

SECTION D

CUSTOMER POLICIES

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D.1. PUBLIC IMAGE

First impressions are lasting therefore nicenstripy Limited's aims are to maintain the highest standards at all times.

- ◆ Your vehicle should always be clean and driven in a courteous manner
- ◆ You and your staff should be appropriately dressed in your corporate attire at all times
- ◆ The standards of appearance of all should be high
- ◆ You and your staff should approach your customer in a friendly manner
- ◆ You and your staff should ensure that your customer has total satisfaction of a job well done
- ◆ Always clear up before you leave and ensure customers lawn and surrounding areas look in prestige condition.

D.2. PRICING AND TRADE DESCRIPTION

It is imperative that you ensure that your customer knows what they are going to receive and the cost of our service.

If your customer understands that the cost is different to that finally charged, you could have committed an offence under the Trade Descriptions Act 1968.

If you find that you have under-priced the service, then, generally, your customer must be allowed to purchase the service at the original price.

You are perfectly entitled to instigate price increases for services provided, but must ensure that all customers are made fully aware of such increases **before** any works are carried out.

If you receive any queries from a Trading Standards Officer (they should carry formal identification), you should give them every reasonable assistance, but also please report any visit from them to your Central Office.

Any verbal order given by your customer is a contract between them and nicenstripy, and those prices are not subject to increases. Therefore, it is essential that pricing errors are not made as they will naturally affect your profitability.

D.3. SERVICE AND COURTESY

nicenstripy Limited can proudly boast that its aim is:-

“never having to disappoint a customer”

Operational excellence and professional techniques provide the key to realising the full benefits in terms of service offering and value-added services which will drive nicenstripy "through the first decade and beyond!"

Underpinning all this is the "person-power", without which even the best systems come to grief.

nicenstripy Ltd recognises that for you to succeed for your own and your employees to benefit, you have to harness the potential of your employees; to win their hearts and minds and provide the essential training to equip them with the skills to meet the demands placed upon them.

You will reap most benefit when employees are encouraged to use their intelligence and knowledge to improve the quality of our service and operation.

Our responsibility is to liberate the wealth of untapped potential of staff who maintain customer relationships, giving them the respect their talents deserve.

**CUSTOMERS BELIEVE
IN HIGH QUALITY
SERVICE. THEIR
LOYALTY TO
nicenstripy IS BASED
ON THE PERCEPTION
THAT ALL OUR STAFF
EQUALLY SHARE THESE
VALUES.**

We should therefore always strive to focus on emphasising our qualities and strengths to our customers on each and every occasion they make contact with us and with every job undertaken.

Provided we continue to please, we have the basis for a relationship lasting for years, spanning all our extensive ranges of services offered.

**OUR OBLIGATION IS
TO PROVIDE VALUE
FOR MONEY, HIGHLY
PERSONALISED
SERVICE AND GOOD
OLD-FASHIONED
COURTESY AND
SHOW
WE CARE FOR OUR
CUSTOMERS**

D.4. INTRODUCTION TO CUSTOMER CARE

The phrase “Customer Care” came into being during the early 1980’s but because the phrase is so ambiguous we each have a different understanding of the definition.

Many would say Customer Care is the “trendy” word for providing a good service, some would argue that it is providing a quality product, others for community support and some would say it is providing education on how to use a product correctly.

One of the reasons that “Customer Care” is so misunderstood is the fact that all the above are correct! Real customer care is not just interest in selling the service but advising the customer of its correct uses so the customer will maximise the benefit of the service.

Customers, in today’s competitive market place, not only expect but demand quality of service and speed of response. They want to be looked after correctly and can afford to choose whoever can provide the best mix of produce and value added service.

nicenstripy believe that “Customer Care” is just as important as our Marketing Strategies and Service Quality. If everybody within nicenstripy exercises Customer Care within their sphere of operation we will be doing what everybody else talks about. Customer Care should be our “leading edge” within the market place.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER CARE

Companies spend many thousands of pounds advertising their products or services in an attempt to become brand leader or remain on top. Much of the advertising could be wasted if the most vulnerable but vital link, that between the customer and the person offering the service, is not made successfully.

Research has shown that a dissatisfied customer will tell at least nine friends and associates about it they in turn will tell others who in turn will tell more and so on.

The single most significant reason for this dissatisfaction was not necessarily whether the customers desired service was fulfilled or not, but more the attitude with which they were treated.

- Caring and showing you care, matters
- Good service is what people want and are prepared to pay a premium for
- Bad news travels fast - good news takes longer
- People are hungry for good service

BENEFITS OF CUSTOMER CARE

It must be remembered that there are three “parties” involved in customer care:

- i) Your Customer
- ii) nicenstripy
- iii) You

For Customer Care to work effectively all three parties must have a real understanding of the benefits for them of offering a high level of Customer Care.

A1. BENEFITS FOR THE CUSTOMER

- ⇒ Efficient and regular service
- ⇒ Being cared for and recognised as an individual
- ⇒ Finding out their requirements
- ⇒ Receiving a Pleasant Experience from each Visit
- ⇒ “No Worries” of standards of workmanship
- ⇒ Respect and Recognition

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A2. BENEFITS FOR NICENSTRIPY

- ⇒ Increased profits
- ⇒ Totally satisfied customers
- ⇒ Increased Sales
- ⇒ Customer loyalty and goodwill
- ⇒ Meeting customers' needs for better service
- ⇒ Good word of mouth publicity
- ⇒ Increased market awareness
- ⇒ Increased market dominance

A3. BENEFITS FOR YOU

- ⇒ Customers being pleasant to you
- ⇒ The satisfaction of doing a good job by using your skills and knowledge
- ⇒ The satisfaction of being pleasant to people and giving them what they want
- ⇒ Knowing you have done your best
- ⇒ More happiness, less stress
- ⇒ Satisfaction of seeing your customers satisfied
- ⇒ Increased Profits

**CUSTOMER CARE IS A
COMMERCIAL AND
PROFITABLE ACTIVITY**

BUILDING A CARING RELATIONSHIP

For us to continue to be successful it is necessary to build and retain goodwill. You need to ensure that when you leave your customers premises, you leave your customer feeling content and that you and the company have done everything possible to meet and exceed their requirements and needs.

In dealing with every customer you should take every opportunity to build on customer satisfaction and show concern for his or her needs. It is important to carry that through to and beyond the point where you say goodbye to the customer.

You need to try as hard to create the right last impression as you did for the first. You will want your customer to be left with a good impression, not only of nicenstripy, but also of you and your skills.

**CREATING A GOOD
LAST IMPRESSION WILL
HELP TO BUILD A
BETTER RELATIONSHIP**

CUSTOMER CONTACT

No matter what type of day you are having ALWAYS approach your customer with a smile!

When you are cheerful and happy the customer is more likely to respond to you in a positive manner.

**“A SMILE
BEGETS A SMILE”**

People have an image of nicenstripy and its service in their mind, created by advertisements they have seen, previous contacts and other information. If Central Office are spending money to ensure that the right image is present and that the customers see us as a professional organisation with an excellent service, it is vital this image greets the customer.

**“YOU NEVER GET A
SECOND CHANCE
TO CREATE A GOOD
FIRST IMPRESSION”**

Issue Number 000

The presentation of your service will influence sales by affecting peoples attitudes towards them.

Spend time and talk to your customer - show that you have a real interest in their requirements and make useful suggestions to improve on their needs.

Always leave a job clean and tidy.

Return all calls on your mobile as a matter of urgency each day.

Return all calls on your answer machine as a matter of priority each evening.



D.5. HANDLING CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

There are three things to acknowledge before we discuss how to handle a complaint:

- i) The reason there is a complaint is often because you, or your staff, have ignored the pages before this in the Customer Care section.
- ii) If handled correctly can be the best “selling opportunity” available.
- iii) Sometimes customers don't complain - they simply tell you that they no longer require our service.

There are many reasons why customers complain. You may be more sympathetic to some complaints than others, but all must be treated as genuine and handled in a polite and positive manner.

If handled badly, complaints can be unpleasant and upsetting for both you and the customer. Part of Customer Care is building a lasting relationship. Even the best relationships, however can suffer from time to time.

Often problems are caused by a breakdown in communications, failure to meet expectations or a simple misunderstanding. Whatever the problem they must be dealt with promptly and in a professional manner.

Customers who complain are actually doing us a favour as they give us a second chance to put something right.

Issue Number 000

It is very important to avoid arguing with customers who complain. They are already angry and upset. To argue with a customer will exacerbate the situation. Try to avoid justifying or making excuses from either you or the Company's viewpoint - the customer is not interested in hearing that - just how you will solve the complaint.

If you treat a complaining customer as a nuisance or an irritation, not only will you probably lose their business, but also quite likely that of several other relatives and friends associated with them, because bad news travels fast!

Clearly if a customer comes to you with a complaint, either about the quality of work, the service received from your employees or even just a general topic or point they want to make, in effect they are giving you a second chance to "get it right".

Provided you follow these laid down procedures in a civil and courteous manner, you should be able to satisfy even the most difficult customer and the satisfaction from having done so will be rich reward.

D.6. THE SIX STEPS TO HANDLING A COMPLAINT

A1. CUSTOMER CARE MEANS TREATING ALL COMPLAINTS SERIOUSLY AND COURTEOUSLY

Step One

LISTEN TO THE COMPLAINT FULLY

Do not interrupt, let the customer get it off their chest -
GET THE WHOLE STORY not just part

Step Two

CLARIFY THE PROBLEM

So it's the am I correct in my understanding?

Step Three

WAIT FOR AN ANSWER TO STEP TWO

if yes . . .

Step Four

IF I CAN SOLVE WILL YOU BE TOTALLY SATISFIED?

Step Five

WAIT FOR AN ANSWER TO STEP FOUR

if yes . . .

Step Six

SOLVE THE PROBLEM

Issue Number 000

WITH COMPLAINTS

- i) Keep Calm
- ii) Listen Attentively
- iii) Apologise
- iv) Don't Argue Or Make Excuses
- v) Establish The Facts
- vi) Find A Way To Resolve The Problem
- vii) Keep The Customer Satisfied
- viii) **NEVER** Raise Your Voice Or Loose **Your** Temper



D.7. TELEPHONE TECHNIQUE

Remember the telephone is not just a communication device but a Marketing Tool also.

You should leave your answerphone on at all times and ensure that your message is friendly, but professional, clear and concise.

Correct use of the telephone is a most important technique to be mastered in effective selling, second only to that employed in face to face dealings with our customers.

It is however, so often the one which lets us down above all else.

When actually with a customer face-to-face, we know that it is important to maintain a helpful courteous approach. One step removed however from direct contact with a customer, and into a 'take it or leave it' attitude can soon creep in; unless measures are taken to ensure that this does not occur.

The answer is of course, to instil in your staff and management at all times the importance of understanding and adopting the nicenstripy Limited's style of "telephone technique".

You must constantly ensure that your "effective selling" technique stretches far beyond the boundaries of standing directly in front of a customer.

D.8. OPERATING HOURS

**nicenstripy LIMITED'S POLICY
IS TO BE OPEN FOR BUSINESS AS
A MINIMUM BETWEEN
8.00 AM AND 5.00 PM,

THESE HOURS MAY BE
EXTENDED DURING THE
SUMMER MONTHS.

MONDAY TO FRIDAY
INCLUSIVE.**

As mentioned elsewhere, all operations such as cleaning, general maintenance, repairs, etc., should preferably take place outside of these hours except where unavoidable.

D.9. SERVICING AND MAINTAINING EQUIPMENT

A. INTRODUCTION

All equipment should be regularly serviced to ensure it's smooth operation.

On a regular basis mowers should be serviced to keep them in peak performance.

In between, however, there is much that can be carried out by you and your team to maintain the equipment in good working order.

B. MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

nicenstripy Limited would recommend that the following maintenance programme be strictly followed to avoid any costly servicing repairs.

C. EQUIPMENT

All the equipment and tool box etc. should be off loaded and the equipment thoroughly cleaned and then oiled in the appropriate places.

C1. MOWERS

Oil **MUST** be checked each and every day before use. Top up of oil should be made immediately the oil level falls below the manufacturers recommended limits.

C2. STRIMMERS

The filter should be cleaned on a weekly basis.

C3. BLOWERS

The filter should be cleaned on a weekly basis.

C4. HEDGE CUTTERS

Blades should be sharpened when required and a full service once a year should be adequate.

C5. CHAIN SAWS

Chain saws are probably the most dangerous pieces of equipment used and should always be kept in prime working condition. Ensure the blades are sharp, are at the correct tension and there is chain oil in the machine, whenever the machine is in use.

Any observations regarding the performance of the equipment should be noted. Where necessary, any reoccurring defaults in equipment should be notified to Central Office.

D. TOOLS

You should inspect the tools to ensure that each is working to the specified manner (this is very important for electrical equipment).

You should also take this time to carry out a stock check on tools, mowers etc and ensure each is fit for its job.

If any tools are missing you should advise the staff member so that a replacement can be made within 24 hours.

Please pay specific attention to mowers and strimmers, particularly in relation to Health and Safety.

E. VEHICLE

You should also take time to inspect the vehicle to ensure that:

- ▣ tyres comply to requirements
- ▣ the exhaust is doing its job
- ▣ the vehicle is without any dents
- ▣ generally in a road worthy condition

Please also note the vehicles mileage on each inspection and forecast when it is likely to require its' regular service.

There may be times when you carry out spot checks on a vehicles mileage, especially on a Friday if your staff are not working at the weekend.