



# What plumbers can teach us about customer service

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- > Accounting
- > EPOS
- > Barcoding
- > CRM
- > Payroll
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## Introduction

We write accounting and business software and are continually updating it to help people get the most out of their business.

One of our main markets is trade counters, such as builders' and plumbers' merchants and in order to develop better software for them we decided to get some feedback on what makes a good trade counter from the people that actually use them.

So, we posted a message on a Plumbing Forum asking the members what they thought and as the responses 'flooded' in (sorry!) it became clear that they applied equally well to most types of business. Here are some of the best comments:

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- > *"Free, quality coffee! Can't even think without it."*

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  - > *"Software systems don't make good merchants. Good people do."*

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  - > *"You can have the flashiest system in the world, but if it's operated by donuts you'll get 'cack' out of it."*

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  - > *"Service and price are my big 2."*

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  - > *"Good staff make a merchant but ignorant ones make it fail."*

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  - > *"What about access to their stock list while you're in the queue? It'll crack you up waiting 20 mins to find out the part you require is not in stock."*

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  - > *"I know people will say ring 'em but sometimes you can't get them on the phone!!!"*

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  - > *"Proper professional, caring merchants who look after their customers"*

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  - > *"A local merchant by me still uses paper trail, but it doesn't really matter as they provide good customer service and the guys behind the desk know their stuff."*

more >





# What plumbers can teach us about customer service (continued)

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My thanks to the following people on Plumbers Forum for taking the time to give us their feedback:

- APPlumbing
- SimonG
- IDCHAPPY
- Toxic Ted
- Ermintrude
- Alpha man
- bright spark
- Ray Stafford
- gas man
- AWheating
- Ch4 plumbing
- Nostrum
- brum
- BOD
- Millsy 82
- kris
- mache
- R.Oak
- Plumbstar Tom
- oz-plumber
- Anton

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> *"A decent amount of stock!"*

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> *"Software is the concern of the merchant to be honest. I don't really care unless it means the demise of decent guys serving you."*

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> *"Knowledgeable staff. I hate reading out a list then having to check the bag because the guy either gets confused or doesn't want to ask what I mean!"*

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> *"Good levels of stock and a system that allows quick transactions. Nothing worse than losing half an hour out of a busy day just for a few fittings."*

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> *"We can login to some suppliers and order the necessary materials for jobs and either have them delivered to an address or available for pick up at any branch. Of course this has some glitches, due to items that are not generally held in stock, but if that happens I will get a phone call letting me know if the item(s) will not be available at the requested date/time. At least now I don't have to waste time at the suppliers placing orders tomorrow for things that need doing next week."*

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## Conclusion

As you would expect, trade counter customers want to be served quickly and effectively, so they can get back to their job and earning money.

However, it is clear that the key factor in achieving good customer service is to have efficient, knowledgeable staff. As one of the comments above points out, "You can have the flashiest system in the world, but if it's operated by donuts you'll get 'cack' out of it." Quite.

But equally, if you have business software that is slow, cumbersome and unreliable, it will make it harder for those great members of staff to keep your customers happy. So, talk to us and make sure you have the right software for you, your staff and your customers!

**If you'd like to find out more about how our business software can help you do business better, give us a call on 01458 444010**

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