

Customer Enthusiasm and Innovation in the B2B Industry

Does a company become more innovative by listening carefully to customers? Or does the customer merely guide us in a direction that should have been obvious all along? The demands placed upon products and services are increasing. The issue of cost is invariably a topic of central importance; well-educated, well-trained buyers will always bring this issue to the table, at the very latest following the conclusion of discussions on services or specifications.

This makes almost every customer relationship today an emotional roller-coaster, swinging back and forth between one's worst fears and unbridled enthusiasm. In this game, the seller and buyer need to be able to keep a cool head and reassess their own negotiating position at any time, but they must also be capable of entering negotiations with a clear strategy in mind.

There are three key questions that you should always ask yourself beforehand:

- What do our customers really expect from us?
- How can we (not just) meet these expectations, but exceed them as far as possible? Or at least fulfill implicit expectations?
- How can we be sure that our assumptions are correct?

Many customers may set great store by price, while performance or technical specifications may be defined precisely, but at the end of the day, only those who get more than they bargained for or receive more than they would have from a competitor will be truly happy.

How does this fit in with the idea of innovation? It's obvious that the expectations of customers in this respect will initially be much less clear-cut. You can't be truly innovative if all you do is eliminate flaws in existing processes.

What approaches can we consider from the customer's point of view that will enable their processes to become better, faster, more efficient and yet more cost-effective? Do you ask yourself this key question often enough and do you act on what the answers tell you?

- Do our products and services provide the customer and their processes with the best support possible?

And this is where the customer once again has a role to play. We can see here that customer enthusiasm and innovation go very much hand in hand. But innovation doesn't necessarily make a customer happy, and focusing on the customer doesn't necessarily bring about innovation. The trick is to keep check on both sides. Consider, on the one hand, how incremental changes can be achieved by means of small, seemingly insignificant improvements, and, on the other, how the product or service of the future should appear when we take a good look ahead.

We can only innovate successfully if we do so with the aim of making customers happy and by involving them early on.

Are customer enthusiasm and innovation important to you?

A chat with no obligation is always worthwhile! Benefit from expertise gained through 8 years of experience in consulting and 14 years of line experience. Advice based on experience and passion.

However, internal focus, driven by service engineers or product managers, frequently pushes the issue of unloading old baggage to the fore.



However, it is only possible to get really enthusiastic about something that truly is new. And to achieve this, you need to step into the customer's shoes and take a look at the world from their perspective.