fact that people are reviewing the business is just as good as getting a positive review. Online reviews can help open up a communication network between the consumer and the business. A negative review can be used as criticism upon which a business can learn from, something Lush can start doing. As long as businesses are willing to listen to these reviews and even reply back, this can build customer trust and loyalty (Jensen, 2014). Chapter Five

Further Development

LUSH has always striven to further enhance the customer experience. They have innovated their products, their stores, and their online presence to provide the best customer experience possible. Now they want to blend all of these aspects to one with their new collaboration with Method and i-KOS. Their aim is to create an e-commerce website that is fully responsive to the user and blend brand storytelling and the product. They want to showcase

how truly unique LUSH is to their customers; how effective are their products and why fresh products truly matter.

The online experience truly does effect the customers buyer decision, especially for beauty products. This new venture wants to capture the essence of the product and show it to the customer. They aim to tell the describe each and every product they have and tell its show the customer the different stories behind the products. This was inspired by a concept called ' window into LUSH'. This is a huge step in both customer relations and e-commerce for the company, for it will bring in a whole new level of interactivity for the customers.

To further build on the concept of ' window into LUSH', they have created a new editorial called Lush Times. A quarterly publication that will be widely available in shops as well as in the website. They truly wanted to immerse the customer in the company and an editorial magazine was one way they could. This will increase their exposure to the world, bringing in more customers, as well as help further educate the existing customer base about the company. By furthering the creation and improvement of customer relationships, this will help Lush long term in terms of their customer base, sales, and future sales.

Additionally, they also created Lush Kitchen. Lush Kitchen is a product's ' behind the scene' look for the customers to showcases new and exclusive products. Each product is hand made and made exclusively for Lush Kitchen from which the customer can pick and choose from. This concept will give the customers a sense of exclusivity as well as a feeling that they were part

of the creation process. This level of involvement will give the customers a sense that they made this product for themselves and will raise their satisfaction. Conclusion

LUSH has proved that they are undoubtedly one of the best company that could offer a truly remarkable experience and deliver high quality services to their customers. They are also aware of the connection between satisfied employees and satisfied customers, which makes them able to recruit the right people that are passionate in their products as well as giving the best services.

However, further improvement still could be made. Being pro-active in the online review platforms could bring many benefits. It will make them able to retain even more customers and even getting new customers with higher chance of being future loyal customers. This is something that LUSH should consider doing in the near future.

In addition, we have conducted a visit to one of LUSH's Singapore branches to get the LUSH experience first hand. Compared to the research we have conducted, the company's reputations has truly exceeded itself. The sales person was polite and prompt, yet still friendly. They helped us with our inquiry as well as recommend better products according to our needs. They even went as far as to giving us a product demonstration. LUSH's goal for exemplary customer service truly shined and we as a group say for sure LUSH's customer service is one of the best out there.

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