

Customers must be at centre of business



By [Marcel Strauss](#)

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In peak periods, companies do their utmost to stand out to consumers who have money to spend. Tactics vary between marketing as a draw factor and increased customer service as the key to drawing more feet to stores.



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Whichever tactics are utilised, everyone agrees that the customer should be at the centre of what a business does to encourage people to choose their product or store above any other competitor and the best way is to put oneself in the shoes of the customer.

Thinking like the customer starts with being consumer-centric. This concept allows the organisation's resources to align and respond to the ever-changing needs of customers effectively, while still building mutually profitable relationships.

One of the many important needs that a customer has when it comes to buying products is quality, especially food. The average consumer is willing to spend more money on food that is of a superior standard and therefore it is important to talk about the quality and freshness of the food you offer. For the majority of consumers, efficient and prompt service is also a major concern, which can only be achieved with well-trained, efficient and sufficient staff.

Good principles

- Start with your staff. Train them to manage their interpersonal relationships and body language so that when a consumer walks into your store, they feel welcome before a word has even been spoken.
- Remember and understand that franchising rules, regulations and policies were designed to enable the consumer to do business with you. Know when and how to challenge the business to ensure the consumers' expectations are met at all times.
- Always remember that when consumers have a problem, they will tell more people than they would have if they were happy with your food and service. Therefore, make it your priority to always look for the best solution that fits your customers' needs.
- Staff need to know that they influence the kind of service a consumer will receive when they enter the store. It is therefore important to keep employees motivated and aware of the vital role that they play in the business.
- Take note of your regular consumers. Although it is impossible to remember each person who comes into your store, make an effort to pay attention to regular customers to establish an even better relationship.

A vital element to ensuring consumer-centricity is communication. By communicating with customers on a regular basis, you will not only build better relationships, but also understand their needs better. Keep your consumers informed of promotions and any news happening in your store, including your community involvement.

The store that listens and acts on what consumers want is the one that will win their hearts and their buy-in. Being consumer-centric really starts with the question, "what would my consumer want?"

ABOUT MARCEL STRAUSS

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