

## The Empowered Entrepreneur Show

### Episode 038

<https://empoweredentrepreneurshow.com>

- Intro: Welcome to the Empowered Entrepreneur Show. Discover your life's purpose, reprogram your mind for success, and attract an abundance of paying clients to your business. Now here's your host, Tom Tenaglia.
- Tom Tenaglia: Aloha empowered entrepreneur. I am Tom Tenaglia and you're listening to the Empowered Entrepreneur Show. And today I want to talk about giving customers a consistent message. So, a few episodes ago I had shared with you some ideas about listening to your customers and paying attention to what are the subtle things, what are the consistent things that various customers might be saying? The reason why we need to give our customers a consistent message is it comes down to reputation of your business, it comes down to the more the customer can expect something from you and they get it and the more customers can expect that, you tend to benefit from word of mouth and you tend to benefit from your message getting out there. The other thing is people tend not to understand that your business is who the customer sees that they're interacting with.
- Tom Tenaglia: So, if you do have multiple people working on your team, ensuring that they're giving a consistent message is going to be key because it's the business. So, if you really want to benefit from business growth, then consistency becomes a key player there. So, for example, if a retailer says, "Hey, there's free shipping" and the free shipping is a reasonable time period. It's not the cheapest, that's going to take three weeks to get to you, but it's a reasonable time period. Then you grow to expect as a customer that free shipping option number one and the delivery date number two. But if you say free shipping, free two-day, three-day, four-day shipping, and your product shows up a day late, then it starts to ruin the reputation of the company.
- Tom Tenaglia: I had a company I bought something from and it was same day arrival. And what's funny is it said, same day arrival for six out of the seven items and the seventh item was going to arrive by 8:00 AM the next day. I'm like, "Okay, cool. No problem. That's fantastic." Well, funny enough, later that evening they said, "Hey, we're running late. We'll get you an updated delivery date when we know, but the item that was scheduled to arrive 8:00 AM the next day that the day before, and I placed the order thought, okay fine, I can wait for that. That one showed up on time and the remaining items didn't show up until much later. And so I was like, "Well, this whole same day arrival thing doesn't really work for me because I'm after the reliability and the credibility of what it is that company is saying."
- Tom Tenaglia: Then all of a sudden, "Well, now I know. Now I know that same day may actually not be as reliable as next day morning." So, it's under-promise and over-deliver and not the other way around. It's not over-promise and under-deliver. The more you can under-promise and over-deliver, the better. If you have to reschedule an appointment. One reschedules, two reschedules might be fine, but the reality of it is if you thought that you weren't going to be able to do it

for three weeks out, then you have to just tell the person, "Hey look, I'm not going to be able to meet with you for three weeks out. There's a chance that it could be sooner. If that occurs, I'll check with you and see if you have some free time. If not, let's just schedule for three weeks out."

Tom Tenaglia: And you set expectations and if you bring the date in, bring the time of the appointment in, then it's very rewarding to the customer. People's calendars are full. It's a lot better than setting expectations for something and then pushing it out constantly and changing the date or changing the time or whatever. So, the other thing is back to that same restaurant that I had talked about in a few episodes ago, the consistent message between the people working there. I had gone in, I had asked for an item, and the person behind the counter said, "Oh, you know what? We can give you this." And I said, "I thought there's an upcharge for that?" And he said, "No, no, no. Not this particular kind. This particular kind doesn't have an upcharge."

Tom Tenaglia: I said, "Okay, well if that's the case, that's fine." So, I go back consistently every other day to pick up these meals and for three or four consecutive trips, different people there said the same thing. "Yes, this particular kind of item does not have an upcharge." I'm like, "Okay, cool." The next time I go, so all within the course of a week, they said, "Oh yeah, even this one has an upcharge. In fact, this one's even more expensive to us because of X, Y, Z. Therefore we have an upcharge on it." I'm thinking to myself, so the person behind the counter who told me, "No, you can get this because it's free" is now at direct odds with the person who's telling me, "Yeah, you can get it, but you got to pay for it." And I was trying to explain to her, "Well, they told me I could have it before."

Tom Tenaglia: And the lady said, "Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. If you want it, you can have it. We'll give you as much of it as you want, but you pay for it." People who know me know how generous I can be and know how I'll tip out the wazoo. I bought a gift card, I think for \$100 and I tipped the people selling me the gift card 30 bucks, which is interesting because when you use the gift card, you're supposed to tip then. So, I'm like 75 cents for an upcharge is not an issue here. The issue is the consistency in the message. The issue is, I was trying to explain to her, I know the person behind the counter is the one that said, go this route, this item is free. And so they brought the manager out and I was explaining this.

Tom Tenaglia: I don't think he picked up on that per se, but I said, "I totally get it. If that's the case, if this is high-quality stuff and if that's what you're doing and that's the charge, great. I'm just surprised that these other folks didn't know that because it's probably a rare thing for you to ask for this specific item. I don't know how much staff you have, but it seemed like half of them didn't know." And he said, "Well, I'll send a message out to the crew to let them know that even this one has an upcharge." And I said, "Dude, I'm game for that. I just want things to be consistent."

Tom Tenaglia: Now, that could be my issue. If I dug into it, if I had a problem with it, yeah, I could do some release work around it. But I looked at it and I'm like, I didn't have a problem with it. I just wanted to know upfront, Hey, is there a charge for this or not? Because surprises in that regard seem to be a little bit off. It's like, well sometimes you're telling customers yes and sometimes you're telling your customers no. So, which is it? And he said he would clarify it and I said, "Okay, cool. No problem. Totally get it." And then he looked down at the counter and the product was there and he said, "Is this yours?" And I said, "I mean, I had asked for it, but I don't need it because there's the upcharge." And he said, "No, no, no. Take it. Take it this time. We already packaged it for you and everything."

Tom Tenaglia: And I said, "Well, I really, really appreciate that." See, I wasn't arguing with him. There was somebody behind me in the line and I felt really bad for him though. I was trying to apologize, but he wasn't really paying attention to me either. He was just like, "Why is this guy arguing over 75 cents?" It was a much bigger ... first of all, that's my perception of it. Maybe he wasn't even thinking that. But the look on his face, my interpretation of it, was kind of like, "What is going on here?" So, anyway, I just said to the manager, "Yeah, let's just be consistent." And he's like, "I get it. You want one price for what you buy on a consistent basis."

Tom Tenaglia: I'm like, "Absolutely." And of course in my previous episode where I talked about, well, if that's the case, and a lot of people do actually get an upcharge. Like, if 80% of your customers have an upcharge, that's a clue to say roll that price into the price of the product. I mean, it just fascinates me because nobody wants to look at a menu, see a price, and then be surprised when they check out. I don't know. It's a fascinating way of doing it. "Oh, well we have to charge it because of the ..."

Tom Tenaglia: Look, I don't care. Include it in the price because it's all on that customer perception and what it is that you want to achieve. So, rather looking at what is it that you're giving, what is it that you're able to get by shopping there?

Tom Tenaglia: I mean, I dated somebody who kept saying, "Oh, I go to this particular home goods store because they have a lifetime warranty on their products. You can bring anything back at any time. Oh, I go to this particular wholesale store because they have the same thing. I can bring it back for any reason at any time." Yeah, there are people that abuse return policies, I think. For things that have store memberships, well that's an easy thing that you can handle. You can put that into the membership agreement and stuff like that. So, you can have a form of a boundary. I don't like to pay restocking fees.

Tom Tenaglia: Maybe if there's reasons why I would have to pay a restocking fee or not, but it's one of those ... I rarely would return stuff for the longest time. And then it started becoming about what is it that I want as a customer? What is it that I

expect as a customer? And then I started watching someone that I used to date who would buy stuff, try stuff out, take stuff back that she didn't end up wearing or anything like that, and keep the stuff that she liked. It's like, that's one way to do it. To me, that takes a lot of time. I'd rather buy the thing that I need at the time that I need it. But it requires you to know what you need. Anyway, the point is consistency amongst team members talking to customers, consistency amongst messages that you're giving customers.

Tom Tenaglia: So, everybody should get the same thing. It's fascinating because in the same restaurant, one of the items was an avocado and they used to give half an avocado in a particular meal and I saw this lady cut the half avocado and then cut it again and was giving a quarter. And I asked her, "I thought it was a half an avocado?" And she said, "Well, we got bigger avocados in, so it's a quarter now. It's the same amount of avocado, it's just a bigger avocado." I'm like, "Oh, okay. When did that start?" Actually, at the beginning, she said, "No, it's a quarter." And I was like, "Wait, when did that start? Because I've been coming for a week consistently." And she said, "Just recently when we got the last batch." And I'm like, "Okay, what was different about the last batch?" She's like, "Oh, they're bigger avocados. So, you're getting the same amount, just a different portion of the avocado, but it's the same actual amount of avocado." I'm like, "Okay, cool."

Tom Tenaglia: It also seemed like, "Well look, if you're going to give half an avocado, be consistent with the half avocado. If you're not giving half avocado, then you might be giving two ounces avocado so you're consistent by weight or you're consistent by volume." I would see the same place that, if you took it to go, you got a two-ounce container of a side, but if you had it in the store, there was no way of measuring. They didn't measure the ounces to put in the mixing bowl. So, very inconsistent. They did, however, weigh a number of things on a scale, like the meat to make sure they were consistent with portion sizes there.

Tom Tenaglia: So, it's all perception and I do the best I can to look at it and go, "Okay, is this me? Is this something I have to release? Is there an issue here or is it a boundary or is it something that I just expect from a company I do business with?" And also because I make podcasts on entrepreneurial things, I pay attention to these things and one of my asks of the universe at times is, "Well, let me have an experience that is positive and still works out pretty well that also gives me an idea for an episode." So, these ideas show up and then I look at it and go, "Well, that's a podcast idea." So, it's what can we learn from this experience? What can we learn from the consistency in the messages? Consistency amongst people on the support staff, for example. There are times where I'll respond to a support ticket that I'm a customer of and it's obvious that somebody else picked up the ticket but didn't read the thread of the ticket.

Tom Tenaglia: That's just lazy, to be honest. So, they're responding to me that something that is totally irrelevant to the actual thread. They're giving a basic answer. I'm like, "Are you paying any attention whatsoever to the experience of the customer?"

## The Empowered Entrepreneur Show

Episode 038

<https://empoweredentrepreneurshow.com>

And for the most part a lot of people kind of miss out on that. Yet, we're aware of it when we are the customer. So, a common theme here is treat your customers the way you would want to be treated as a customer to some degree. Consider. It's a nice litmus test. It's not a black and white thing. It's not an always or never thing. It's a consider the experience of the customer and what you're doing. So, if you do have to enforce a boundary, how can you do it from your heart? How could you do it in a way that leaves the customer feeling pretty good?

Tom Tenaglia:

I worked in customer service at one point and my boss at the time she said, "Look, you don't have to know the answer to everything somebody comes up to you and asks you, but they should be able to leave with more information than what they had and information that helps them get closer to the answer as opposed to no, I can't help you with that." Can you give them something that gets them closer? Okay, no I can't, but if you go down to this office on this particular day, then you can ask for XYZ and you can go from there. All of that stuff continues to help. So, I hope you enjoy thinking these things through and paying attention because it is the small things that make a big difference in your business and giving a consistent message, having your people give a consistent message, and being consistent with your customers, and ultimately consistent with yourself is going to help you grow your business by leaps and bounds. So with that, Aloha; a hui hou. I'll talk with you again soon.

Outtro:

Thank you for listening to the Empowered Entrepreneur Show.