



MARKETING TO THE ENTITLED CONSUMER

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Overview

Surely, you've heard the phrase, 'the customer is always right'? Well it couldn't be truer today. In the modern marketing landscape, entitled consumers demand more attention and transparency than ever before from companies. Now that people are becoming aware of the vast amounts of data these companies are gathering on them, consumers are starting to demand that it be used effectively to make their experiences better and easier. The more entitled the consumer, the more they expect. Any reasonable amount of wiggle room for mistakes is slimming quickly; consumers are happy to run to the nearest competitor for a better customer experience. The only way to compete in the modern times of ever-changing opinions and social media "cancel culture" (campaigns to boycott brands) is to adopt a consumer-first marketing strategy.

"Today's consumers are like the best coaches – they're not interested in your excuses. And like the best coaches, if you don't improve, they'll replace you."

Chapter 1: Unreasonable Expectations

In the modern business world, consumers have become enormously entitled due to immediate access to services and the urge to please the customer. Skype, Venmo, and Uber are all modern examples of the immediate access to services that people now expect in the palm of their hands. When things inevitably go wrong, such as Skype failing to connect or the Uber car not showing on the map, the entitled customer immediately looks to place blame. There are various degrees of entitlement:

1. **Anticipators:** These consumers would rather work *with* the company to get the best experience possible. They know that their data is being tracked and hope it is being used well. They are highly collaborative, but still maintain high expectations.

2. **Fully Entitled:** They will collaborate and share data, but punish companies for poor service. They will post bad reviews if their needs are unmet.
3. **Demanders:** They expect companies to go above and beyond and cater to their every whim. They are impatient and demanding, and will deftly punish companies any way they can. They will tell friends and family of any poor experiences and demand compensation from the company for their troubles.

"Successful marketing to entitled consumers demands that you take everything you know about them and use it to serve them with timely, personalized marketing based on reciprocal value, relevance, and respectful empathy."

Many of these above-and-beyond expectations stem from Amazon placing customers first and providing standard 2-day shipping for all Prime members (soon to be 1-day shipping). Amazon is well-known for going far above expectations to please the customer, which creates extremely high standards for companies in other industries. If a company ships something, consumers expect it to be at Amazon-speed. Customers will not print labels for their online returns, and refuse to pay delivery charges. This has a ripple effect: every industry must now exceed customer needs, and customers rarely give companies second chances.

Chapter 2: Marketing Overload

Once marketers got ahold of utilizing email, it became a battle for consumers' attention. A given business can send consumers thousands of emails a year, chock full of ads for new products or purchase "suggestions". Most of these are irrelevant to the customer, but companies prefer to just bombard consumers with offers. Only 43% of emails are opened, and many times this bombardment strategy backfires when customers unsubscribe to mailing lists full of ads for irrelevant products. Annoyed customers are not good for a company's brand.