



Centrestage

Keeping you up with the play in the Central City.

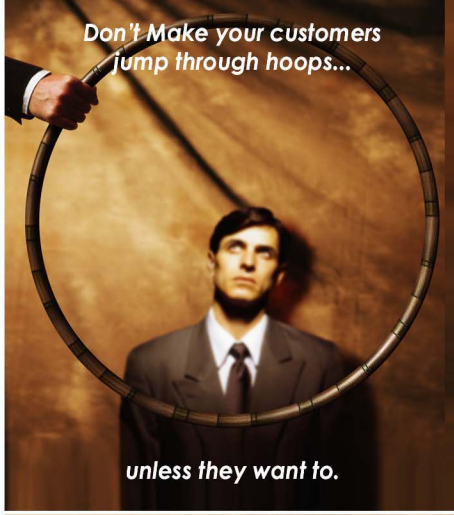
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Kathmandu pleased with results



Above: Andrew Veitch with some of his staff



Don't Make your customers jump through hoops...

unless they want to.

Market leaders Kathmandu are pleased with initial results from their move into City Mall.

I caught up with Manager Andrew Veitch who was busy getting ready for their annual big sale. Andrew said, "It has been a learning curve for us as we have cultivated a whole new audience but are reaching expectations. We have had to rethink and adapt the way we do business as our new customers are using the store differently and it is in our best interests to meet what they expect and want from us. We have had great feedback so far, but will continue to monitor and adjust what we do to give our customers the highest possible retail experience".

Wise words and highlights the

importance of continually monitoring and understanding your customer. Retail is increasingly becoming competitive so complacency and a lack of understanding your customer will lead to a major decline in sales. Always listen carefully to what they say and do while in your store and be prepared to make changes to the way you do things.

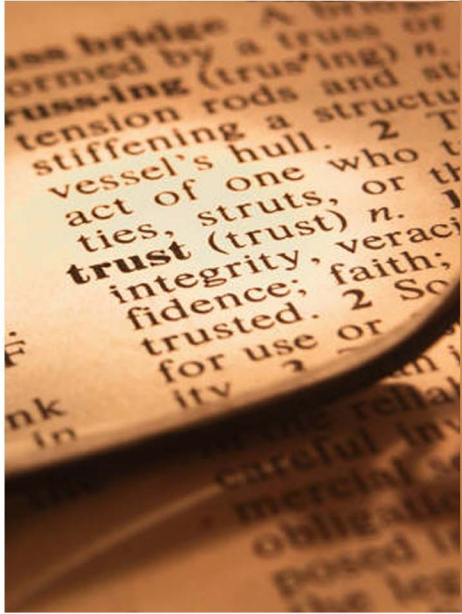
Remember, it cost five times more to gain a new customer than it does to keep an existing one so constantly re-evaluate, refine and introduce excitement to your customer base. This is what matters most and is relevant across all areas of retailing, from pricing and positioning strategies to customer service and visual merchandising.

Retail managers should ask their staff what are the customers saying. What do they want and are we delivering it. If not, strategise what you can do to make your retail experience world class. Simply satisfying your customer today is not enough. You have to provide world class service by going well beyond expectation and you will find your existing customers will remain loyal and tell other people about it.



Paul Lonsdale
Central City Manager
Business Association

A Matter Of Trust



Would you put your faith in someone you don't really know to help you make a critical decision?

Millions of consumers do just that every day, via product reviews on websites, the opinions of influential commentators, bloggers or the say-so of their Facebook friends. Worryingly for retail marketers, many experts say that shoppers are now more likely to trust complete strangers than they do brands.

Mike Lundgren, of leading US

digital marketing agency VML, calls it the "joe66 factor". As consumers, he says, we are ready to accept the input of someone with a Hotmail address on the other side of the world - joe66 - in preference to the recommendation of a familiar retail brand.

Research agency Nielsen backs up Lundgren's opinion, saying 78 per cent of us agree that "customer recommendations are the most credible form of advertising". Ian Jindal of the UK's Internet

Source: Retail Industry Expert - Jon Bird

Retailing website goes further to claim that products with reviews on websites result in an 80+ per cent higher sales conversion.

For retailers, it is important to go with the customer flow. Recognise that the days when brands called the shots are gone. Engage your customers in conversation and encourage them to pass judgment on your retail brand. With good management (and a bit of good luck), someone like joe66 will give you a five-star rating.



Tram Rails already down

It is great to see that within a couple of weeks the tram rails are being laid. The speed of this work can be attributed to a simplified tram foundation from what was placed in city mall. Through the mall upgrade, the level of

engineering in the foundation was reduced, as initially it was over-specified. The other factor that will make the rest of the extension programme move quickly is there is no paving work to be done. The majority of the upgrade

works are confined to the road with little to no affect on pedestrians.

This will cast aside some retailer fears of long drawn out works affecting already difficult winter trading.