



Consumers: don't get mad, get what you want

By: Ben Popken NBC News

Customers are angrier than ever and no wonder: they're losing. The good news is with a few inside tips, they can get the satisfaction they deserve.

According to the 2013 Customer Rage Survey, customers are complaining more since 2011. And the tables have tipped: more than half the time consumers complain, they don't get results.

But as long as you have a reasonable complaint, there's no reason to just sit back and take it.

The four key consumer frustrations cited in the report -- too few customer service reps, too many automated phone menus, spending too much time dealing with the problem, and having to contact the company four times to get a result -- each have solutions.

You can't change companies, but you can change how you approach them.

Too many automated menus

We've all been there. You call the company and get a recording saying, "Thank you for calling. To better assist you, please listen to the following menu of options. Press 1 for accounts, 2 for billing, 3 for services..." You push a number and then get a new list of options. That leads to yet another level and then you find out you're somehow in the wrong menu and have to start over again. When that happens, check out [GetHuman.com](#). It publishes secret phone numbers and which numbers to push to get a real person on the phone the fastest. For example, when dealing with Bank of America, press "0" at the first few prompts, then press "1" each time after when it asks for a "valid selection."

Too few customer service reps

Why wait on hold? If you've tried and failed through normal routes, try directly emailing the executive team or calling up an executive's secretary. Don't forget to be nice, even if you're angry. Especially if you're angry.

Spending too much time dealing with the problem

State as clearly and succinctly as you can what's wrong and how you want it fixed. "My service doesn't work and I'd like you to fix it for free" gets results faster than a shaggy dog story. Stick to the basic facts that matter. Don't enumerate every perceived disappointment.

Having to contact the company four times to get a result

Do the above and you won't have to contact customer service four times. Maybe only twice. Or even just once! A post to a company's Facebook or Twitter feed is also a great way to expedite an issue. Nothing cures frozen customer service like a little public sunshine.



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