

Growing eBay Sales with Top-Notch Customer Service

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The whole experience reminded me of how critically important it is to pay attention to customer requests when dealing with eBay sales. On the Web (and with email) it's easy to lose contact with customers and forget to address their concerns.

Make sure you don't fall into this trap. You may not see the results directly, but your customers will become upset and you'll eventually lose business - like my painter has. Not only did he lose business, he lost a valuable referral source.

He started to lose me when he failed to record my suggestions and concerns. I didn't get into interior design much, choosing between mauve and tope, but I did have some input as far as the whole project goes.

I wanted them to make sure they cleaned up the "misses" on the outside, where some black trim paint accidentally hit the white house paint. I needed them to unstuck some of the windows and put all the screens back, as well.

When the project started wrapping up, it was obvious that the lead was ignoring some of my requests -- namely the screens and window unsticking. I loved the work, but I wasn't so hot on their finishing skills.

From a customer service perspective, the timing couldn't have been worse. Just when the painters wanted to consider it a job well done, I was having second thoughts about their competence.

That sinking feeling should not have come at the end of the project. The lead should have been going out with a celebration rather than with some gripes. He should have lead me around, showed me how great everything looks, showed me the extra work he'd thrown in, and gone down my list of requests one by one, demonstrating that he met my needs and respects my wishes.

If he performed these "finalizing" customer service/marketing steps, he'd have my 100% recommendation. I'd rave about him to friends, pass out his business cards and even write up a testimonial for him. I'd offer to help him out with his advertising materials, in fact. We'll certainly have more painting jobs in the future, and I'd like to stay on good terms with him.

On eBay, the same steps need to be followed in order to build business and collect loyal customers that rave about you. You need to send customers follow-up emails that confirm what they bought, what kind of deal you're giving them (on shipping, bonuses, etc.), and how you appreciate their business and would welcome any questions they may have. You need to offer them targeted cross-sell and up-sell items as they bid and shop. And, you need to quickly address their concerns as they come up. All this attention and service ensures that your customers refer you to others, leave positive feedback, and return to do more business with you.

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