

Don't Lose Your Customers

This perspective comes from [Pivot Point Solutions](#):

You can't lose what isn't yours. And if you recognize that your relationship with "your" customers is tenuous at best, you have a good chance of creating lasting bonds and keeping customers. Customers are transient. They are **supposed to be transient** in a free-market economy. In our Darwinian economy, only the strong should survive. In our economy we should want consumers to make the best purchases for them. I used to feel bad when I didn't "buy American" until I realized that American's don't buy American, they buy smart. Now **I only feel bad when companies think of their customers as entitlements**. Here are some surefire **ways to lose customers**:

- **Hammer them Like a Nail** – If your answer to dissatisfied customers is to run a public relations campaign trumpeting how much you've improved, you are on the wrong track and wasting money. **Customer satisfaction can be addressed only by improving customer service**. In the world of social media and connected buyers/consumers, the good news about service will spread. Without tangible customer benefits your PR campaign will seem like you view service as a marketing problem, rather than a service problem.
- **Treat Customers as an Inconvenience** – We focus a lot of time, energy, attention, study, research, and ultimately money on acquiring customers. Who can argue with an approach that lends itself to growing and building the business? Yet we invest very little on retaining those customers we worked so hard to acquire. If our acquisition message of "you are important" is to resonate and remain meaningful, we must **back it up with actions and deeds that shout "we still value you!"**
- **Create Processes that Benefit You or Your Company (but not the customer)** – I had a surreal experience recently when trying to pay off the balance on a loan with [Chase Bank](#). It took only a few minutes to get the loan. But paying it back required two (2) hours and the involvement of at least four (4) different departments (I stopped counting). Amazingly, Chase Bank had to verify that it was authorized to accept payment. I don't know about you, but when someone offers to pay me back, I don't ask where the money came from... I'm just happy to see it again. Now I'm beginning to understand why people think the banking system is broken. First it lent money to people who shouldn't have gotten any in the first place, and now it won't take the money back? Quite simply, **if your processes aren't benefiting customers, they are losing customers**.

The **Pivot Point** is that **"your" customers have choices**. And so do you. If you choose to ignore customers or erect barriers to their success they will take their business elsewhere. After all, **customers are yours only as long as you provide a benefit**.