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**3 WAYS THAT TECHNOLOGY CAN IMPROVE
THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**
To Drive You New Business Amidst The COVID-19 Crisis

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To Drive You New Business Amidst The COVID-19 Crisis

Customer experience – it's a catchphrase, a marketing vessel, and an intangible part of doing business. Most businesses realize the bottom line benefits that having a good customer experience brings.

Statistics such as “86% of businesses will pay more for a better customer experience” and “25 out of 26 customers won't complain to a business about a poor buying experience – they will just stop buying ” show the importance of a strong customer experience environment. However, these statistics don't help shed light on the tangible things that a business can do to improve their intangible customer experience.

Oftentimes, businesses will take strides to improve their customer experience without knowing exactly what areas they need to improve. Finding these areas of improvement are often difficult, especially when it comes to delivering products and services to businesses and to the home.

In parts delivery, managers and executives don't always have the face-to-face exposure to their customers that other types of businesses have. So, in a fast-paced and changing environment, how do parts businesses find the areas of their customer experience that they need to improve, and take steps today that will drive profitability tomorrow?

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The Driving Force of Repeat Business – The Fulfillment Experience

Every touchpoint that you have with your customer is part of the customer experience. It starts from their very first order with you and doesn't really end. The simplest way to understand the customer experience is to break it down into three parts: The buying journey, The fulfillment experience, and the post-purchase experience.

The most common and well researched part of the customer experience is the “buying journey.” This includes a business's website, their ordering experience, their support during the ordering process, and the follow-up visibility of that order . There have been thousands of studies and corresponding papers written depicting the intricate details of the buying journey that ultimately leads to a customer deciding to place an order. The buying experience is extremely important; however, the focus on the buying experience often leads to other parts of the customer experience being overlooked.

On the flip side, the post-purchase experience is all about creating brand awareness. After a product or service has been fulfilled, it is imperative to keep your business top of mind in each customers' thoughts. Through marketing, customer follow-up and support, you can ensure that the next time that customer needs a product – your business is first to come to mind.

However, according to SupplyChainDive, the fulfillment experience is the largest driver of repeat business for almost any retailer – and it is especially essential in the fast-paced parts industry. Additionally, repeat business is the lifeblood of a successful company. On average, it is six times more costly to attract a new customer than it is to re-engage a past customer. Past customers understand the fulfillment experience of your business, and they know what to expect. That is why, in a competitive business like the parts industry, it is imperative that your fulfillment experience outshines the competition.

Technology to Take Your Fulfillment Experience to the Next Level

According to a paper by SEKO Logistics, there are three important things that business to business (B2B) customers want (and will pay for) during any delivery:

1. flexibility to make delivery changes if needed;
2. visibility of their delivery; and
3. proof of delivery and a clear chain of custody protocol.

While these customer wants may seem difficult to satisfy, certain technologies will allow you to provide your customers with an excellent fulfillment experience. But first, let's take a deeper dive into why customers want these specific things and the tangible benefits for a business to provide them.

Delivery flexibility

Customers are busy too, and oftentimes they will need to change something about a delivery even after they placed an order. In the parts industry, repair shops are busy, their schedules change, and often you may find a customer requesting a different part or wanting to return a part. Your ability to handle these requests efficiently and satisfactorily directly affects your relationship with that customer. Approximately 25% of all canceled/returned orders were due to customers not having the ability to change their order after placing it.

So, how can technology play a role in this customer need? Dispatch solutions with advanced capabilities can provide

multiple options. For example, with a modern solution you can change a driver's route on the fly to manage your customers' needs in real-time. Additionally, the constant communication between your dispatchers and drivers will allow your team to react quickly to changing demands – improving your customer satisfaction dramatically.

Visibility

Along with flexibility, customers want visibility of the delivery process. They want to see when the driver left, their updating ETA, and any delays or changes made along the route. That way, they can plan the rest of their day accordingly. The importance of visibility is hard to attribute to a bottom line number; however, in a study by Supply Chain Quarterly, 47% of customers said they have chosen not to order from a business again due to poor order visibility.

Additionally, this visibility dramatically reduces the amount of time that your team is fielding calls from customers asking about their delivery status. Approximately 62% of calls into a part shop are about a delivery that is in transit. By implementing advanced dispatch technology that

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can send ETA notifications to your customers with a real-time tracking link, your team will experience dramatic time-savings. The inefficient way of fielding a call, calling the driver, figuring out where they are on the route, and then calling the customer back and providing an ETA are gone.

Proof of Delivery and Chain of Custody

Lastly, proof of delivery and chain of custody are imperative to a successful delivery operation. On average, for any product that is delivered to a business or to a consumer's home, 30% will be returned compared to just 8.8% that are returned after buying in a brick and mortar store. So, what does this mean for the parts industry? With the vast majority of orders being delivered, it is essential that your team has solid proof that the product arrived in good condition.

Utilizing advanced dispatch technology, your drivers can have the ability to take a picture of a delivery and collect digital signatures ensuring that the product arrived in good condition. When taking advantage of electronic proof of delivery that modern dispatch solutions offer, select customers reported their return rate drop by ~40% in the parts industry.

In addition, a product return is an expensive headache for any shop. Advanced dispatch technology can once again assist by automatically suggesting the best driver to handle a pickup based upon their route, their location, and any time window commitments they need to make. Through modern, dynamic optimized routing, returns can be picked up and completed efficiently – driving customer satisfaction.

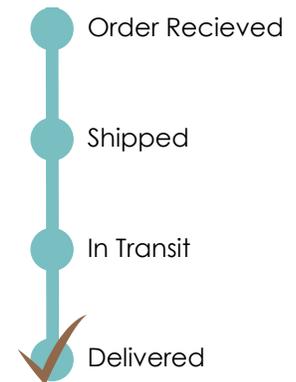
The Tangible Return on Investment for Advanced Dispatch Technology

Advanced dispatch software gives your business the technology it needs to give customers visibility, provide real-time updates, and gather irrefutable proof of delivery; however, are there any other bottom line benefits to adopting this type of technology? The answer is a resounding yes. Hundreds of parts shops have realized financial benefits like:

- 30-50% mileage decrease per route
- 50% decreased "time at stop"
- 21-30-minute average route improvement
- \$500 more product sold and delivered per day
- \$125,000 more revenue per year
- 30% more revenue delivered per route

The customer always comes first. It's the cornerstone of a successful business. Realizing your customers' fulfillment needs and meeting them with advanced, cost-effective technology is key to taking your shop to the next level. Through providing your customers visibility of their orders, the ability to make changes to orders in transit, and a clear chain of custody with solid proof that the product arrived in good condition, your business can continue to thrive now and in the future.

PROOF OF DELIVERY and chain of custody are essential



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