



PSA News

The Association for Service Professionals

Don't Fear the Online Review- Fix It!

By Randy Carney- Executive Director- PSA

What seems like many years ago, a business owner had a pretty good idea when they had a customer service issue. The customer would either call or visit the store, or perhaps even call the manufacturer, but at least you generally knew the name of the customer or at least the situation, and you had a chance to resolve it before things got escalated beyond the point of reason.

Today, it is often different. Many consumers head straight to social media or review sites- in some cases they don't even give the service provider a chance to correct the issue. Bad online reviews can influence the choices other consumers make when it comes to your business, and while many businesses have a real fear of these reviews, not knowing the reason a customer is unhappy is even worse.

Try as you might, you will not have a 100% record in customer satisfaction. If you keep an open mind, on line reviews can provide you with a lot of information on how customers view your service. There are ways to address a poor online review, even if you don't know the name of the customer involved. The worst thing to do is to ignore the review.

First of all, address the review with your staff, and ask if any of them might have an idea who the customer is. By acting immediately to bring to light and correct the incident that might have led to the review, you can take firm steps to make certain it is not repeated. And there remains the possibility that you can learn the actual name of the consumer and take steps to address the issue with them- always the best possible outcome. If the review is on Facebook or Twitter, you also stand a great chance of knowing the consumer's name, so you can handle the matter with them directly.

Even if you never learn the customer name, you can address concerns or accusations with the review. Consider sending in a response to the review- make it clear that you are the service provider or dealer, and stress what your policies are in relation to the complaint. Be very up front and professional- do not trade punches! Also note that you are more than willing to make it right with the customer if at all possible- this might drive them to speak to you if they have not.

If, after investigating the alleged incident with your team and getting no information that might lead you to identify the consumer, you may want to consider contacting the review site to see if this is indeed a "legitimate" complaint. Unfortunately, there have been cases where competitors have sent in bogus complaints in order to paint companies in a bad light. Consider this in particular when there are a slew of poor reviews that you cannot confirm. Many sites will take these reviews down if it can be proven that they are in fact false.

Some companies have taken the step to address poor reviews by sending in positive reviews of their own, and some of these may also be false. Bad idea- be honest in your approach to this issue and realize that, no matter the accuracy of the alleged issue, where there's smoke, there is usually fire. Trying to bury the review in made up positive comments is simply a "Band-Aid" to the original issue, whatever it was. Do what you need to do to correct any practices that drove the complaint in the first place.

Also, consider a more proactive approach. Set up a survey system to contact your customers after a transaction and make certain that they are happy with the transaction they had with your company, and perhaps they will also provide you with a testimonial that you can put on your own website. At the very least, this helps head off unhappy customers and gives you the opportunity to work with them prior to any steps they may feel they need to take on social media or review sites. The most unhappy customer will generally appreciate this level of support, and your actions may completely turn a bad situation around.

As noted, it is simply not possible to satisfy every customer, but most customers will not become anonymous bomb throwers if you take these simple steps to address or even head off potential problems that could damage your relationship with this and many other customers. Don't ignore poor reviews- understand the drivers and take steps to both address the alleged issue and prevent it from happening again!

Customer Service is Not Dead!

A glimmer of hope in a difficult situation.

By Jim Campbell- Mcap, CSM

As most of us have noted in recent months, drastic changes have taken place in the way we are able to go about our business. Parts have taken an astronomical hike in cost, despite outsourcing to other countries. OEMs have changed ownership and made strategic business mergers. There is another wave of factory servicers taking over the metro areas of the country again, disrupting warranty calls which used to go to independent servicers. In fact, many such companies are being put completely out of business by this practice.

Hopefully, not many of you have put all your eggs into the warranty service basket and been left holding the bag. Even our main parts suppliers have been coerced into handling only OEM-provided parts. You don't have to be Ms. Cleo to see a dangerous scenario for us if we can't adapt and overcome. Time will tell, as it has several times in the past, whether factory trucks are the best solution in the long run. Since we have no say in corporate matters of this magnitude, it leaves us to our own means to look out for our customers and provide the kind of service they expect.

I want to relate an experience I had last month with an OEM whom I have never had to service, nor buy parts for their products. One of my customers has a 3 year-old Proline Vent Hood in his kitchen. It's a pretty nice one, as you can see, and is well worth keeping in good running order. So, I began my hunt for a simple rocker switch for the fan. Starting with the manufacturer's website, I surfed my way to the authorized distributor's link. It was nothing more than an email address, so I described my situation. In 3 days, I received a new rocker switch in the mail, no invoice, no charge, no nothing! The customer was impressed, not only with us, but after I described the manner in which the OEM handled his problem, he was even more confident he had purchased the right brand.

I'm sure there are others of you who have also had a pleasant experience with an OEM upon occasion, and it renews your faith in the industry to some extent. If any of you need help with Proline parts, you may contact Mark Zuro at Smart Home Luxury in Salt Lake City at [**\(801\) 973-6267**](tel:8019736267). Speaking purely as a service company professional, I think this is a good example for every manufacturer to follow when the situation demands it. If consumers have to pay high prices for high-end products, they expect a certain amount of quality and reliability, both from the product and the people who made it. Thanks again to Proline for fulfilling this expectation!



Proline 42" Professional Vent Hood

LG's sales of Inverter Linear Compressor refrigerators top 10 Million

LG Electronics (LG) said global sales of refrigerators with its patented Inverter Linear Compressor had topped 10 million units. This includes refrigerators sold in the United States, where the appliances have Energy Star certification.

LG introduced the world's first refrigerator powered by an Inverter Linear Compressor in 2001. LG sold 1 million of these refrigerators by 2007, 5 million by 2011, and 10 million by November 2014. The company said it sees strong sales in premium refrigerator markets in the United States, Korea, Europe, and the CIS region, and it expects to sell more than 2 million such refrigerators in 2014.

The technology makes use of a straight piston drive instead of a conventional reciprocating drive, resulting in less internal friction than conventional motors. This increases the refrigerator's reliability and durability and generates less noise when running. LG said its Energy Star-certified refrigerators with this technology were approximately 32% more energy efficient than those equipped with conventional reciprocating compressors. (This assessment is based on VDE testing that compared comparing annual energy consumption of LG model GBB530NSCXE with an Inverter Linear Compressor and LG model GBB530NSQWB with a Recipro Compressor, according to ISO 15502 standards. It said energy reduction was a result of compressor type and other design differences.)

After Sales Solutions LLC Launched by Industry Veteran

Baltimore, Maryland, October 5, 2014 – A long-time veteran of the service repair and reverse logistics industry today announced the formation of After Sales Solutions LLC, a consultancy focused on helping businesses improve their post-sales processes to enhance the consumer experience.

James Rushton, President & CEO of After Sales Solutions LLC, is leveraging his 30 years of industry expertise to lead the new consultancy.

“How often do consumers receive sub standard in home repair and/or installation services on their appliance and electronic products?” said Rushton. “ Simply put, way too often based on my personal experience. In each of my roles working in a service management position, in diverse industries, I have repeatedly discovered numerous fundamental issues that prevent successful service events with end customers – many of which are typically the obvious but often overlooked.”

Rushton said many companies also continue to deploy outdated service delivery models that show little innovation considering today’s technology and educated workforce. With social media driving customer perception of business brands, focusing on service is more important than ever.

“If you are not satisfied with customer satisfaction ratings, it is time to take action and do something different. Our consulting philosophy is built on the basic premise that there are four key indicators of service excellence – convenience, speed, quality and cost. It is from this foundation that we discover broken processes that are often unnoticed by the business leaders that manage them.”

After Sales Solutions also develops, implements and manages complete product service programs for those companies that do not have the infrastructure in place for a new product line launch in North America.

“We build a complete turnkey program that addresses all of the components necessary to provide superior customer support while adhering to all governmental regulations. This includes everything from the call center through a reverse logistics and asset recovery component,” said Rushton.

About After Sales Solutions LLC

After Sales Solutions specializes in developing new, or refining existing, service support programs and processes for manufacturers, extended warranty companies and retailers across multiple verticals in the consumer and commercial hard goods industries. For more information about After Sales Solutions and our full suite of services, please visit www.aftersales.solutions

BAT's All Over the Country!

PSA's Basic Appliance Training (BAT) initiative is continuing to sweep the country!

The BAT program focuses on basic principles and repair functions related to electricity, gas and refrigeration, the core basis of a successful appliance service technician. The BAT training provides a solid foundation for new technicians, along with a strong refresher course for more experienced techs that will make the product specific training offered by manufacturers more understandable and also help to make your technicians more efficient and effective.

There is one BAT class confirmed in early 2015- please keep your eye on the December PSA News and our web site www.psaworld.com, for the complete 2015 BAT and PSA training schedule...

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Gas Basics, Safety, Characteristics
Fuel Gas Code requirements for Gas appliances Gas testing devices
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Thoughts from the Executive Director

By Randy Carney, PSA Executive Director

As I write this, late as usual, the household is preparing to celebrate Thanksgiving. This most American of holidays remains one of my favorites, in spite of the ridiculous new tradition of the “Black Friday” shopping spree, and its leeching into Thanksgiving Day itself. While you are enjoying your turkey and the company of friends and family, remember those that are working. I remain hopeful that more thoughtful minds will start to pull this trend the other way, but I can’t say I hold out a lot of hope.



Rant over... here’s a couple things to kick off your holiday season-

- I had the pleasure of spending some time with members of PSA’s training team as they reviewed training offerings and worked on new programs. We are fortunate to have a very talented lineup of trainers that take our Basic Appliance Training (BAT) and other training out to you throughout the country, and you’ll see a new schedule of BAT classes in the December issue of this very publication. Plans are in the works for “Advanced BAT” classes that take technicians to the next levels of proficiency, along with training more directed to specific product platforms. We’re always interested in hearing from our membership on ideas they might have for training, so if you have ideas, please pass them along to us via PSANet.
- NASC 2015 in Orlando continues to draw near, and December is the last month to get a discounted rate to the appliance service industry’s premier training and certification event. Rates will increase after the first of the year, so make plans to get registered and take part in the 2015 convention. The beautiful Rosen Plaza Hotel is the location of NASC 2015, smack dab in the middle of all the nightlife, shopping and restaurant options on Orlando’s famed International Drive. Just go to our website at psaworld.com and look for the “NASC 2015” button to register. We hope you’ll join us as we offer 4 days of education, comradery and fun in Orlando!
- Speaking of Orlando, our own Hans Hansen has done a great job of providing air fare information to Orlando for those wanting to head down for NASC 2015. Hans has provided information from Southwest Airlines, and highlighted some of the great fares they are offering from their many departure points. The info appears monthly on PSANet, so keep an eye out for some great air fares. Generally, you can get very good fares to Orlando from most cities in the US, but those flights tend to fill up quick, so make your plans now!
- And, to close, we here at PSA hope that all of you had a very happy Thanksgiving holiday, and we wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday season.

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