

The consequence of a bad customer experience

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November 2012

Today's trend in the B2C market is CX (Customer Experience). No company will survive in a near future without understanding and investing in CX. This strategy intends to improve the "Experience" of a customer in its journey.

Currently no company can differentiate its product based only in innovation and price. Not anymore. Competitors can quickly create a similar product and the fight for low prices is not sustainable. "Experience" is the differentiator.

But even today there are many companies sceptical about CX (some of them big). For those I leave here a true story (many times told by Oracle's top managers) that shows how a bad experience can impact your business.

In 2008 David Carroll and his band (the "Sons of Maxwell") flew with United Airlines from Chicago to Nebraska. When they arrived to the destination David Carroll noticed that his \$3500 guitar had been damaged and it was broken.

We all know, and many of us also were eye witnesses, of the way airlines employees deal with the luggage that goes to the aircraft hold. This happened with David. He saw and so he made a complaint to United Airlines.

The complaint took many months to have a final closure. A hard and painful process. For months David Carroll spoke many times with many people and all of them put the responsibility on everyone other than themselves.

9 months later there was a final response, and it was "NO". United Airlines was not going to assume the responsibility and was not going to pay for the guitar. David Carroll accepted but promised to write a song about it.

He published the song on YouTube. In the first day it had 25 thousand views and became viral. One of the viewers worked on CNN and showed it on TV. In a short period of time the video reached 12 million views!!

Because of this United Airlines stocks have fallen 10%. A \$2 billion company was now worth \$1.8 billion. A \$200 million loss!! All for a \$3500 guitar and a really bad experience from an innocent customer.

Companies have to improve its customer's experience and cannot despise any of them. Otherwise they will take the risk of being "victims" of the power of social networks where the customer is the top influencer.