

# How to Handle Unhappy Customers with AJ Underwood

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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## SPEAKERS

AJ Underwood, Halie Morris

**H** Halie Morris 00:11  
Hello, and welcome to Everyday Business Solutions. My name is Halie Morris, I'm your podcast coordinator and host and today I have with me AJ Underwood. And AJ, I'm gonna let you introduce yourself.

**A** AJ Underwood 00:22  
Yeah, thanks. I am the sales manager for Double A Solutions, a software as a service company here in Toledo, Ohio. We have five products for products and another lead generation software that we offer. So that's that's me in a nutshell. Do you want the entire bio? Should I start from the beginning? If not, that's me.

**H** Halie Morris 00:44  
Yeah. You joined our company not too too long ago, I think you've recently or you are coming up on- What is it

**A** AJ Underwood 00:52  
coming up on two years?

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Halie Morris 00:54

Yeah, I was gonna say it's been a couple years if it flew by, especially with COVID. Yes. Yeah. I was gonna say you've been here for a little bit now. Yes. But what got you into sales? And how did you find your way into software evolving? Sure.

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AJ Underwood 01:08

Well, in my previous life, I was in the airline industry, and you helped grow a company. You know, at our peak, we were 400 employees, 26 cities across the country. And so even in a position of leadership at the time, you're constantly selling yourself, right? Whether you're at a boardroom, or on a golf course, or, you know, at a trade show, or all of these things are consistent across every industry, right. And so, while my title in my previous life wasn't necessarily sales manager, you are always selling yourself and selling your business, you know, what services or products that you provide, even if you're at a higher level, in terms of, you know, maybe, you know, maybe you specifically deal with contracts, or you specifically deal with marketing, or you specifically deal with some of these other things, the best leaders are constantly selling. So, I felt like it was a some of the skills that I had learned doing that, in my previous life transitioned well, to this industry. Now, with that being said, transitioning from one industry for a decade and a half to another is absolutely terrifying. The good news is, is that some of the skills that you learn along the way are transferable, so you can use them, regardless of where you're at, or what industry, it's really a matter of learning how to speak the language. And then once you do that, you feel comfortable.

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Halie Morris 02:45

It's, um, you definitely came from one industry, that's been very struggled a little bit, they've had a lot of instability. Yeah, a lot of impacts whether people are able to travel or not, with this current climate, it's a lot of ups and downs. And then like, the whole, the regulations and things are so different. Whereas with software, we've, over the years become something that is meant to take your business wherever you want to go and meant to make business as flexible and accessible and as efficient as one would hope it could be. So it's very interesting. Your history, I bet with that. And looking back.

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AJ Underwood 03:26

Yeah, you know, that obviously, the software industry, less unstable, certainly than the airline industry. But the same amount of pivoting is required. You know, when the pandemic first started, many industries were forced to either a sink, or be swim. And so

the airlines have learned how to theoretically swim, some of them sink. Right. And so, when the pandemic first began, we had a responsibility to make the same decision. So much like the airline industry, or the food industry, or the entertainment industry, the software industry also had to decide do we want to sink or swim? Now the good news is, is that businesses across the country decided we have to be a little bit more dependent on technology, we have to be a little bit more dependent on some of these software solutions, especially as we are faced with the scary decision of Do you keep everybody in the office? Do you go remote? Do you have some measure of hybrid setup? And if so, how do you do it? Right? And so thankfully, here at WD solutions, we provide a means to businesses across the country to do that to regardless of how their business is set up regardless of where their employees theoretically punch in every day. We have solutions that can keep a company running, even amidst a scenario where their employees are not in the same office, perhaps even sporadic across the country.

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Halie Morris 05:06

And that's an ongoing thing. That's something that post pandemic, whenever that may be at this point. Companies like ours have said, okay, there's going to be people remote indefinitely, or we want to be able to employ people across the country, but we don't necessarily need an office or want an office across the country. And so it's opened up your talent bracket, which is very nice. Because right now, it's a little hard to get people in the door for an interview as a So

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AJ Underwood 05:35

yeah, I mean, it's an excellent point. You know, we've been able to secure talent in various parts of the country. And without getting too deep in terms of what post pandemic, life looks like, why would I live in New York City, with those associated costs, and the hustle and bustle associated with that city when I could work for a company in Toledo, Ohio, outside of the city, right. And so I think post pandemic, life is still developing, it's still unfolding. And you're right. There are a lot of businesses that for whatever reason, maybe they got during the pandemic, maybe they they got so big, that the idea of bringing everybody back to the office isn't even possible, right, because of all the the talent and the the growth that they experienced. So they have to remain some measure of remote or hybrid. Or sadly, perhaps the opposite. Maybe during the pandemic, a company did not thrive. And they had to figure out ways to reduce overhead, oh, maybe we don't need this building anymore, right? If people can work from home, and we can still seem the same measure of success. Even though we haven't experienced maybe growth or success during the pandemic, we can survive this by reducing some of our costs. So many companies took different trajectories, pre and during the pandemic, what will be fascinating to see as

it continues to unfold, is what business looks like post pandemic. So excellent point.

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Halie Morris 07:15

In, I like to study history, from time to time, I usually study it through fashion. But when you're looking at any part of history, you'll notice there are huge shifts and pivots throughout Oh, see a large one in the 20s and the 30s to 40. There, the 1900s had a lot of them. But every time you see these shifts, you see a shift in the way people live life with the way they do business, the way they interact, the way they approach things. There's no such small shifts with technology going on for the last like 1020 years, that have been really cool. But I think we're in one of those moments where this is the large term, we're on the bend right now. But now we're shifting the perspective, the priorities, and the understanding of how you can interact and do business. And it's at a time where social media and other platforms are making how people sell and interact with sellers and buyers. So much different. So you're right, it's going to be very interesting, because the standard way of doing business is going to look so much different as we continue to move forward. So, absolutely. And speaking of doing business, and speaking of sales, and everything like that, what we kind of came on to talk about today is actually more on the customer side than the employees side. And it's with the fact that a lot of people have realized in the last year and a half of what they want. And so we've always noticed that people who are unhappy are very vocal about being unhappy. But there has been a lot of opportunity where companies haven't have either met expectations exceeded expectations or done the opposite. And with that comes reviews and feedback from your customers. And my thing today that I want to broach because you've been in a role where you've had to deal with feedback on many fronts, is how do you handle negative feedback, negative reviews as it comes in? And as you start to move forward past that, whether you retain that customer or not sure.

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AJ Underwood 09:14

Never in a time in human history, have consumers customers, potential clients, prospects, etc. Have they been more educated than right now? Right, the advent of the internet and the ability to have company reviews at your very fingertips within seconds. Right. And so, the ultimate question is, how do you how do you drive good reviews, right? It's human nature, to not go to a website or fill out a suggestion card that used to go into a box. It's human nature to find the flaws and things when you were a kid and you brought home your report card. Mom or Dad look at it and they see a see what do they focus on, it's the See, right? Well, we can be better here we can do better. So it's human nature, when I have a bad experience or a perceived bad experience, to want to focus on that it is not human nature to sit down and take the time and write out a, this was the positive experience that

I that I had, because the expectation is, I'm going to have a positive experience, because anything less than that, I don't want to do business with these folks, I don't, I don't want to, you know, continue to patronize them. So the counter to that is, you have to be far more engaged with your customers, there is an expression that says, at times, silence can be deafening, right. And so whether it's from a sales perspective, or even a customer service perspective, you have to be actively reaching out to your customer base. And this is before any sort of complaints, even surface, right. So it's the proactive approach versus a reactive approach. And so if you have customers, you know, if you're fortunate enough to have a CRM, like blitz that provides you the means to reach out to these customers and be reminded to touch base with them before they even reach out to you. You can find success with being proactive. I mean, you can get psychological, you can get, you know, philosophical in terms of how you keep people engaged and happy. But in my opinion, at the end of the day, if you can be proactive, and make sure that you're reaching out and contacting the customers, before they contact you, you can find a measure of success. Now, when you do field, that negative review, I think the same approach is still in place. A lot of times, between the review process, and you know, individuals, you know, filing some sort of complaint, all of those things are done behind the safety of the computer screen, right? All of those things are done, where I can simply type out a message, I don't have to look somebody in the eyes and tell them what I experienced, or what I was unsatisfied with, I can just simply type something out, press press enter, and I no longer have to think about it. The burden after I press Enter is on the entity that I complained about, right. So when you do feel those negative reviews, I think it can be just as easy to try to hide behind the keyboard to try to hide behind our computer screens to respond. Right. And you see that right? You see that on Review Boards where somebody files a complaint. And then you see below that response from the owner or response from the business. I feel any measure of response is a lose lose scenario. There's really not much that you can say in that little blurb that's going to make whomever is reading that review Go on, you know what I side with the the big bad business on this one, right? So I think how you approach a negative review is again, engaging the individual or customer, prospect or client or whomever engaging them with a phone call, right? Not necessarily admitting fault, not necessarily saying I'm sorry, but asking them, where can we improve? How can we get better, right? Because you will not make that negative review go away? What once it's on the internet, it's on the internet, right? It's out there. The only thing that you can do in that moment is figure out how we improve from here.

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Halie Morris 13:54

I've seen something where said the best way to respond publicly because there people are looking for some kind of response is to just say, you know, we're sorry that this has happened or something along those lines. One of our representatives is reaching out to

you to help resolve this matter. You know, something along those lines where it redirects the conversation back out. So people who are watching, know that you're doing something, but that also again, you get that private one on one where you're able to address their concerns and hopefully solve them, or at least coming away, come away and have learned something that can help you better your business.

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AJ Underwood 14:29

That's an excellent point and to what I had mentioned earlier, I think that's a brilliant response where you want to be careful as certainly making it appear as if you're in defense mode or even worse, argumentative mode, and then again, that's a lose lose scenario, but the simple clean response, apologize for your experience a representative will be reaching out to that's brilliant. Anything above and beyond that, I think is a lose lose scenario.

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Halie Morris 15:00

So then it comes off as either too showy or, like you said, defensive or aggressive.

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AJ Underwood 15:06

And Has anyone ever won a battle on the internet? Just out of curiosity, an argument? Has anyone ever won an argument on the review? Oh?

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Halie Morris 15:16

It's usually one of those like Twitter battles where whoever gets the most laughs Sure. Is the I think that's how that works. Yeah, I'm

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AJ Underwood 15:22

not sure I'm not entirely sure there's ever been a definitive winner in an internet argument. So to your suggestion, that's a brilliant approach. And then, and then you move on, because anything above that is an internet is an internet argument. And you don't win those

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Halie Morris 15:39

naturally, not even like the person who left the negative review, what do they gain out of continuing that Archer online to, and at the end of the day, hopefully, they're still a

customer, they work customer, you want to take care of them. So yeah, the end feedback like that can hurt sometimes, you know, realizing that there was a gap that you left open, or that sometimes just the human error of running a business, something slipped through that normally, that's not part of your process. Sure. And so that's, that's always a hard situation, because it's like, you might be at fault. And it might not be something that like, was particularly like you could avoid, somebody said something offhand. And it upset the person, or something just didn't work the way it was going to because of some error, or whatever. And it's always hard, because maybe you couldn't impact that ahead of time, or you couldn't have foreseen that. But you might have to still apologize, and you might still lose that customer. So how do you respond in a situation like that, where you don't really have like that gratification of being able to solve their problems? I

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AJ Underwood 16:47

think there is a danger in believing this was out of our control. Now, with that being said, there are times where certainly the actions of an employee or something that that truly is, in that moment out of your control is out of your control. However, did the employee say something that they shouldn't have? Because they didn't get the proper training? Right? Did something happened because a process wasn't in place to potentially eliminate that error? Right. And so I think it can be dangerous for companies to go, I was nothing we can do about it. Right? When in reality, you truly can look towards what I have always called a root cause analysis. So in the instance, that the employee said something that the customer was upset about? Why did they say that? Were they having a bad day? Or did they not have the proper customer soft skills training, right? Maybe in that particular scenario, they didn't know how to respond to it. So what happens in a situation where you don't know how to respond, you shoot from the hip, right? You're making it up as you go along. And in those scenarios, you can find yourself in trouble and you can find yourself upsetting customers. So you know, or maybe, you know, there's a in our world software, maybe there is a bug or a glitch, something that truly was, quote, unquote, out of your control. But what what things can be implemented to pretend or to to prevent, rather, these things from slipping through the proverbial cracks. So it's important when you do field the negative complaint to not quickly dismiss it, to not quickly disregard it, to really take a look at what the individual was upset about, why that happened, what caused that thing, and then what corrective action could be put in to prevent that from happening again.

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Halie Morris 18:59

Now, in a case where an employee says something that is perhaps something they shouldn't have, whatever, whether it's an offensive remark, or it's they didn't know, so they

kind of pulled it off the cuff and it wasn't the right thing, right? How do you then go to your team member? And start that corrective notice, like whether it's a retraining or looking to see what gaps in their their education or their training need filled?

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AJ Underwood 19:27

Yeah, great question. So here at double A solutions, we have a product called a line phone systems that provides call recordings. So whenever I have to field some measure of a salesperson potentially said or didn't say something they should or shouldn't have on the phone, I actually have the ability to pull that call recording, and listen to it with the salesperson. So this gives us an opportunity to hear what was said, or what wasn't said together. Again, going back to the maybe we didn't know what to say maybe they were having a bad day, maybe they shot from the hip and just said, Whatever, whatever kind of first jumbled in came right? So you have an opportunity to listen to that together, reflect on it and then go, assuming it isn't a fireable offense, and then go now that you're not on the spot, now that you don't feel that heat lamp, how would you have reacted if this was said, and you got an opportunity in life to press pause, to think about a response, and then say said response, that gives them an opportunity to still kind of feel a measure of pressure that comes along with being a salesperson or a customer service representative. But it also gives them the ability to formulate a thought and go, Well, I should have said, or I would have said this. Now, the next time they field, something similar, we've now created a scenario through reflecting on that call recording of building muscle memory. The next time, customer says the thing that caused them to say the thing that they shouldn't have, they now can remember or channel back to the training that they experienced when they listen to the call recording, and respond appropriately. So through a means of listening to the call recording together, getting a chance to think about what we would have said or done differently the next time, the next time it happens, we can respond accordingly. Because we've practiced it, we've thought about it. And so to answer your question, the ability to listen to a call recording, you know, the many companies do they call it for quality assurance. But are they really using it for quality assurance, I think they can be used as a means of training to prevent these infractions from happening.

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Halie Morris 21:54

That's, I, you know, I was just talking up with a post that we're doing for a line today. And that was one of the things that we put in the copy is whisper coaching, call recordings, all of these things can help your team members feel more comfortable with their training help, as they run into these hiccups grow from them rather feel rather than feel like, Oh, I screwed up, like, they can't trust me, or I can't trust myself, or what do I do when I get on the phone, you know, making them feel more nervous, it makes them feel empowered,



and that they're supported in their role. Instead,

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AJ Underwood 22:28

it's human nature, the moment you feel proverbial, you know, the proverbial backed into a corner, right, we have that fight or flight, right. And so when we feel like we're backed into a corner, we can make the mistake of lashing out. But when you feel like even during a conversation, that the customer is potentially heated, if you feel like you have the knowledge, you feel like you have the de escalation abilities, and you feel like you have kind of the leverage in the conversation, you never feel like you're backed into the corner. So you're always clear of mind, sound of mind. And again, through some of the training that you can experience with whisper coaching or through reflecting on call recordings, you truly never find yourself from a customer service standpoint or a sales standpoint, backed into that corner.

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Halie Morris 23:18

There's a saying that everything in life is a negotiation. And I'm pretty sure that many people who watch YouTube can hear the ad plane in their head for I forget what it is. But I took a negotiations class, they said the same thing. And one of the things that you learn, if you take that mindset is that in a negotiation, you need to make the other person feel empowered. And as if they're the ones controlling the situation, or they're going to get defensive, and they're going to back out. And I feel like it's no different with your training and things like that. You're trying to help them get to a certain point where they can perform confident, confidently and comfortably in their position and do extremely well in it. And so if you're coming at them in the situation where you're having a conversation or a negotiation, if you will, and you don't give them their own leverage or their own empowerment, they're going to back out of it. And whether that's a defensive tactic, or they're just going to shut down and not take what you say to heart. It can be bad for your team overall and that person Sure,

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AJ Underwood 24:20

you have to take an empathetic approach. You know, going back to my airline days, you know, if we had a flight that was canceled, or there was a mechanical issue, and a young couple was going on their honeymoon. That was devastating, right. And so from an empathetic standpoint, you could go, how would I feel here, right, I would feel really frustrated. And so even though they may be upset, the last thing that we would want to do is match that intensity. And if we can approach every conversation or negotiation with an empathetic mindset, we can naturally de escalate something we can acknowledge

how frustrate writing something would be all the while providing some means of resolution.

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Halie Morris 25:05

Exactly. So kind of going off that if not all of your negative reviews are going to come from online or quiet feedback, or during a cancellation call, they might come in the form of somebody calling up your rep and yelling at them. How do you train for that? How do you train that person to take in that immediate form of feedback, all of that immediate fix, because that that is one overwhelming situation can put your rep in tears, it can get them riled up. And it usually strips away all that hard earned training. So how do you train them to handle a situation like that?

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AJ Underwood 25:41

Most of the time, the first thing that you have to remind somebody is the individual who is upset is not upset at you, personally, right? It's going to feel like that, because they're yelling at you, or they're upset at you. But they're not upset at you. Right. And so understanding that first and foremost, is a huge step to making sure that we then take the appropriate measures, after we have a chance to get a word in edgewise. Right? Number two is listen, listen to what they're upset about. Right, don't interrupt, let them say what they want to say. And a lot of times, you know, people tend to almost talk themselves in this in circles, or, as they are upset about something, they'll naturally because you're not interjecting, they'll naturally kind of circle back to maybe something wasn't as bad as they're making it out to be right. So you know, understand not to take it personally. Give them an opportunity to speak, listen, and then finally, respond, empathetically. So don't match their intensity. Do not argue don't become combative. Understood, acknowledge the frustrations, that would be a very frustrating scenario, what you've just described to me, right. And so now you have an opportunity from that point to go. Because there may be it just may simply be a misperception right, and you have an opportunity to go, I can understand how frustrating that would be you trying to do this thing and not being able to do it. So if you don't mind, maybe I can do a screen share with you and show you the workaround, or show you or you can show me what you're experiencing, right. And then they do that and you're able to resolve it. Sometimes you're not able to resolve it. Sometimes they've got a complaint, whether it's justified or valid or not. And you know, they're hitting the road, they're cancelling their parting ways. Those three things are still into into effect, right? Don't take it personally, listen, take an empathetic approach, they will walk away from that conversation, maybe still seething about the thing that didn't work. But your response, your approach may ultimately be the thing that brings them back one day, because they may find your competitor is not any better. Or they may find

flaws in your competitor or the next thing they move on to. And they may go You know what, nothing's perfect. But I liked the way that I was treated over here. So I think those three things exists still, whether you, quote unquote, win their business, keep their business lose their business, don't take it personally, listen, be empathetic.

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Halie Morris 28:32

Sometimes those situations, the product or the service is not even the problem. They're having other problems. And it's this one little tiny nuance of yours that set them off. And it's easier to direct their frustrations on your team members than it is to go home to whatever that might have actually frustrated with our own or in their own workplace or wherever it might be. So sometimes it's just letting them wind themselves down will be enough. or giving them space and time. Exactly. It's a very interesting situation. Because I think that negative feedback, wherever it may come from, if somebody is in love with a product or service they sell which sales reps I've learned and a customer service reps, they like to work with things that they trust and rely on that they would use themselves. And we practice that in house. But it's cool because then they have like, they feel comfortable. They feel bonded that product that service. And when it doesn't work the way you know, when it doesn't work the way they want. Or when something does happen. They might feel a little like, Oh, we let them down. So I have a feeling. So it can be hard. And then if somebody is yelling or negativity kind of bleeds out, just like a smile cans. It's one of those areas though, but you want to turn it around so that one you can respond to it and that hopefully in the long run, it can work for you because ultimately what you're trying to do It's not just driving new sales, but it's retaining those customers. So your customer retention is an employee retention. Because if you can retain your customers and keep them happy and have good training, you're going to retain your employees. But the customer retention is huge. And that can be the successor of business or not constantly bringing in new ones without retaining your existing ones. isn't going to last you too long.

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AJ Underwood 30:22

So attitude is everything. Right? So you're 100% correct. Salespeople, customer service representatives, we're usually really passionate about the thing that that we sell, or that we try to provide a means of support to, which makes it easier for us to be upset or take it personally or become argumentative. When somebody does something that we feel wronged us, because that's our product, that's our baby, and now you've wronged me. But attitude is everything. If you've ever been on the road, and you've been cut off by somebody, you have a couple options there, you can yell and scream and Honk your horn or brake check or do whatever you know, or you can go maybe they're having a medical emergency, right? That didn't change what just happened to you, you still got cut off, but

your attitude, your mindset changes how you approach the the infraction. So the same mentality can be used with somebody who is passionate about the thing that they sell, or the thing that they provide support to, they're going to feel wronged, they're going to feel that infraction when somebody is yelling at them or claiming their product or service is inferior, and you can yell and scream and get mad and, you know, proverbially, you know, the proverbial break, check. Or you can say, maybe they were having a bad day, or maybe there's something legitimately that we have to take a look at here and adjust. So not to sound cliché, but attitude is everything.

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Halie Morris 31:57

No, I agree. And it makes a difference with your own personal happiness, if you're dealing with that situation, that impact on you. If you can bring a more positive in attitude, it's going to keep you happier throughout your day, your work week, things like that. It's just it's a very again, interesting situation dealing with negative feedback. But it's also part of doing business is you can't make everybody happy. Not everybody is going to be your customer or your ideal customer, or it's just sometimes things happen. And it's how, how do you handle that? How do you respond? instead of reacting immediately to a situation? What do you do to stop, assess, and then move forward? And then how does that impact you long term because finding a short term response and not looking back and reflecting for the long term can also affect you negatively or not helping you? And that opened you up to the opportunities of potential? Because maybe this customer wasn't happy about a certain thing? There wasn't a feature? Or it wasn't compatible with something if you're selling a product or something? So Oh, is that something we could do? Could we open up an integration there? Could we open up the ability to do this? Is that something that works for us? Is there demand for it? Is that breaching a new market and connecting to new people?

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AJ Underwood 33:21

Absolutely. I mean, that goes back to the root cause analysis, don't be quick to dismiss or disregard a complaint, especially if there is a measure of pattern that develops with those complaints or with those negative reviews, you have an opportunity to take a look at the root cause what is causing these these complaints? And like you said, maybe it was a missing feature, right? So instead of, you know, quickly dismissing that go, Well, what would it take to provide this feature? Right? And so, yes, 100% to your point, don't be quick to dismiss, don't be quick to disregard, genuinely, in great companies, do this, genuinely take the feedback, good or bad from the customers and continue to build and grow and adapt?

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Halie Morris 34:06

Yeah, exactly. So going back a little bit to earlier in our conversation, we talked about being proactive. You talked about, you know, touching base with your customers throughout the entire process. And I've talked to somebody on employee retention and one of the things is, if the first time you know, your your employees leaving is when they walk out the door, then you've done something wrong, and I feel like is the same with your customers. The first time you know that they're unhappy is when they leave you, then what did you not do before then? And so what are some ways that you look to generate feedback, honest feedback from your customers, so that you can understand where they're at where they're their customer portfolios, but also how you're performing as a business?

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AJ Underwood 34:49

Sure. For for sales specifically, I think the number one area where you can gauge a measure of feedback is by requesting referrals. Right? Who else? Do you know? Who else do you believe could benefit from this product? And you can, you can usually gauge pretty quickly how they're feeling about the product, if they're like, Oh, yeah, I know. You know, I know, three businesses that could use this or I know somebody that could use this. reciprocally, they could come back with, I don't really think anybody could find a benefit from this, or I, I'm not really sure that anything I know anybody. So by asking for referrals, the ability to continue to from a sales perspective, you build your book and expand your portfolio, that's a huge way individuals will let you know right away, even if they don't come right out and say I don't like this, and I'm like this, and only this or you do this really great, or you do this really good. By simply asking for a referral or referral opportunity, you can genuinely gauge the temperature of how they feel about your product or service. So on the sales side, number one is referral. And then number two, is a just a call a check in how are things going? Is there anything that I can help you with? Do you have any questions? I encourage my sales team to always keep the conversations positive, how are things going? What's been your favorite feature so far? Right? And that keeps the conversation alive. They may say my favorite feature is x. But you know what? I've had a concern about why, right? And then you have the opportunity from a resolution standpoint to go well, here are the here's the answer, which is z. So I think just checking in, and I, when I say check in I mean, pick up the phone and have that human interaction or schedule a virtual meeting together, just even if it's for five minutes, 10 minutes, gauge the temperature of how they're feeling. And then keep it positive. What's been your favorite feature so far, something along those lines. So referrals and check ins,

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Halie Morris 36:54

it's interesting that you, you say that because I know, feedback forms, and just asking for reviews is a popular way that companies like to go. But the personal touch, like you said, it seems to be the most impactful and honest way, whether somebody might not if they're on the phone with you want to come right out and say, Well, I actually can't stand what this one features doing. But they might poke at it. And then you can, like you said, get to that root cause of what's going on before it becomes a bad review, or it becomes a complaint, or it becomes a bigger issue that affects how they interact with a product or service. So it's interesting because again, you said phone call, like make it a personal objective, make it a personal matter to connect with your customers, and get to know them makes a huge difference on how they feel to with your service, your service that you provide, like, you know what, it's not a perfect product, maybe I have a little something with my business, I wish it did a little more of this, that's common, everybody's business is completely different. Every individual is completely different. But they love interacting with your team. And overall the functionality is a plus. So they're probably going to be a lifelong customer.

A

AJ Underwood 38:07

Yeah, in sales, whether it's business to business or business to consumer, the individual you're selling to or the entity that you're selling to, they want to like you, they want to like your company, they want to like the things that your company stands for. And so there will always be, you know, things that maybe might not check all their boxes, or there may be some perceived, missing features, so to speak. But like you said, Every business is different. So it would be an impossibility to appeal to every single business. So how do you counter the lack of ability to appeal to every single business, it's building rapport, establishing a relationship, having that personal touch, and I know all of those things can sound cliché, but again, the consumer is never been more educated. And there are a lot of companies that you know, I want to fall short of using the word manipulate, but try to convince their customers or consumers to leave positive reviews. And those are very easily identifiable. If you go on to any site that has reviews, the five star reviews typically have no comments, right? Because a company said hey, if you leave a five star review, you get this and the one star reviews or the two star reviews have the comments. And so when you see an overwhelming all these five star reviews with no comments, and all these one or two star reviews with comments, it's easy to kind of weed through the nonsense and go Okay, well, I don't know if this is a company that I want to do business with. So it is dangerous to go, Hey, give us five stars and you get a \$10 credit. I think it's more important to build a rapport, build a relationship, have that personal touch, and then people will be more inclined to go to your site or to go to Google had to go to another website and go, you know, what Halie is really great to work with. I love working with this company. You know,

I'm not a big fan of this feature. I love this feature. But I'm now providing a positive review with my genuine feedback.

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Halie Morris 40:16

And that's, and that's what you look like, look for as a consumer is genuine feedback, because you might not like everything of it. But if you understand what you're getting into ahead of time, it gives you like, more comfort level, when things come up, or more comfort level with addressing those things. I've seen the five star reviews with no comments. I've also seen giant long paragraphs and tucked somewhere in there is a really large critique about they actually didn't like the product, but they kind of hit it in there because they wanted whatever incentive was given to them to provide a review that they didn't honestly believe so. And that can be detrimental. Because as soon as I see those, I'm like, I don't want this product. So Alright, I think that's it for my questions. Did you have anything else that you wanted to bring up that you think would be valuable for our listeners?

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AJ Underwood 41:04

No, I appreciate the opportunity to come and chat. I think the next big piece that employers have to tackle outside of customer retention is employee retention. And so that's probably another entire conversation. But there there really is a fine line between how companies are successful or retaining customers, and how companies are successful with retaining employees. And if you can be good at one, usually you can be good at the other, right? Because a lot of the same logic applies a lot of the same approach applies these empathetic approaches, you know, these the ability to listen, the ability to provide genuine feedback, etc. So I think great companies have both of those figured out, how do we keep our customers? How do we keep our employees and those companies are the ones that are thriving, pre pandemic, during the pandemic and ultimately post pandemic.

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Halie Morris 42:04

Exactly. I couldn't have said it better myself, and I don't think I know many who could. Thank you, AJ, for joining us today. And thank you everyone for tuning in for this episode. We'll see you next month.