

Create an experience to get ahead of competitors

Maytag, realizing that many people eat in their cars and in front of TV sets, may be marketing refrigerated compartments in dashboards or arm chairs as they focus on "the eating experience." To begin change, focus on the experience that customers have while using your goods or services.

Coke and Pepsi convince consumers that the people who drink their sodas have better drinking experiences. Ty, Inc. by making Beanie Babies scarce heightens the experience of owning one.

Gilinder Glass in Port Jervis stages an experience thru museum and production tours as does Hershey's Chocolate World and the Crayola Factory Museum. Merchant Direct, ships microbrewed beer each month to people who sign up for its Beer Across America Club, and does the same with wine, cigars, and coffee.

What would you do differently if you charged admission? At The Sharper Image, customers, never dreaming of buying anything, play with the latest gadgets, stretch out on massage tables and listen to miniaturized hi-fi equipment. They then leave without paying for the experience.

Why not stage stair climbing contest and charge admission instead of browsers using the latest equipment for free. The Wall St. Journal recently reported that a British Nightclub with revenues of \$40- million got only 6 million from traffic at the club with the rest coming from memorabilia sales.

Visit a Rainforest Cafe and rather than hearing "your table is ready" check out "your adventure is about to begin". While waiting there is a great gift shop to browse thru and return to after experiencing dinner in a jungle complete with thunderstorm.

Progressive Insurance of Cleveland equips its vans with a personal computer, satellite uplink, and everything else needed to resolve a claim at the accident site. The customer's specific needs are met; receiving not just a check, but a cup of coffee and an invitation to relax in the van, call his family, or arrange for a ride.

Do we in the Hudson Valley create customer sacrifice? That's the gap between what a customer settles for, and what he wants. When an airline passenger asks for a Pepsi and is offered a Coke, he backs off from his true desire and


FAMOUS KENTUCKIANS

Some famous people born in Kentucky: Abraham Lincoln, Muhammad Ali, Daniel Boone, Alben W. Barkley, Jefferson Davis, D.W. Griffith, Adlai Stevenson, Zachary Taylor and Diane Sawyer.

NEVER ELECTED

Gerald R. Ford was the only American president never elected either to the presidency or the vice presidency. On Oct. 12, 1973, he was chosen by President Nixon to succeed Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, who resigned. When Nixon resigned Aug. 9, 1974, Ford was his successor.

BUSINESS IDEAS FROM THE SOURCE
BY JOE MURTAGH



accepts the Coke. He expects to be disappointed.


British Air is tracking individual customer preferences for beverages, meals, magazines, and other choices. This not only turns customized service into a satisfying individual experience, it lowers their cost by eliminating the waste of loading and carrying unwanted beverages, meals and other items. BA expects to save \$5 to \$8 million a year, and to pay back its investment in the first 12 months.

That's before it begins to realize the benefits of giving its passengers individualized experiences. The first time that a flight attendant brings a passenger his favorite drink and magazine without being asked, the response is not just customer satisfaction, but customer surprise.

A new Italian restaurant, rather than giving away discount coupons to lure new customers, surprised guests who chose to dine at full price by giving them free meals, creating both a desire and sense of obligation to return again and again.

The free meals cost 3.3 percent of monthly gross, but has a much greater impact on customers than an ad budget that size.

This article provided by Joe Murtagh, President of "the SOURCE" (294-8383) in Goshen, NY and is, in part, extrapolated from the best selling business book "The Experience Economy" by B. Joseph Pine II & James H. Gilmore.



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