

# Experts Weigh In: How Does Your Customer Service Stand Out?

What makes your small business stand out?



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1 DAY AGO



When it comes to customer service, how does your small business stand out from the pack? From handwritten thank you notes to remembering little life details, we chatted with 25 experts about the strategies they use to keep loyal customers and continue bringing in new ones for their business.

1. “We recently decided to tackle the same challenge of how we inject some personality into our business and moreover how to deliver stand out customer service at scale. We have around 220,000 currently, and we want to figure out a scalable effective way to get personally with them. After brainstorming we came up with an idea to tap into our customer’s soul through their pets. When a homeowner signs up for our service we gather information on if they have pets, and if so what are their names. We do this, so our lawn vendors know to be careful when entering the lawn. We decided we could use this info about our customer to send a personalized gift to our customers’ pet, addressed to them. This really wowed our customers, we received personal thank you notes, videos of their dog chewing the bone we sent posted to FB and thank you tweets, it worked really well for the time and money we invested.” — Zach Hendrix, Co-Founder, [GreenPal](https://www.yourgreenpal.com) (<https://www.yourgreenpal.com>)

2. "We add the human personal touch to every product we sell. We offer life time technical support and a knowledge customer service agent to answer every phone call. Unlike the big box stores. Nothing is automated. We sell office electronics. So, having a live customer service and having a technician is very valuable to our customers. We have many loyal customers that have been buying goes back 12+ years." — Yungi Chu, Owner, [HeadsetPlus.com](https://headsetplus.com/) (<https://headsetplus.com/>)

3. "We keep important details about our clients on file. This way when we are communicating with them, we can refer to these notes (examples: pets, children's names, things they love, and things they dislike). This allows us to personalize our experience with them. We send them very personalized gifts when they hear they are having a bad day, getting a promotion, etc. All of this is documented in our CRM. We respond to all client emails within a two-hour window. We send a lot of handwritten notes. These are just a few of the things we do to show our clients that we adore them." — Ginger Jones, Chief Customer Officer, [WebPunch](https://webpunch12.com/) (<https://webpunch12.com/>)

4. "We have found the best customer service strategy to keep customers loyalty and to drive new business is to provide overwhelming value for the money the customer has spent us. Customer service is just a segment of the 'value' a customer receives for the good or service the purchased. Our customer service model occurs naturally based on how we treat our customers after the sale. Thank you cards and remembering anniversary dates are nice touches, but they don't constitute customer service. Being readily available in a time of need is critical to providing overwhelming value. 'Being there' is always construed as good customer service to the customer. Checking in from time to time just to touch base and ensure they are happy with the product/service would be deemed excellent customer service by the customer. Everyone likes to be remembered, especially when you have handed your hard-earned income to someone." — Bill Westrom, Creator & Co-Founder, [TruthInEquity.com](https://truthinequity.com/) (<https://truthinequity.com/>)

5. "The number one thing my business does to stand out from the pack is listen to my customers. In the world of digital marketing, a lot of bigger companies don't take the time to listen to their customers, get to know them, and understand what they really want. As a local business owner who works with other local companies, I can take the time to ask them about what their business challenges and goals are and work with them to create a strategy to beat those challenges and attain those goals. By spending time with my customers face-to-face and learning more about them as a person, and not just a customer, I'm able to forge lasting relationships with my customers." — Andrew Schutt, CEO, [Elevated Web Marketing](http://elevatedwebmarketing.com/) (<http://elevatedwebmarketing.com/>)

6. "In a digital world, we keep it physical for our video games. That same physicality is part of everything we do. Handwritten notes, artisanal, hand-crafted quality all bringing your favorite games technology from the '80s and '90s back to life in 2018. We don't just use auto responders, we message our customers. It's part of our customer success strategy. For larger clients, and enterprise customers, we have hand-curated gifts we order from a company called FoxBlossom.co. The boxes either have our logo foiled on top, or laser etched into wooden crates. Many of the gifts are branded, but all of them are curated to our brands. They make it easy for us to say thanks with something that looks explicitly personalized without us having to become gifting specialists. We've used that same gifting strategy as a next gen marketing tool. Whether it's genuinely taking notice, or just a small desire for reciprocity, we can target prospects effectively by sending them a gift that represents everything we want in our brand this way." — Andrew Conduff, Video Game Enthusiast, [Mega Cat Studios](https://megacatstudios.com/) (<https://megacatstudios.com/>)

7. "Given our size, we custom design all of our training for our clients. This necessitates a great deal of interaction with decision makers long before I arrive to train. It facilitates the creation of relationship with those organizers. Many times, these people have come to me based on personal recommendations from others across the country who know me and have participated in our training. As we provide training, I also invite anyone that attends to contact me at any time after the training with questions, need for resources, etc. Within a week of the training, I send each attendee an electronic manual of everything we completed, as well as, other resources to advance their journey. For most, this has not been experienced before. My emphasis is to create relationship." — Mark Anderson, Director of Training and Development, [Anderson Investigative Associates, LLC](http://andersoninvestigative.com/) (<http://andersoninvestigative.com/>)

8. "1) We test and hire folks with servants' hearts - our goal is hire team members who care about people. 2) We work hard to retain a high experience level in our customer service arena so that our Customer Support Specialists are the most knowledgeable people in the company. 3) We have constant interaction between Customer Support and Operations to keep our customers well informed of the status of their orders. 4) We have the following Brennan Manning quote posted at every work station and we live and breathe

it: 'In every encounter we either give life or we drain it; there is no neutral exchange.' We all seek to give life! 5) None of our sales or customer support folks are commissioned – we want the same care and attention given to all customers, not just the large or most profitable ones. 6) As a 'Kingdom Business,' we have a prayer chain and invite customers to let us know if they need prayer. 7) The entire company is empowered to do whatever it takes to ensure customer delight." — Todd E. Miller, President, [Isaiah Industries, Inc.](http://www.isaiahindustries.com/) (<http://www.isaiahindustries.com/>)

9. "Respond as quickly as possible to client requests (no exceptions). Give everyone in the company the power to solve a client's problems without needing to get a manager or the owner involved to approve a solution. If we do make mistakes, we don't make excuses or try to deflect blame. We always accept responsibility for errors, fix them ASAP, and apologize sincerely. Be transparent about costs and deliverables. We try to go above and beyond in terms of deliverables on projects, which means we won't charge extra or nickel and dime clients if they have unusual requests. We'll often run extra reports at no charge or expedite a job especially if it helps an HR person dealing with his/her own senior management's demands. We also encourage employees to connect with our clients on Facebook and LinkedIn and treat them like valued partners." — George Gillies, VP Operations, [Insightlink Communications](https://www.insightlink.com/) (<https://www.insightlink.com/>)

10. "I invite people to email me with questions or comments, and I take the time to reply to each message personally. This may seem like common sense, but in a world of online gurus (which I'm considered one of), people often respond that they're surprised to hear back from me and didn't know if I read my emails. This causes people to trust me immensely, and they'll often come back to buy what I'm promoting, as I simply took the time to help them with nobody else did." — Jeff Lenney, CEO, [JLenney Marketing, LLC](https://jefflenney.com/) (<https://jefflenney.com/>)

11. "It's key for us to make certain that all customer inquiries are handled by an actual human being. We wouldn't trust an algorithm or an automated FAQ response to be enough. Our customers often have specific questions about beard or moustache care that only someone with experience can answer. Whether by social media direct message, email, or our site's chat function, we make sure that everyone gets a bit of personalized attention from one of our staff when inquiring. We have also built a no-worry guarantee into our process. A product or scent may simply not work for a given customer, and we are happy to replace it with something that will. Aside from pure customer service related to purchase, we interact daily with our customers via social media. That can mean reposting their pics or reviews of our products or stopping by one of their posts to show some love and say hello. We've met some truly incredible people this way. We've also taken other steps to help offer up information and education about not only our products, but about beard and moustache care in general through our blog. This content is available to anyone, whether they spend money with us or not, with our goal to help those who have questions about beard or moustache grooming by sharing the stories and advice we've learned over years of growing and maintaining facial hair." — Adam Barraclough, Communications, [Can You Handlebar](https://www.canyouhandlebar.com/) (<https://www.canyouhandlebar.com/>)

12. "IT technical support is at the heart of our business and we stand out by always responding quickly. We guarantee response times and display real-time support team statistics where everyone can see them. This keeps the support team motivated and focused on their goals. We measure customer satisfaction on every call." — Jennifer Mazzanti, CEO, [eMazzanti Technologies](https://www.emazzanti.net/) (<https://www.emazzanti.net/>)

13. "I use Facebook Messenger Bots for my customer service, but take it up a notch whenever I send an automatic message. When my customers respond back, I take the time to reply myself. No bot. Just me having the conversation. That allows me to make real connection with my customers." — Sharlrita Deloatch, CEO, [SJD Enterprises LLC](https://sharlritadeloatch.com/) (<https://sharlritadeloatch.com/>)

14. "We emphasize in first post purchase email that we believe in loyalty and want to create a great customer experience for the customer. We let them know that starting right away we have actions in place to reward them for loyalty including discounts on their next purchase. On a customer's second purchase, we offer them a free t-shirt. Shirts are relatively cheap and are a great way to spread your brand when someone wears it and as a constant reminder to that customer that you sent them that shirt for free and a token of your appreciation. We also, serve them helpful content about how to use our products after they purchase and give them workouts to do. As far as availability, we try to make ourselves easily accessible to customers in several channels. Chat, email, phone and all social media channels. In all of these we strive to reply as fast as possible which people really appreciate it and usually same

day. All these strategies together lead to great customer reviews which we share on our home page and on individual product pages. This helps with conversions in getting new customers. When people hit our website and see all the reviews, we emphasize how many we have, it helps them convert into new customers as well.” –Jay Perkins, Owner, [Kettlebell Kings](https://www.kettlebellkings.com/) (<https://www.kettlebellkings.com/>)

15. “The way we make our customer service stand out is with surprise freebies. When we deliver the services, we always throw in something extra that their business will benefit from at no extra cost. We also make sure to not tell them ahead of time that they are going to receive it. This creates a nice surprise that leaves them with a warm appreciation and lets them know we go above and beyond for our customers. Most businesses try to get away with the minimum, and in a world of the MVP mentality, it’s easier to stand out when you excel.” — Sean Dudayev, [Frootful Marketing Inc.](http://www.frootfulmarketing.com/) (<http://www.frootfulmarketing.com/>)

16. “As we’ve grown our business and developed our customer service, the thing which has been most successful for us has been to present it less as ‘customer’ service, and more simply as a ‘service.’ We’re an educational publisher focused on 11-plus exams in the UK. A lot of people who end up on our site because of Google-friendly resources like this hang around to ask us questions about their children’s education — by chat, email, or writing blog comments — because they believe that we know our stuff. We always do our best to help people as fully as possible without pushing for sales. This lets us develop relationships with parents, which has nothing to do with selling them books. By being free with our time and doing our best to help the people who visit our site — and not always treating them as customers — people in turn stop seeing us as a sales company, and more as an organization they really like, whose products they want to buy.” — Robert Lomax, Director, [RSL Educational Ltd.](https://www.rsleducational.co.uk/) (<https://www.rsleducational.co.uk/>)

17. “We try to ensure that we have the same customer service representative work with a dedicated client anytime they have a question. Customer support software tracks previous tickets or concerns and which team member handled them. It’s easy for our team to ensure we make the experience more personal by allowing the same team member to work with a client each time. The clients love this and get to know our team by name. That personal connection is invaluable.” — Shilonda Downing, Founder, [Virtual Work Team](https://virtualworkteam.com/) (<https://virtualworkteam.com/>)

18. “When it comes to customer service, one of my secrets to success is motivation. I find out what motivates the customer, and send out motivation quotes tailored to what they like. The second is the follow-up. Most people provide a service, but never check back to make sure that the customer has received the maximum value. I have a two-step follow up system. After two days I check to make sure the product was received well and after seven days I check to make sure it is benefiting them personally. This is also a great way to create strong business relationships.” — Willie “BJ” Williams, CEO, [Inspire the Fire Inc.](http://www.williebjwilliams.com/) (<http://www.williebjwilliams.com/>)

19. “For us, it’s about listening to our customers. We’re constantly asking for feedback and sending surveys to improve our products, web design, and customer service. This shows our customers that our mission is their satisfaction. Whenever we are faced with a dissatisfied customer, we make it our priority to make it right by any means necessary. We are dedicated to sustainability, which is why we only use cruelty-free ingredients and processes. This is something our customers are also very passionate about. We’re a small company with a big dream and our clientele loves this about us.” — Nate Masterson, Marketing Manager, [Maple Holistics](https://www.mapleholistics.com/) (<https://www.mapleholistics.com/>)

20. “Our client satisfaction specialists always show lots of empathy towards our customers. They know how to put themselves in their shoes to understand their needs and help them solve their issues. They really do care. I believe this empathy, this ability to understand our clients’ circumstances to improve their overall experience, is what makes our team members the best at what they do.” — Gregory Golinski, Head of Digital Marketing, [YourParkingSpace](https://www.yourparkingspace.co.uk/) (<https://www.yourparkingspace.co.uk/>)

21. “We believe the fact we offer full customer support alongside our online marketing courses is a standout feature. Not only do we offer customer support alongside our courses, but we have continually invested heavily in a support network that has grown alongside our user base and frequently goes beyond the expectations of our customers. One of our most recent initiatives has been to begin sending personalized video messages using a platform called Bonjoro to every new customer. This allows us to introduce ourselves, what we do, where our members can get additional help, and any other useful information we may see fit to add. Make

no mistake, this is a very time-consuming process. Averaging at around 10 new users a day, it takes around an hour or so of my day to reach out to everyone. We truly believe this investment in time is worth it, however. The feedback has been phenomenal with both churn and refund rates down across the board. The dynamic nature of these videos means we can also add extra info like course updates or upcoming events to the videos on the fly so that they don't become dull. It really does blow conventional plain welcome emails out of the water." — Jon Hayes, General Marketer, [Authority Hacker](https://www.authorityhacker.com/) (<https://www.authorityhacker.com/>)

22. "1) We connect via commonalities: Whenever talking to current or prospective customers, we try to find commonalities between us. If I'm on the phone with a new customer that has daughter that went to the same college as me, we'll bond on that for a bit. If they're interested in helping cash-strapped small businesses with finances, I'll talk with them about my startup story. We all have those shared human experiences, it's just about finding them. 2) Over-the-top support and patience. What I see competitors lacking that we do well is provide the entire solution for the customer and are patient with them. They don't know the industry like we do, nor do we know theirs. There's an element of hand-holding and education that goes a long way. Upon the purchase of our products or printing services, we provide our customers with in-depth support. We factor in all the aspects of the location our customers are working with and give them our most thoughtful design tips." — Joe Robinson, Founder, [Coastal Creative](https://www.coastalcreative.com/) (<https://www.coastalcreative.com/>)

23. "We approach customer service as more than a way to answer customer queries — we use it as a versatile, organic source of information to build our online tool and our business. We're a small team, but several of us, including myself, actively engage with customers on a regular basis. Doing so has several benefits. When creating written content online content, I know exactly what kinds of problems our clients are facing on a regular basis and can address those issues directly in the content I'm writing. Because we provide a procurement software tool but aren't acting as procurement professionals ourselves on a day to day basis, getting feedback from our customers directly influences the direction we take when prioritizing new developments to the tools we offer. We've seen some great results from this approach. It takes a bit of extra effort at times, but the benefit of sharing the customer service role throughout different departments in the company is having a team that truly understands what problems the team is working together to solve for the customer." — Kyle Strong, Marketing Coordinator, [Tradogram](https://tradogram.com/) (<https://tradogram.com/>)

24. "We do several things to stand out from our competition when it comes to our customer service. For instance, several of our customers are local to the area (we're based in Los Angeles, CA) and will come to pick up their bike in person. Our owner, Feras, is always there to help them load the truck. He inspects and makes sure that the bike is ready to go for the customer, asking them any details, and making sure to follow up and make sure they got home safe. We always ask our customers to share pictures of them selling from their bikes, and converse with them about how their business is going. Through these conversations, we can provide insight to future customers about the business they're getting into, as well as advice down the line." — Kaity O'Keefe, Sales and Marketing Manager, [Ferla Bikes](http://ferlabikes.com/) (<http://ferlabikes.com/>)

25. "Attitude is number one. Keep things positive and never point fingers, even if the user is the one in the wrong. Beyond that, we like to keep track of our users' communication preferences and respond accordingly. We currently have four methods of communicating with Pavemint users: chat, email, text and call. If someone typically texts us for support, we don't call or email them. We text them. Or if a user prefers to talk on the phone, we don't pressure them into using the chat even if it's easier for us. As a result, we create a loyalty between us and our users. They know we care about them and they care about us!" — Julian Flamer, Director of Customer Experience, [Pavemint](https://www.pavemint.com/) (<https://www.pavemint.com/>)

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