

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Bakalářská práce

2013

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**CUSTOMER SERVICE AT AN AMERICAN
COMPANY BASED IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC
WITH COMMENTARY AND GLOSSARY**

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Fakulta filozofická

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Studijní program Filologie

Studijní obor Cizí jazyky pro komerční praxi

Kombinace angličtina- francouzština

Bakalářská práce

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Plzeň 2013

**Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracovala samostatně a
použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.**

Plzeň, červenec 2013

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Děkuji vedoucímu bakalářské práce Aloku Kumarovi, M.A, M.B.A za pomoc a podporu při zpracování . Dále bych chtěla poděkovat rodičům za jejich podporu a trpělivost během mého studia.

I would like to thank Mr. Alok Kumar, M.A, M.B.A for his help and support. I would like to thank my dear parents for their support and patience during my study.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Customer service is non-price competition of recent years. Loyalty of preferred and favorite companies depends on fact how much they care for the customer. Companies need to be customer oriented rather than producer oriented if they want to succeed in this competition. Without excellent customer service, business cannot be done these days because it is its integral part.

This bachelor thesis deals with types of customer service focused on a branch of American company found in the Czech Republic – McDonald's. The following deals with behavior and attitude with the customer and an interaction with them. There is a description on franchising with its advantages and disadvantages. Including how franchising works at McDonald's and what needs to be done before an applicant can start with his own business.

Types of communication with customers show the right way to help customer and expose customers' wishes and desires. One of the important subchapters is targeting on the customer that shops online, a growing trend today.

2. CUSTOMER SERVICE GENERALLY

When people imagine the phrase customer service, they often think of bored, not caring, unpleasant and sometimes rude staff. After side they are pleasantly surprised when they get help, smile and a kind attitude and it makes them tell their friends. [1]

Most of the salesmen don't realize that people are in the role of customers many times. For example at the doctor, at the post office, in the shop, at the bank and at the car service. If customers are not satisfied with attitude to them, they have an option to go somewhere else. My point is that an average service will be soon forgotten and no one would like to use it.

So if salesman would like to be successful, he needs to remember all this and the fact, that he needs to start his customer service in basic small details that creates a whole. We can divide these details in 2 main categories. [2]

1.1. First impression

It is naturally fixed in people that the first impression to the customers is very important. This applies even in the case of online or telephone communication. There are many details that make the whole impression.

First of all is the appearance of the salesman:

- Kind and positive attitude to customers,
- Eye contact, smile, head high, friendly expressions,
- Well-fitted clothing corresponding with the type of business,
- Clean clothes and shoes, professional outward. [3]

1.2. Courtesy

Since we were children we were told to say “thank you” and “please”, and as an apology to say “I am sorry” - people accept this and react positively. These skills are important for getting along with customers in business more than anyone can imagine. People will certainly appreciate it. Politeness is also honored in a conversation and polite phrases make a salesman a real professional. Using literary language. A salutation with “Sir” or “Madam” or even the person’s name, if known, shows the customer, that the salesman really cares about him. [4]

Adding kind words to conversation, dealing with customer as not just a number but as a unique person is also very useful. It makes the customers pleased, so they will use your services again and tell their friends.

This is best expressed in the following quote:

“They have wants, needs, and desires, and we as business owners need to make sure that our products, services, and messages can deliver on all that.” [5]

On the other hand, dealing with customers in a kind way while providing bad service is pointless.

1.3. Dealing with customers

Good looks and a kind attitude alone will not satisfy a customer. *Service needs to be compact:*

“1. A perfect product

2. Delivered by a caring, friendly person

3. *In a timely fashion*

. . . *with (because any of those three elements may misfire)*

4. *The support of an effective problem resolution process” [6]*

First two points were already mentioned, points number three and four represent dealing with the problems, tasks and questions from customers. Salesmen need to count with importance of these points and they have to be able to solve it quickly.

When there is a problem that the salesman cannot solve quickly or he needs few days to manage it, there is a good way to answer the customer in a polite way, to tell to customer that this problem needs couple of days to be solved and ask for his patience. This attitude shows the customer that the salesman really cares about his problem and he is working on fixing it. [7]

Dealing with customers is very closely connected with appropriate language. It shows your skill level of solving problems and answering questions.

“Language is crucial to how a customer experiences your business, which makes it a critical element of your brand. It’s the next stop on our itinerary.” [8]

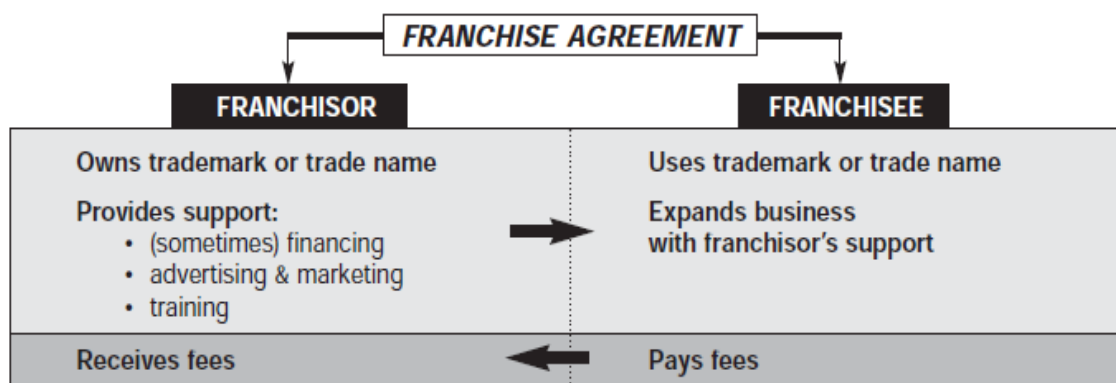
Better customer service can also be reached, when employees anticipate needs of customers, not just solve situation when it happens.

“That is the difference between providing ho-hum service by merely reacting to customer requests and building loyalty through true anticipatory service.” [9]

This statement goes hand in hand with the intuition. But an intuition does not mean uninformed decisions, but on the contrary be informed and follow your instincts. [10]

2. FRANCHISING

A common form of business model for American companies. Franchise is a deal or licensed business between two parties. **Franchisor** (owner of trademark) gives the right to use this trademark to **franchisee** (a person or group of people). Franchisee pays to franchisor fees for the rights (flat rate or percentage of sales), franchisor provides support, training and rights to franchisee. [11]



Picture n.1

(source: Intro to Franchising, p. 1)

2.1. History of Franchising

History of franchising goes back to 1950s in the USA. There was a huge increase of franchise of McDonald's mostly in 1960s. Lately, McDonald's expanded to the world. This is marked as a second boom in history of franchising. Success in international extension is clear because of knowledge on a national basis. [12]

2.2. Types of Franchises

There are two most important elements with franchising, product distribution and business format.

A product distribution is the simple relationship between supplier and the dealer which the franchisor provides his logo and trademark to franchisee. Typical types of this franchising are gas stations, soft drink distributions and automobile dealers. [13]

A business format of a franchise does not include only the product and the trademark, but also manuals and plans. This type is the most common franchise. Types of this franchising are fast foods, restaurants, service, automotive etc. [14]

2.3. Advantages and disadvantages

It is good to know advantages and disadvantages before running your own business and purchasing one. I have chosen just a few of the most important:

Advantages are:

- Running business for yourself, not by yourself.
- Franchise is provided with a space for your own operation in business.
- Franchisee gets well known brand.
- Chance to success in business because of known products and technology. [15]

Disadvantages:

- Not complete independence, franchisees are under the supervision of franchisers.
- Limited duration of franchisee, difficult in terms of a termination. [16]

2.4. Conditions for getting McDonald's franchisee

McDonald's is world's best known company with family-style philosophy. They have over 31,000 restaurants located in 120 countries, it means serving food and drink to almost 1% of world population (over 44 million people). We can say that McDonald's is restaurant for everyone, for all types of socio-economic and demographic areas. [17]

- Of total 31,730 restaurants are:
- 6,900 operated by the company,
- More than 20,300 operated by franchisees,
- About 3,960 operated by affiliates. [18]

And here is a chance to start your own franchise, which is a key to success of McDonald's. Every franchise can contribute to the success of McDonald's brand, for example Big Mac, Egg McMuffin have been formed by franchisees in the world. [19]

First of all it is important to submit an application, this is the first step, applicants will get answer by e-mail with result. If applicants get positive response, they are invited for a meeting with a Franchising manager. Then the applicants are asked to work at McDonald's for three days, this experience will give the applicant a closer look on how it all works. For those applicants who have worked well there is a final interview with the Managing Director, who ultimately decides whether to start training or not.

This training is in length of nine months full-time. [20]

After successful completion of the training and after McDonald's decides whether the applicant's discretion and opinion is suitable to open his own franchise, the applicant is offered to manage his own franchise business. [21]

Franchise cost vary, it means the offer is specific to every successful applicant. Estimated cost is about \$5 million and depends on:

- Size of the restaurant,
- Pre-opening expenses,
- Signage,
- Inventory,
- Seating and style of decor,
- Equipment,
- Location,
- Landscape. [22]

Every applicant must have at least 35% of money or property of final price. McDonald's does not provide any financing or loans and no other parties are allowed to be a part of this business. [23]

Every successful applicant needs to count with the fact, that McDonald's has the final word where to open the business, it is not possible to open it wherever you want to. McDonald's videlicet requires geographical flexibility. [24]

This might be an issue especially in the Czech Republic, where there is no tradition to move because of a job. It is a challenge for all of Europe. Multiple languages, many different cultures and various traditional lifestyles.

3. COMPARISON OF EUROPE AND THE USA

The main difference between companies in Europe and in the USA is in research and traditions. About two thirds of restaurants in Europe are based on family style mostly with three employees holding their traditions, they are not willing to spend more time behind the desk. It means they do not invest their time and money to research, doing statistics and market information that shows evolution in this industry and new trends. [25]

US companies are more active and it also brings success, they are flexible in adaptation to customers and to local preferences which also includes menu offerings. There are always changes being made, if needed. There are of course some geographic variations next to substantially uniform menu and also a variety of time limited promotions. [27]

Expansion of these companies to the world, especially in fast food industry brought a few problems in menu offerings and meal names. Some countries might consider some names or menu offerings as impolite, rude, insulting or contrary to the faith and traditions. [28]

This happened in America, because of the movie Godfather, which was perceived as gangster type and offensive to Italian Americans. [29]

For specific example KFC with brand name Colonel Sanders had a problem in Germany, because for some Germans it showed a military symbol of America, which was inappropriate. [30]

Nordsee Hamburger Farm had to solve hamburger situation in Germany in Hamburg, because it means a native citizen of Hamburg. [31]

Burger Queen had a problem with a brand name in the UK because of insulting sovereign countries. They had to rename to Huckleberry's. [32]

But those problems were not just in Europe of course.

For Brazilians it was difficult to pronounce Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), so this brand changed name to Sanders. [33]

These were just company name problems, but there were also problems with serving food in some countries or some areas. One example for all, in the Middle East fast foods had to delete ham sandwiches from their offer. [34] This might be caused by breaching local traditions and habits.

All these situations were solved by fast food chains to be near to the customer and it shows, that these companies do fully understand the importance of these changes for customers.

4. TYPES OF COMMUNICATION WITH CUSTOMERS

4.1. Internet

One of the most important things in business is to look around you and see, how big companies are dealing with their customers. The best thing every firm can do is to use the internet as much as possible.

These companies are using as many communication channels as possible. The most important are:

- Flickr,
- Facebook,
- Twitter,
- LinkedIn,
- YouTube,
- Yelp. [35]

The best way how to be seen is to use all of these mentioned. Using all of them can also let you to offer to your customers the possibility of choice, because with all these you can address lots of customers and it is their choice, which channel they like the most for communication. The most used in the world is Twitter and Facebook.

“Consumers are learning to follow the companies they do business with on Twitter and Facebook when they are given a return on their time investment.”[36]

Many customers prefer instant response in case of urgency. This can be offered on Twitter, because it's instant replies serve like a public forum. With connection to Google, tweets are part of Google search.

“Customers expect good service and prompt resolution to problems.” [37]

The faster the responses are, the more trustful and loyal customer will be. That is the reason, why many companies have a team of people responsible for prompt answering to customers. For this case it is better to have a signature for every member of a team, so it can be recognizable, who was answering. This applies when one team is answering from one Twitter account. [38]

Non-automatic responses also gives good impression. [39]

Twitter is the main reason for the success of Dell. They started to post computer tips and they offered bargain coupon deals. Earnings after these services are counted to millions of dollars. [40]

Some segmentation is also very useful to do, for example in areas or in types of products. Customers will choose and they will know where specifically ask for service.

The main advantage of internet customer service is that companies have a real-time feedback. Many people can instantly write their experience, problems, that can be useful for other customers, so it means that customers say what do they want. This can be very useful for changing products, improving your service. Business will be much easier if you do what people need. [41]

“While companies are either blindly hobbling along, doing things the way they always have done, or perhaps noticing something probably needs to change, the customer has taken things into [his or her] own hands.” [42]

Great example is the situation, when retail executives were asked who has seen E.T. (Steven Spielberg's movie). This is mainly kids movie, so only couple of people raised hands. Then they were asked how can they relate to their customers if they do not know their pop culture and the way they think. [43]

We can also add Instagram between communication channels mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Instagram is a simple application for sharing pictures with the whole world.

Kuwaiti salesmen are selling goods via Instagram. It is free, simple steps

are - create an account, take a picture of your own production (animals, fruit, ...), use some effects and add a price. Next step is to wait, when someone answers. Successful businessmen are followed by thousands of people on Instagram.

Kuwaiti businessmen found a new way how to address new potential customers. Even older salesmen are not afraid of starting with Instagram. [44]

4.2. Phone calls and emails

Customers do not use telephones or emails that often, because via social networks they can get attention of millions. [45] Rather than calling to call centers, never ending waiting on the phone, being told to hold on and wait and that they are in the row.

However, when the customer decides to contact us via email, social networks or letter, there are some rules that should be respected. I have already mentioned that we should answer as fast as possible, but another important thing is also how to answer. We start with a salutation. Dear Sir or Dear Madam opens a letter or email when we don't know the name of recipient. When we don't know the name, but also a sex we use Dear Sir or Madam or Dear Sir/Madam. If we know the name of the recipient it is good to use it, our customer gets personal correspondence and feels important and unique. In that case, we use his surname. Dear Mr. Smith. When we address our email a letter to an company we usually open our letter with Dear Sirs, in American English than Gentlemen. [46]

An email or letter should be ended with a complimentary close. If we use salutation Dear Sir, Dear Madam we use the complimentary close Yours Faithfully then. If we started our letter with the name of the customer (recipient) we use the complimentary close Yours Sincerely. The title (Sir, Madame, Smith) is always the same in the salutation and in the

complimentary close. [47]

We have to add our signature. This is called the signature block. We type our name, usually position in the company, address of our company and contact. This is an example of a signature block:

John Smith (Mr.)
Director
The Smith Company Ltd
Red House, King Street
London EC1 7DQ
Tel. +44 20 78 74 57
Email: smith.john@smithcompany.com

We should also add if we are sending any attachments – Please see the attachment below.

Emails and letters should be written clearly, concisely and carefully. We have to consider the recipient and the purpose of an email. We use correct grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, as we would in any other form of correspondence. We should also avoid writing emails with any words in capitals letters as this may seem like shouting or being aggressive and therefore have a negative effect.[48] (citation, p.22)

We would also like to pay attention on the layout and presentation of emails, because it gives the recipient the very first impression of our company's efficiency. [49]

4.3. Company forums

Twitter could also work as a public forum for solving problems, because other customers (users) can reply to this question or note. That is the reason, why some company specialized forums are not actual anymore.

You need special logging data for this forum, not many people are reading your notes there, so there is a lower possibility that your problem will be solved. On the other side by using Facebook or Twitter, used the most in the world, there are many pages and company users and you can address much more people. And the main thing is, that you have just one login name and password for those many „forums“, not special logging data for every forum. People use it also for themselves not just for customer service or solving some technical problems.

4.4. Big and small business

Not everyone is able or have good conditions for running big business. But big business means (on the other side) lots of money to spend trying out some new things. With small business there are less problems, because it is only the matter studying how are big firms doing their business and customer service business and learn from it. Larger organizations are not as flexible as small ones. Mainly because of management, that needs to approve plans (in advance?). [50]

Small business can be successful as much as there is great relationship with customers. They do not need any strategy if they do this and also use social media – the direct connection to customer. [51]

Small business has also advantage of being closer to the customers and employees. [52]

Big companies also do lots of graphs and charts, where there is no time for this in small business and those small companies are not based on them. [53]

No doubt, that data like this are important, but more effective is short article or text that often delivers more and specific information. [54]

4.5. Summary

Firms can use any type of communication, but the most important is to answer messages as soon as possible. Best solution is to answer immediately. Many firms guarantee answer in 48 hours, some even in 24 hours. It shows the quality of customer service. Best way how to reach this is to be on convenient place where the company can be contacted whenever customers needs to. [55]

Proper customer service needs to be:

- Useful in dealings with the product.
- Easy to log on company Web site and reach solution immediately.
- Enjoyable for customers, that they feel their words were heard. [56]

4.6. Web shops

Every salesman who has his own web shop needs to know some facts. Simply said, he needs to know that his shop is here for his customers and his own interest is to make everything work perfectly. These are the simple facts of dealing with customers in online shop store:

Welcome customers in your shop. Show them, how important are they for your business. [57] Adding some information about number of soled products, some news for customers is not a bad start.

Offer them your help. Make sure there is always a help button for customers. Be sure, that not everyone is so handy to find everything he needs on the web site, that is why web site needs to be simple and easy for orientation. [58]

Next important thing is to make forums, or forms for filling, also simple. Maybe the best advice for help is to use Live chat, or Live call. When customer does not know where to find some specific product, he can

write or call by simply pushing button “call” or “write“.

Let customers be free. Do not use signs asking for help on every page. They might seem as annoying or nervous and that could be a reason to left the online shop store. [59]

Offer customers more information about your product. Good way is to compare with any similar products, comparing prices and properties so that customer has a chance to decide which product he would like to buy. Thank them for their purchase. Offer them a discount coupon for future use and make them feel happy.

5. SERVICES AND MERCHANDISES

What criteria make restaurants unusual?

- They belong to service.
- Services produce anywhere almost two thirds of GNP and same percent of employed people work in services, but service does not dominate international trade.
- Service international trade grows faster than merchandise. [60]

Improvements for McDonald's

As for every firm there is also space for improvements. It includes customer service and also provided services and so on. Here are few in my opinion the most important:

Home delivery – Another type of customer service can be provided by McDonald's. With having one or two cars per one subsidiary business, McDonald's can satisfy the demand for their products. This service would be competition for some pizza services and other food services. On the other side customers and fans of McDonald's would definitely appreciate

this service.

For example students could be really great customers of McDonald's delivery service. It is happening all the time, that students need to order some food and very often they need to order some food for example at three o'clock in the morning when all the other restaurants are closed! McDonald's is not closed but it has not its own delivery service.

Maybe that there would be a problem to solve and this problem would be a freshness of McDonald's products. As I will mention in my practical part, the freshness of products is very important for McDonald's. There is lot of rules and regulations, not only about vegetable and salads, but also about the meat, the bread and all other food. So imagine that we order two Big Mac menus to delivery. Normally, the sandwiches and French fries can stay no longer than ten minutes before they are sold to customer. So maybe we could have a problem in there with this "freshness" policy of McDonald's which cannot be respected when providing a delivery service. Actually the preparation itself could take three minutes maximum and then the rest of the time will be just the time needed for delivery. The question then is if the customers would mind and if this food would really be so bad after taking time to deliver it? I think that when they are already have a possibility to take your order with you in a paper bag, they could be sure that you will not eat it in ten minutes and therefore you will not be eating the freshest product possible.

Benefit cards – Greater loyalty of customers can be reached by providing benefit cards or club cards. These cards can be specially made for purchasing extra offers, sales and for example competitions. The benefits cards do exist already, but they are not working on collecting the points. These promotional cards or gift cards allow the customer to purchase a coffee or a dessert.

Independent mobile network – Similar to Tesco Mobile, McDonald's can also penetrate another market by providing their own mobile network.

Customer Service at McDonald's

The customer service starts immediately when we enter the restaurant. At the same moment we can see if there is lot of people, if there noise, if the restaurant seems to be clean. Then we can see employees, they can smile, they can greet, they can seem to be happy and well groomed. Then we can see the billboards with menus. The customer service at McDonald's is composed of three main parts: cleanness at the restaurants, fresh product of an excellent quality and fast, personable and efficient service.

6. CLEAN RESTAURANTS

I will start with cleanness at the McDonald's restaurants. Which is really important is the fact, that there is always one employee who is responsible only for keeping the restaurant clean. It means that he does not prepare any sandwiches, he will not complete your order. His only task in to keep the restaurant clean. Every thirty minutes he has to check the toilettes and if there is toilet paper. If there is not water on the floor or around the basins. He will also insure the toilettes are clean and if the mirrors are well polished. He takes care of the plates. Collecting them from the customers or from the plate-rack, cleans them and returns them back to the employees working at the cash desk. Every plate is cleaned with an antibacterial solution and covered by one time place mat. All tables and chairs have to be clean all the time, he has to sweep and mop the floor at least every hour. This depends, of course, if it is rush hour, when there is lot of people or on the weather, if it rains or snows, the floor needs to be cleaned at least every fifteen minutes. The vacuum cleaning and table polishing is done every day after closing the restaurant.

7. FRESH PRODUCT OF AN EXCELLENT QUALITY

The freshness is very important aspect at McDonald's. All ingredients are

controlled when pulling out from the refrigerator, for example the salad can be out of a refrigerator for thirty minutes only and then it has to be thrown away. When a sandwich is completed it can be kept for 10 minutes, then it has to be thrown away. If these rules are respected, it is difficult for the customer to receive a fresh meal. The rules of hygiene are also connected to the preparation of food at McDonald's. Every employee has to observe the rules how to be groomed. The employees have to wear clean uniforms with an apron and a visor, their hands have to be clean, disinfected, nails have to be as short as possible and without varnish. The hands have to be washed at least every thirty minutes, this is controlled by manager of the restaurant (when washing their hands, employees are obliged to sign a sheet of paper, so then the manager verifies that sheet of paper, it does not work that the manager controls every single hand of every single employee every thirty minutes).

8. PERSONABLE AND EFFICIENT SERVICE

The very important part of the customer service at McDonald's is service itself such as environment in restaurants. The environment has to be pleasant and clean, customer feels comfortable and comes back regularly. This way of customer service is changing last years at McDonald's restaurant. Nowadays, the stress is put on the pleasant environment, on spending nice time at restaurant because just like that the customer desires to come back again and again. We are changing uncomfortable, small chairs made from wood to comfortable, leather big chairs. Fast foods like McDonald's are no more restaurants which care only about how quickly the customer leaves their restaurant, but they actually care about how their customer feels, because they want him coming back as soon as possible and not alone, but with family and friends, that is why they have promotions for family meals: when customer buys two hamburgers or two ice creams he gets a discount, or they have huge boxes where we can find portion for three or four people.

Once when customer finishes his meal, there is also McCafe where he can buy a coffee and eat a dessert, which makes him (feels) more satisfied. There is at least the possibility to go there for just a drink of coffee with a friend, at this moment the customer service needs to be excellent, because McDonald's is not a typical cafe, customer has to have a reason why to go there – and because nowadays coffee is not so different at different places the thing which actually decides is the customer care. Now customer can sit in a big leather chair, which is very comfortable. He can also take a newspaper or use a Wi-Fi connection with his computer or mobile phone. Great advantage could also be that McDonald's restaurant are non-smoking, so non-smokers could prefer these restaurants, because they are not obliged to breathe smoke from others, like in other restaurant. When they have children, they would also prefer a non-smoking restaurant. There is often special place for children, called "corner for children", where we can find small tables and chairs, small playgrounds with slides, with balloons, bicycles, dance floors with video games, there are also coloring pictures, magazines and air balls. When customer comes till 10:30 and buys a coffee there is a hostess who refills cups, so this could be another advantage and good step to improve customer care.

9. TRAINING AT MCDONALD'S

Employees are trained to be very polite to customers. There is always polite way how to talk with customer, there is always "thank you" and "please" when talking with customer but also when employees are talking to each other they have to be polite with other colleagues such as with customers. When they are polite all the time at work, then "thank you" and "please" become more natural and employee seems more natural and nice to customer, when he is not forced to be so just in that moment.

10. SIX STEPS OF THE SERVICE

The service itself contains six steps: greeting, receipt of order, putting the

order together, handover of order, receipt of money and goodbye. Customer service begins when customer enters the restaurant. The door has to be perfectly clean and the glass has to be polished. We do say “hello” to the customer at the moment we see him entering the restaurant, but we do not ask immediately about the order, we let him take off his jacket, look around if there is enough space, if he simply likes the place. Then we let him look at the banners with menus, so he can choose what he would like to get with no stress. While choosing his meal we are keeping the eye contact with him. Then there is “two-meter rule” – we do not ask customer what he would like to get unless he comes closer than two meters from us. We stand upright, little bent forward and we are smiling towards the customer – that is how we show we perceive our customer. We also pay attention to the “mirroring”: man is facing woman, woman is facing man and man is standing little sideways when customer is woman. Then we greet our customer. We are changing our salutations, because we do not want to sound “robotic”, we use “good morning”, “good afternoon”, “good evening”, “how can I help you”, “what can I offer you”, “what would you like” etc. When customer has no idea what to eat, we help him with the choice. We ask which meat he would like to eat: pork, poultry, beef or fish. We also inform customer about promotions, reductions and new products, so he can choose which fits him the best. Employees are helping to increase sales – when customer say he wants fries, we do not ask if he would like to get the smallest one, but we order automatically the largest one. If he wants a “Big Mac menu” we do not ask if he wants medium but we immediately order large menu. There is also “offering sale” – we try to offer to the customer something which his order does not contain. When customer wants coke and sandwich we offer him French fries. When he takes menu (consists of a sandwich, French fries and drink) we offer him a desert, ice cream or fruit. Employees are also trying to use “additional sale” which does mean to offer to customer something he could need – like ketchup or mayonnaise

for French fries or some sauce for chicken nuggets. In fact, all this is not customer service itself, it is not real service for customer, but it is a service for McDonald's. When we are offering and selling larger portions of food and drinks as well as ketchup and sauces, that actually helps McDonald's to have larger sales. But my opinion is, that it could be a part of customer service, because customer could feel this like we are taking care of him, when we want to offer him something his order does not contain. Then we complete customer's order, as quick as possible of course.

Actually there are two ways of serving customers. The cashier can be alone, so it is him who receives the offer, it is him who prepares and completes the order and it is also him who receives the money and gives customer his meal. Then there is second way how to serve customers: "back up". This way is considered more efficient and quick, so we use it during rush hours but disadvantage of this is that we need two employees: one for serving customer directly (the one who is receiving customer's order, who is receiving the money from customer and this employee also gives to customer his order), and the second, who is collecting the order (putting it together). We need two cash machines, employee receives one order on the one cash machine and another employee starts to collect this order. Then employee changes the cash machine and serves another customer. Another step of serving customers is receiving the money. Employee asks for the payment when giving order to the customer and he does it this way: "One hundred crowns, please". There has to be always the word "please" and once received the money he says "thank you". Employee never asks if customer has change. Finally, he says goodbye to the customer.

There are special employees at McDonald's: hostess. They take special care of customer service, because they are supposed to spend more time with customers than the other employees. Hostess are taking special care of children, for example when some child wants to celebrate his birthday

at McDonald's it is hostess who takes care of the celebration. At some restaurants there is special room for celebrations, at the others we use the "crew room". Hostess prepares a cake and menus for children, such as what they are going to do during the celebration. Usually they spend time together and then they go throw the whole restaurant and the hostess makes them an excursion. They can see where the food is being stored, where and how we prepare sandwiches, French fries, salads and yogurts. But hostess does not take care just of children, but also of other customers. Sometimes, she is at work just for actually work with customers. She does some surveys – this serves to find how customers see the customer service, what they appreciate and what they would change. She asks for example if customer likes the service provided at restaurant, if he likes the music, if the food is good, if it is hot, if his food was delivered quickly, if the restaurant is clean and if employees are nice.

11. POINTS OF CUSTOMER SERVICE AT MCDONALD'S

The customer service actually adapts to the needs of customer. When talking about McDonald's the main need of customer is to eat. He wants to eat quickly, cheap and good meal. Nowadays when we have no time we have to eat quickly and that is why fast food restaurants are so popular.

The customer can also eat for example late at night which is not possible at normal restaurants. McDonalds is opened during the days as well during the nights. Usually, the whole restaurant is opened till midnight or 2 o'clock in the morning and then the window service is provided – the customer cannot enter the restaurant but he can still use the window for order the food. He cannot sit at the restaurant and enjoy his meal but he can still eat at 5 o'clock morning. There can be also McDrive which is opened during nights so the customer can eat at 5 o'clock morning and he does not even get off from his car.

The customer can also find comfortable that there is more than one

restaurant in his city, so he does not have to travel all around the city for eat, maybe that the closest restaurant McDonalds is just around the corner. And maybe that this restaurant has also a McDrive so there is no need to get off from his car to eat.

12. MARKETING

McDonalds tries to be close to consumers – using advertising. The customer does not need to go to the restaurant when he wants to know where is the closest restaurant or which sandwich is new. There are TV advertisements, there are billboards on the streets, there are advertisements in the newspapers and on the internet. There are also promotions – using small tickets or coupons which give customer the opportunity to buy more products more cheaper. It responds to customer's need to eat more but cheaply – we offer him for example two sandwiches for the price of one, we can also offer him some combination which actually forces him to take friends with him – at this moment, customer is happy because he can eat more using less money than usual, or he can eat with friends he invited, also cheaper than normal, because usually his friends would not go eat with him at McDonalds.

13. MCDONALD'S IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

Me personally, I consider as a huge advantage that the majority of products are the same in every country. This plays a huge role in customer service, because customer appreciates that he can eat the same sandwich at home in New York and when he travelling to Europe, he can be sure that he will eat exactly the same sandwich also in Paris. This is due to the very same procedure in every restaurant all over the world, employees in New York and in Paris are trained in the same way, they use the same equipment, the same machines, the same manuals, even the smallest difference is not allowed. This results our Big Mac is same all the time, there is exact amount of salad in it, the meat is prepared for the exact time and is salted with the exact amount of salt. All

the time. All around the world.

Although, McDonald's is changing his offer little bit in different countries. For example because of the religion – in countries where there is lot of Muslims, we can find meat “hallal” – this is the meat from animals which were killed normally (not with the electricity, but with the knife – the animal felt no pain). This is very important for Muslims, because they eat only this meat, so that is also form of customer service. They offer also product for vegetarians – vegetarians are not forced to go anywhere else, they can always eat salad, ice cream, fruit, vegetable or they can get fish sandwich. They can also ask for sandwich without any meat in it – they can get the Big Mac, but without meat, so they will eat just bread, sauce and vegetable. There is also service for kids at McDonald's. Children have their special menu in here – Happy Meal. This menu is focused on children, it is special meal composed of a sandwich or chicken nuggets, then of French fries or fruit, then small beverage and of course, the most important thing – a joy. Kind can usually choose what he will eat and of course he can choose which joy he would like – usually, it depends on the weekly offer, we change the joys every week or two and there is always something for girls (pink or violet color, animal or small doll) and for boys (black or blue color, small joy of soldier or some car). There are also weeks when there is no difference between the joys for girls and boys, but it is rare.

Even if the products are the same all over the world, the offer could change, because McDonalds must respond to different needs of different customers of different countries of different culture and of different mentality. For example in the USA the advertisements and the offer must respond to need of American customer. The Americans need to have huge portions of French fries, of beverages and they love huge sandwiches. They have to offer something special, something which is even bigger and even better? You get these huge portions and you do not need to get out of your car – using Mc Drive. In France we need to focus

on need of French consumers – they like their desserts after eating so we have to offer them the best desserts. In France we can find promotions of menus including desserts – which we cannot find for example in the Czech Republic, because here we do not consider the desserts so important like in France, so when we will see in television that there is a promotion of desserts it does not attire the Czechs like as it attires French customers. Then in the Czech Republic we focus a lot on promotion when Czech customer can get more for less money. We offer two sandwiches cheaper, when we buy two ice creams instead of only one. The Czech also like to receive a gift as part of their meal.

We offer a glass or a cup with a menu, a teaspoon with yogurt, tickets for lottery with two menus etc. These promotions attract a lot the Czechs.

14. SELF SERVICE

There is new trend at McDonald's nowadays – the self service. The customer enters the restaurant and he does not go to the cashier but he goes directly to place his order into an automatic machine, so he does not need to wait for an employee, he chooses quietly what he wants to eat, without any pressure, he actually could feel more free, because he can take his time, he can change his order as many times as he wants and nobody is there to be mad at him or to show him any pressure. Once his order is placed, he just receives a ticket with a number and he waits until his order is prepared by an employee.

15. GLOSSARY

Plate-rack – a special trolley in which we collect plates, vozík na tácy

Cash desk – a place where we pay and order, pokladna

Fast food – a restaurant where the food is usually prepared before we arrive, types of restaurant like McDonald's, restaurace rychlého občerstvení

McCafe – special corner in a McDonald's restaurant where we can get

high-quality coffee and desserts

A corner for children – a little playground for children, usually with slides, little tables and chairs, dětský koutek

Six steps of the service – šest kroků obsluhy

A two-meter rule – we do not ask a customer what is he going to eat till he reaches a distance of two meters from us, pravidlo dvou metrů

The mirroring – how do we stay when dealing with our customer, zrcadlení

An offering sale – we are trying to sell something which customer does not have yet in his order, nabídkový prodej

An additional sale – we offer something that customer could need, for example ketchup, doplňkový prodej

The back up style of serving customers – there are two employees needed, one which cares about the money and communication with the customer and second which completes his order, back up systém prodeje, we can also use it as a verb and as a noun – „Will you be my back up today? Will you be doing my back up? Will you back up me? Budeš mi dnes back upovat?“

A hostess – an employee who is mainly responsible for children's celebrations, hosteska

A crew room – a room where is usually a computer, there are table and chairs and also some notice/message board for crew, crew room

The window service – mainly during night, whole restaurant is no more opened but we can still use that window to buy something, okénko

McDrive – the name of service, when the customer arrives in a car and does not need to get off the car, he just drives through the service and gets his order directly inside the car, McDrive

The Big Mac – a type of sandwich in which we have two slices of meat, a sauce, an onion and pickles, Big Mac

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18. ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis deals with customer service in general, I described types of customer service, its particularity and its application. I focused on American company McDonald's which is one of the biggest international companies not only among fast food restaurants. I worked at McDonald's during my studies so I had a chance to see its customer service and training of new employees from the other side then an average customer ever could. It is also another side of customer service when I actually saw it then when I read the books about it. In my paper I describe the training of new employees how it is realized by trainers at McDonald's.

I also wrote about the franchising, its advantages and disadvantages as well as the conditions of getting the license from McDonald's.

I was thinking how to improve the customer service, I presented my own suggestions in the paper.

19. RÉSUMÉ

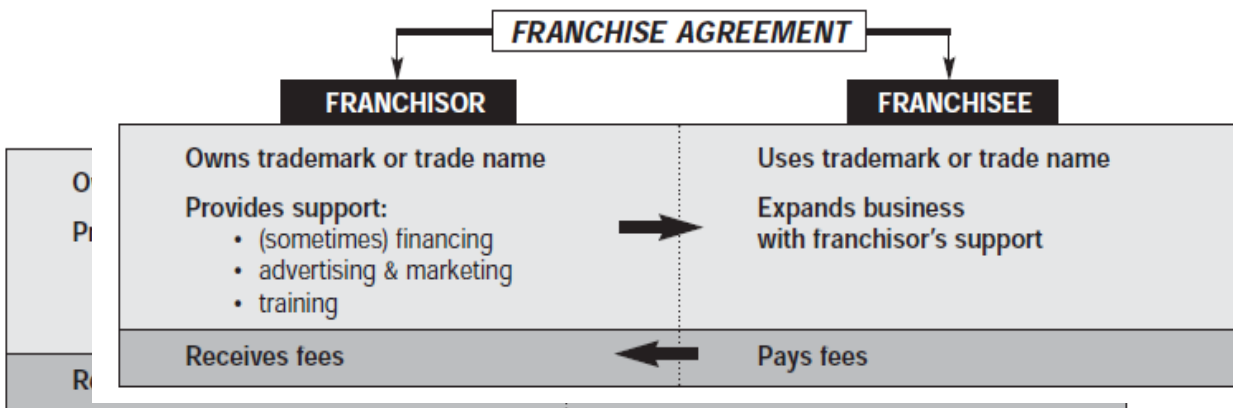
Tato bakalářská práce pojednává o zákaznickém servisu obecně, jaké jsou jeho typy, jejich specifika a využití. Zaměřila jsem se na americkou společnost McDonald's, která je jednou z největší nadnárodních firem, nejen v oblasti restaurací rychlého občerstvení. U McDonald's jsem během svých studií pracovala a měla jsem tak možnost vidět zákaznický servis a trénink zaměstnanců z jiné strany než běžný zákazník a také z jiné strany než jen z knih a výzkumů. V práci podrobně popisuji školení nových zaměstnanců přesně tak, jak jsou noví členové týmu školeni trenéry v McDonald's.

Zabývala jsem se také otázkou franšizingu, jeho výhodami a nevýhodami jakož i například podmínkami pro získání licence od společnosti McDonald's.

Uvažovala jsem nad vylepšením zákaznického servisu McDonald's, v práci proto představuji konkrétní návrhy.

20. APPENDICES

2. Franchising



(source: <http://www.franchise.org/files/intro2franchising.pdf> [Retrieved 24 April 2013])