

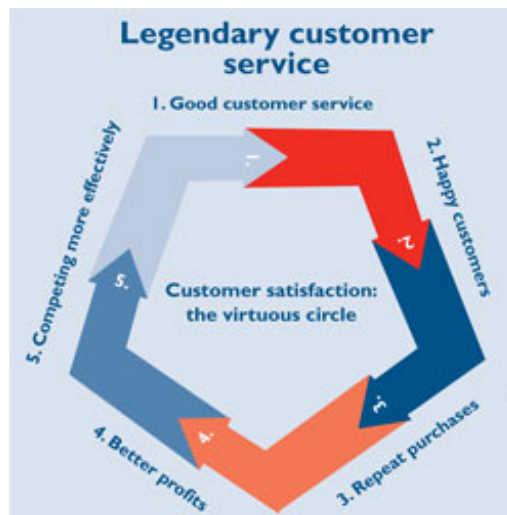
➤ The importance of excellent customer service

Why is customer service so important?

Customers of a business can be new ones, or current ones returning to buy more. The significance of good customer service can be shown in financial terms, as it costs at least five times as much to win a new customer as it does to keep a current one. Much of the profits of most businesses rely on repeat custom.

It costs as much to gain ONE new client as to keep FIVE existing ones

Portakabin may be the market leader, but if it had poor customer service, clients could switch to one of its rivals. The bulk of the company's profits come from repeat sales, so it is vital to keep clients content. This helps the business to compete. Due to the commitment Portakabin has shown in providing a first-class level of service, its service levels have become, in its own words, 'legendary'.



Customers can be either internal or external. Internal customers are people within the business who depend on other parts of it. For example, continued good sales (in the sales department) may depend on the quality of the product (in the production department). External customers are those who come to buy products. Portakabin knows that if its internal customers deliver excellent service, external customer service excellence will follow - each member of the business is able to contribute to better service. To this end, each department has been encouraged to create its own internal customer charter, and a first-class service is the target of all internal departments.

The Portakabin reputation is the direct result of a continued team effort to provide a level of service that is second to none.

The key to success in a competitive market is to provide a product or level of service that is unique - this is what differentiates one business from another. Portakabin stands out in the market because it provides unique Customer Charters that draw a clear line between its service and that of other firms. The key elements offered by Portakabin, and not by others, are embodied in a unique pledge which states:

* delivery or completion on time or, for hire customers, a week's free hire for every day they are late, or, for sales customers, an extended 6 month product warranty

- * a pledge to stick to the agreed contract sum

- * a 5-year product and 20-year structural warranty package on every new building purchased

- * full technical certification of the product.

Portakabin states these unique elements clearly in its Customer Charters.