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Editor

Communication is key

Customer service plays a key role in so many industries today that it's vital to get it just right. A wrong word here or there, a phone call or email not responded to, and the complaints can be multiplied over social media or within close-contact industry circles extremely quickly, causing a great deal of bad publicity and ultimately, potential job loss.

Communication is key. It's so important today that queries be dealt with in a reasonable time frame, that people at least appear to care about concerns or requests for information, and react in a suitable manner. While most of us are aware of this, those who remain ignorant, wilfully or otherwise, do so in a very public way. Dedicated forums for hotels, attraction and restaurants like TripAdvisor, in addition to the review panels featured on booking websites like Booking.com and Airbnb, make any grievances extremely public, while those whose services and solutions aren't typically reviewed online gain a bad reputation within their industry through word of mouth.

Bad feeling can be devastating to businesses today, large or small. Right now, we're seeing major backlash against Apple, which after many months of mixed messages, has decided to provide replacement batteries for a small batch of faulty iPhone 6s models within a given serial number series. However, reports from users across many websites assert that the battery faults are not limited to this small number of devices. At the time of going to press, Apple has denied plans to extend its battery replacement programme to other iPhone 6s phones, or indeed, to iPhone 6 phones, which are reportedly experiencing the same problems. Users are furious, with many threatening to defect to Android devices, and others commenting that Apple products are not being built to the same standard since the passing of co-founder and CEO Steve Jobs. When someone without a single Apple product like myself is aware of these problems, we can conclude that Apple is facing a mountain of bad press, and that an effective solution is vital to maintaining its status as a top-of-the-range service provider.

Poor service is one thing, but when that poor service is coupled with inadequate communications, the problem is amplified drastically and is at risk of getting completely out of hand in a very short period. Many companies will never regain their reputation, or indeed the customers or partners they've treated poorly, ultimately leading to their demise.

Those of us active in the communications sector need to be at the top of our game when it comes to communicating effectively with those around us, as today, it's more important than ever before. ■

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