

## A monthly roundup ...

### B2B companies aren't keeping up

According to a survey from Accenture Strategy, B2B companies are falling behind in improving the customer experience. B2B customers have rising expectations about how they want to do business and the service levels they should be able to expect, but very few companies are making the investments in digital customer portals and apps that would allow that to happen.

[www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com)

### Do your customers trust your organization?

A recent study of consumers by Verint Systems Inc. finds that as many as half of all consumers are suspicious about how companies use their personal data, and suggests that many companies don't go far enough to ensure their trust. Verint suggests that companies need to do more to assure customers that their data is being used properly.

[www.verint.com](http://www.verint.com)

### Show your gratitude to customers

Does your company make a habit of showing its gratitude and giving thanks to customers who are doing business with you? If not, keep this new theme day in mind — Michael F. Sciortino, Sr., a marketing expert and author, has launched what he calls "Gratitude Monday," which will fall on the last Monday of every month. The goal is to create a consistent and ongoing motivation for thanking customers for their business as a step towards increasing customer retention, referrals, and revenue.

[www.GratitudeMarketingBook.com](http://www.GratitudeMarketingBook.com)



### Frontline Spotlight

## Team leader brings patience and maturity to the job

Kim Sanders takes her job as customer service team lead for Americo Manufacturing, a manufacturer of industrial floor-cleaning products, floor mats, and other materials, very seriously. With six different divisions and a variety of products, Kim and other members of the service team have to be well versed in a variety of areas.

In fact, says Vanecia Lord, Americo Manufacturing's customer service manager, "because of her outstanding knowledge and contributions to the team, Kim was promoted to team lead just last year."

Lord praises Sanders as being "very self-motivated. She often steps up to be my right arm without having to be asked." She also acts as the Exception Specialist for Americo's customer service team, which means she handles problem calls.

Lord says that "one of the great things about Kim is that she is always calm and never gets rattled, no matter what the problem." She adds that Sanders shows "a great deal of maturity, knowing when the customer just needs to vent and not getting upset by that. She is also very organized, thorough, and detail-oriented — which is very important when you are handling customer call issues. But first and foremost, she just cares about the quality of the work that she does."

Sanders agrees that she brings patience and maturity to the job, and credits the fact that, "I have dealt with the public face to face in different jobs throughout my career.

I've learned that you can't get mad when you are facing somebody and they are yelling at you. Even over the phone, you can't let it show through in your voice. You have to listen and know that you are there to help them."

"I try to always be positive, and if there is something that I can't do, I just tell them what I can do," Sanders says. "If they are having a bad experience, I try to make the resolution to that experience as easy as possible. And I follow up constantly to keep them updated and apprised on the status of their issue."

There's also an open environment and a family atmosphere supporting Americo's eight-person customer service team — "and that means just yelling or calling across the way if there is a problem," Sanders says.

Lord adds that they have a saying in the department that "everybody has a wingman" and no one has to go it alone. "And if you are struggling, your wingman is supposed to have your back," she says.

The advice that Sanders offers anyone who works in a job like hers is to treat everyone as your customer. "Internal customers are just as important as your outside customers," she says. "I try to treat everyone the same. And I think that has helped me out a lot."

In the end, she says, "I just try to have the same attitude toward everyone — because everything that I do has my name on it. And that means I want it to be the best that it can be."