



We are kicking the new year off with a brand new website
and exciting new menu!

Visit <http://www.privatehotelschool.co.za/> to take a deeper look inside
The Private Hotel School.



Working hard, having fun and contributing to a good
cause!

The Event Planning students of the Private Hotel School held a Fashion Show Extravaganza on Saturday, 31 October
2009 at the Japie Krige Hall, Paul Roos Gymnasium.

The Private Hotel School is a fairly new hotel school that offers a Higher Education programme in Hospitality Management as well as Professional Cooking. It is situated on the outskirts of Stellenbosch at 33 Stellenbosch, Vloottenburg. Not only is the venue a teaching facility, but also a restaurant, 33 Dine, and a guest house, 33 Stay.

Fifteen second semester students from The Private Hotel School were given the task of organising an event from their Event Planning lecturer. The students decided to hold a charity fashion show and donate all the proceeds to the Cape of Good Hope SPCA.

It took a lot of hard work, dedication and coordination but eventually the group pulled together to host an unforgettable evening.

Numerous generous sponsors contributed to the success of the event, and with beautiful models and clothes, success was guaranteed! Approximately 120 guests attended and were given a spectacular show of fashion by designer, Nicky Healy. During the interval, the guests had an array of delicious canapés which were made by none other than a few of The Private Hotel School students.

Apart from selling tickets for the event, money was also raised by selling raffle tickets for professional chefs knives and receiving personal donations. Therefore the total amount that the students managed to raise, after covering costs, was a generous R3000,00. This was a fantastic achievement as this was the student's first event.

The students have all gained invaluable experience through organising this event, but this is surpassed by the knowledge that all their hard work contributed towards to a good cause.



Recommended reading by Director, Hein Olckers:

The 10 Customer Service Trends for 2010

In 2010, customer service makes a big comeback. It becomes the new marketing. Forget about paying lip service to offering "great customer service". Let go all of those "the customer is always right" myths. It's time to offer outstanding customer service only because it makes economic sense for your small business. It is the only truly sustainable competitive advantage.

What to watch in 2010:

We Try Harder:

With the economy still struggling to recover and unemployment at record highs, all "customer facing employees" actually will try harder this year to attract, satisfy and keep their customers. Job prospects remain slim in 2010 and every employee wants to keep any job they have. This year, effort from everyone will be in plain site.

It's Not Your Product:

Zappos' tag line is "*Powered by Customer Service*". With the company being sold to Amazon for almost a billion dollars, there is no denying that customer service can build companies. Zappos proved that it can make money selling shoes over the internet by offering free shipping both ways. Amazon and Zappos are companies that really just don't sell products, but a customer service channel to sell any product. All things being equal, I buy from Zappos and Amazon because I know I can count on them. This is the year that all companies will see service as the only way to keep customers buying from them.

It's All About You.

Technology has allowed companies to personalize my visit when I go to buy from their web site. When I visit Amazon's site, they welcome me back by name and suggest things I might want to buy based on what I bought in the past. This is the type of personalization I come to expect when I go to any face to face retail establishment. When I check into a hotel, I want them to greet me by name if I have been there before or I am a member of their frequent buyer program.

This always happens when I visit the Portland Paramount but at The Nines hotel in the same city, they never remember who I am. With the immediacy and personalization of this fast paced internet world, great customer service

is only what the customer says it is at a particular point in time. The difficulty is raised because this standard varies from person to person. This year, more companies will customize your shopping or service experience either online or in person because that is what you want.

Tell the World.

Tools like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube allow me to tell not seven people but 10,000 my pleasure or dissatisfaction with a company immediately after I interact with them. No more secrets here! Every satisfied customer is now a booster for your company and every dissatisfied customer potentially can hurt your business. Now, there is more of an incentive for every company to get it right for their customer. This year, no bad deed will go unpublished by a dissatisfied customer.

The Brands are Listening.

You as the customer are talking on Facebook and Twitter, but companies are also beginning to listen. Chances are that if you post a complaint using one of these tools, the company will respond directly to you. I have had this happen with Sears and Lands End. This year, all the major companies will not let any negative comment go by without responding to your concern.

Online Service Gets a Face Lift.

Forget the lag time of email or waiting for a call back. This year, more and more web sites will allow you to chat directly to customer service people either through chat or video. Want to chat from your phone directly to the company? No problem. Skype them? No problem. Scott Jordan at Scottevest, allows the customer to watch what is going on in his company live on the web every day!

Insourcing is In.

More and more American companies who outsourced their customer service will bring that function back home either by hiring a domestic company or bringing it in house. The "we can outsource this customer service thing" has hurt companies like Dell and Capital One. This year, look for more of the technology assisted customer service jobs to be transferred back to the US. Companies realize how important it is to their business. Just ask any car dealer the profitability of new car sales to their car maintenance business.

That's Tight.

Companies you do business with will want to know everything about you. Tighter relationship with customers will continue as economy remains poor. Companies can't afford to lose profitable current customers. This goes way beyond frequent flyer programs. Accenture working with Proctor and Gamble has a new technology that tries to predict consumer preferences using optimization engines. This year, companies will continue to track everything about you to make that your relationship as personal as it gets.

Fire Them.

In 2007, Sprint famously fired 1,000 customers that were clogging up their customer service lines and costing the company loads of money. Not every customer you have is profitable. Look for more companies this year to fire you if you cost them money and recommend you take your business elsewhere.

Get Small.

All startups used to want to appear big. We bought typewriters and later computers and web sites to make ourselves look the part. Now, everyone company, as Chris Brogan says, wants to be human. I call it getting small. Every company wants to seem like the corner store, but have the global pricing power and distribution of Walmart. Furthermore, big business is now consistently targeting your small business since it is the a sector of the economy that is growing. President Obama will continue to emphasis that small business is the core of American business. You have arrived!

What do you see as the trends in customer service for 2010?

(view article at <http://smallbiztrends.com/2009/12/customer-service-trends-2010.html>)



