



# Creating a Great Customer Experience

## In Ten Easy Steps

# Improving the Customer Experience in Ten Easy Steps

With the huge rebirth of “Word of Mouth” marketing that has resulted from the evolution of social media; the success of your business depends on the customer experience now more than ever before. Ideally, you want to build an ongoing relationship with the customer, because if the customer is engaged, he or she will be more likely to buy your wines and refer friends to you in the future.

## **What do customers expect from you? They expect:**

1. Quality
2. Knowledge
3. Attention, and
4. Value

In the tasting room, you want to design an experience that will ensure your visitors come back for more. On the web, you want to design the shopping experience such that you minimize the risk of abandoned carts. So how do you design an experience to meet those expectations? These are our top ten suggestions.

### **1. Research**

You should research both your customers’ needs and the customer experience your winery delivers.

Think about your customer's expectations. What have they heard about you and what do you believe their perceptions are? With that information in hand, try being your own secret shopper. Look at everything through the eyes of the customer.

Where do you see room for improvement? Do your employees have the same perception of customer expectations that you do?

### **2. Work to Meet or Exceed Expectations**

How do you do that? You do that by providing such thorough detail that you leave no room for risky assumptions. Armed with plenty of information about your wines, a specific offer, or what they can expect when visiting your tasting room, customers should have expectations that are aligned with what you offer. And remember, expectations can change as a result of social trends, innovations and the economic environment, so you will need to continue to work to make sure they're aligned with your offering.

## Tip

Try using surveys to measure the gap between expectations and experiences.

### 3. Surprise and Delight

Most luxury firms understand this. Your high value customers need to be treated right, meaning you'll want to go a step above and beyond to create an extraordinary experience for them. Look for opportunities to surprise and delight. What can you do to say "you're special?" This is where a robust database comes in handy. You might try using it to send personalized "thank-yous" to people who've visited your tasting room in the last few days. Make sure they go home with a positive impression of your winery!

### 4. Eliminate Roadblocks

On your website, make it super easy for your customers to get from point A to point B by removing any unnecessary steps. Can they get from the homepage to your wine shop in one step? And what happens when they get there? If a wine is "sold out", don't let it be the first thing they see. If they click through to a product, how difficult is it for them to get back to the category they were on?



*On your website, eliminate any roadblocks preventing customers from getting where they need to be.*

### 5. Nurture Your Prospects

They may not be ready to buy from you now, but at some point they will be. Or, they may have friends who are future top customers for you. Try to remain top of mind by using tools such as email and social media to stay connected. When they're ready to purchase, make sure they think of you.

### 6. Focus on Delivery

By "delivery", we're referring to your wine shipments. Again, make sure you meet or exceed expectations. Are your shipping policies easy to find and clearly outlined on your website? What states do you ship to? Are you holding shipments due to weather? If yes, make sure your customers are aware and make sure you've provided alternatives. For example, you may want to offer a free upgrade to express shipping.

Do you include follow up material with your shipments, such as invitations to winery events, or a special offer on reorders?

Finally, once the wine has been received, try sending an email thanking your customer for the purchase and requesting feedback (i.e. you could ask her to come back and rate your products on the website.)

### 7. Always Exhibit Customer Appreciation

Remember that marketing and relationship management continues long after the sale, so be sure that you continue to meet or exceed expectations. Who are your best customers and how do you reward them? Of course, customer appreciation isn't limited to just your top buyers.

Your goal is to create a relationship with each one, build loyalty, and ultimately turn that customer into a lifetime customer.

And don't forget to stay in touch. This doesn't mean that you should bombard your customers with offers; sometimes a simple "we appreciate your business" will do.

## Meet or Exceed Expectations

Remember that marketing and relationship management continues long after the sale

### 8. Be Responsive

You should always answer customer inquiries right away (i.e. on the same day.) Your customers want to feel that they are important to you, so make them feel like they are being heard and acknowledged.

### 9. Give Customers a Place to Share Their Stories

Do you use ratings and reviews on the website? You might consider creating an online photo gallery which is populated with pictures taken with or submitted by visitors. You can also send visitors to your Facebook page and ask them to share stories and photographs there.

### 10. Collect, Measure, and Analyze

Monitor customer comments in social media, on your website, and through email and have a plan in place for acting on that feedback. Do you share it with all of your employees? How do you act on it?

Track sales (new sales, repeat sales, and club signups), track customer purchasing habits and preferences. You'll use this information for data mining.



## About WineDirect

An effective direct sales program requires revenue-driving marketing and sales programs, software solutions which provide control and visibility into what's going on in your business, and a fulfillment partner you can rely on.

Founded in 2002, WineDirect offers a full suite of services to ensure your success in the direct sales channel. Our services are available either as an all-in-one solution or a la carte. The choice is yours.

1. An industry leading eCommerce platform to drive direct sales
2. Sales and marketing programs to build incremental revenue and customer loyalty
3. Software solutions to manage and run a successful direct sales program, whether online or in a tasting room
4. Software solutions for a winery's business transactions (ERP)
5. Software solutions for a winery's compliance management
6. Seamless and cost effective fulfillment services to deliver satisfied consumers

**Contact us today to learn how WineDirect's full suite of services will help you see more wine! 800.819.0325**

**800.819.0325**