

STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

It's Time to Improve Your Customer's Experience



Being based in Orlando, it's a common topic of conversation in business circles to discuss Disney's extraordinary success at elevating their customer service to the level of "an experience" In fact, Disney Institute was formed a while back to provide Disney's training methods to any company that wanted to pay for the privilege. It's an inside look at the world-famous systems that prompt most Disney visitors to sing the company's praises and return for more of that magical hospitality.

While we don't yet have a Proponent Institute to come out and train your staff in customer service best practices in person, I wish we did. And perhaps in the not-too-distant future this will be a service we can provide, but for now let's start with an awareness campaign as I truly believe a lot of our members don't even recognize they have customer experience issues... or are simply in denial.

Let me be blunt, many of you do have customer experience issues. Earlier this year we conducted a Secret Shopper study of nearly 50 Proponent Group members' instruction operations. Our Secret Shopper contacted each location by email through their local website and by phone. The results were often disappointing.

While our members generally would score mostly "A's" relative to the rest of the industry as swing technicians and coaches, unfortunately, some of you would score "C's", "D's" and the occasional "F" for your customer's experience.

In a significant number of Secret Shopper visits, the local website would not have a phone number for a potential student to call or there was no Contact Us page. Likewise, pages on the website would be years out of date for program

information or pricing, there was no calendar of upcoming events listed, the person who answered the phone couldn't provide details about specific programs and the list went on. There were even multiple cases where our shopper left email or voicemail requests for more information and either didn't hear back for many days or never heard back at all.

These sorts of inquiries are called "hot leads". They are the easiest sales in business. To mess up hot leads is small-business suicide.

Proponent Group wants to elevate all of our members to running their businesses with the same expertise you have mastered for the technical aspects of the golf swing. One of our next steps will be to have Jackie Beck, of Beck Communications in Connecticut, who conducted the Secret Shopper study for us, present during the upcoming Proponent Group Summit. She will provide more details from the study along with ways all of our members can do a better job with customer service issues and in turn increase your business.

You should also pay close attention to the Customer Journey Special Report article starting on the front page of this newsletter. Understanding all of the touch points your teaching business has with students and potential students will open your eyes to the fact that there are many places along that pathway where you may need to shore up your protocols and standards.

Now a lot of small business owners when asked will say their customers love their products and almost always say great things about their business. That is likely true of the people speaking directly to the owner. What you don't know is how many people silently left after a lesson or two or never even visited your facility because they didn't get the basic, timely information they were looking for from your business.

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