

Experience This! Show Podcast
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ExperienceThisShow.com

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Episode 63:

[SHOW INTRO]

Welcome to Experience This! Where you'll find inspiring examples of customer experience, great stories of customer service, and tips on how to make your customers love you even more! Always upbeat and definitely entertaining, customer retention expert Joey Coleman and social media expert Dan Gingiss serve as your hosts for a weekly dose of positive customer experience.

So hold on to your headphones it's time to Experience This!

[EPISODE 63 INTRO]

Dan Gingiss: Get ready for another episode of the Experience This! Show!

Joey Coleman: Join us as we discuss: using experience to attract new audiences, building natural tourist attractions, and an Italian meal to remember... in Australia? Prima donnas, penguins, and pasta. Oh my!

[SEGMENT INTRO][SAY WHAT?]

Joey Coleman: It's shocking how often people use 38 words to describe something when two would do the trick. We're looking at you lawyers and accountants. Words matter. And there is no excuse for trying to hide what you. We explore words and messaging in this next iteration of Say What?

[SAY WHAT?: A Night at the Opera]

Joey Coleman: Dan I have a little question for you that I must confess I don't know the answer to. I know a lot about you but I don't know this. Are you a fan of opera?

Dan Gingiss: [Laughs].

Joey Coleman: I was gonna give him the benefit of the doubt, folks. I thought you might be. I mean I know you're a musician.

Dan Gingiss: Well opera... I'm going to go with no, Alex.

Joey Coleman: Yeah that's a no. All right. Well anyway my wife Barrett is a huge opera fan. Now in full disclosure I had actually sung in operas before I first attended one. I definitely enjoy opera but I definitely wouldn't consider myself a huge aficionado especially compared to my wife. But that didn't stop me from taking my wife to the Sydney Opera House during a recent trip to Australia.

Dan Gingiss: You mean that Sydney Opera House like one of the most famous buildings in the

entire world?

Joey Coleman: Yeah. No the architecture is stunning on the outside and the performance inside was absolutely incredible. I'm sure folks are listeners you're familiar with this building it's one of the most iconic buildings in the world. It's a regular feature on postcards from Sydney and photographs of Australia. The experience was absolutely incredible and I thought it be great to talk about it as well as some other experiences we had during our recent Australian adventures.

Dan Gingiss: That's right folks. This episode is about Joey Coleman being down under.

Joey Coleman: Some Australian experiences. Bloody oath! That's Australian slang for true that, Dan. Well anyway let me share a few things that I absolutely loved about our experience at the Sydney Opera House. First of all, the evening was clearly designed to bring in new audiences and it was on Valentine's Day, right? So I think they recognized early on let's put together a performance a show. Now this program was actually called, "Great Opera Hits," didn't really leave anything to the imagination there, for folks that might have a significant other (hint hint like me) who was more interested in opera than they were and they could come and that he'd be a little more accessible or an intro to opera of sorts. They had familiar music it was presented in a really relaxed fashion and in fact the audience in attendance showed it because the audience was comprised of a variety of ages and to be frank even a greater variety of outfits. I saw everything from people in shorts and t shirts and flip flops because it was summer in Australia when we were there to tuxedos and fancy dresses. Now we are up where were you. We skewed towards the dressing up side. It was Valentines we had gone to dinner so out on a sports coat my wife had a lovely dress. We skewed to the dressed up more traditional side of opera. But the second thing they had that was great was a fantastic emcee who explained what we're about to hear before each song. Now part of the reason why I wanted to select this is say what episode on our show is because I think one of the reasons people don't like opera is it's sung in foreign languages that they don't understand. So lots of times the words that they're singing the lyrics of the song are things we don't understand especially those of us that are in the United States who are masters at speaking one language as opposed to multiple languages. And what I thought was fantastic is the emcee would give us a brief of what was about to happen. So we had insight into what was being said in the song which made us comfortable with not knowing exactly what was being said in terms of the specific words.

Dan Gingiss: So in other words they kind of tell you hey this is a love story and he and boy meets girl and they go out to dinner and this happens and this happens. And then when you hear it in Italian and really have no idea what they are saying you at least can follow along in the story.

Joey Coleman: Exactly. You get an insight into the plot and to the emotion that's about to be portrayed. And then when you hear the singers the performers kind of espousing that emotion in the lyrics it really doesn't matter what they're saying because you already have the feeling for the point they're trying to get across. They also included many familiar tunes. Now when it comes to opera most people's exposure begins and ends with Bugs Bunny cartoons.

[Opera music plays].

What was wonderful about this particular night at the opera is that they showcased many songs that while not necessarily familiar in terms of the lyrics were very familiar in terms of the music folks you've heard these before. Let me give you a sample of some of the songs that we heard. Now these are not recordings from that actual evening but there are clips of these songs. We heard songs like The Flower Duet from Lakme - Delibes.

[The Flower Duet plays].

Joey Coleman: And Brindisi, the drinking song from La Traviata.

[Brindisi plays].

Joey Coleman: And Nessun Dorma from Turnadot. We actually heard it pronounced both ways. I'm still not sure which way it would be.

[Nessun Dorma plays].

Joey Coleman: So these are songs that I have to be willing to bet you've heard some of those tunes before. Even though you have no idea what the person is singing or saying

Dan Gingiss: Even I've heard them!

Joey Coleman: I know shocking, right? I would say fourth, the singers were entertainers. Yes they performed beautifully and their voices were sublime. But they played to the audience and they played with the audience. They were breaking the fourth wall, they were engaging the audience. It was fun, it was funny, it was entertainment, and entertaining. Honestly I get more fun at the opera than I ever thought that I would have. It was an amazing night.

Dan Gingiss: That's awesome because I don't think that experience is what people expect or have ever really heard about from people going to the opera. And I think that is one of the reasons why people are apprehensive to go if they don't understand opera, right? Is that there's usually not somebody there holding your hand kind of teaching you about it as you go. So I think that was really interesting.

Joey Coleman: Well I agree and then you feel foolish if you don't know. You know lots of times in the program they'll give you a little bit of background but you don't really understand what's going on and no one first time customer a longtime customer wants to feel like a fool when they're interacting with your brand. So I thought it was really great. In fact, I turned to my wife when we rate intermission and I said, "You know if everyone got this exposure to opera as their first opera there would be many many more opera fans in the world." But here's the piece de resistance the last but not least most amazing part of this experience. They gave us the opportunity for a sing along.

Dan Gingiss: Wait a second you got to sing along or at the Sydney Opera House?

Joey Coleman: Oh yes I did. And to be candid I will be adding that to my bill going forward. "Ladies and gentlemen, Joey Coleman performed in an opera at the Sydney Opera House," because I did! It was amazing! So as the lights were going down at the beginning of the show I turned to my wife and I said, "Now when do I get to sing along?" And she's pretty used to my antics and gave me a patented combination smile matched with an eye roll, and then in the first song the very first song Lardo Al factorim now. Just kidding it's Largo al factotum from the Barber of Seville. The baritone gestured to the audience to join in on the chorus.

Dan Gingiss: First of all I just want you to know that I know that smile I roll. For those of you guys that don't know Joey and I are not looking at each other when we're recording so I actually deliver that same smile and eyeroll quite often.

Joey Coleman: Feeling the love feeling the love, folks.

Dan Gingiss: But obviously if the baritone gestured towards Joey Coleman to join in the chorus I'm

assuming you did.

Joey Coleman: [singing] LA LA.

Dan Gingiss: [singing] LA LA LA LA LA.

Joey Coleman: I love it. See we know more opera than we think and the fact that the iconic Sydney Opera House would have a singalong section of an opera performance? It was spectacular. The audience loved it. Everyone joined in and in the process, it illustrated a key component of customer experience. The sooner you can engage your customers in your product or service offering, the better the experience. All in all the night at the Sydney Opera House was not one to soon be forgotten and I hope to enjoy an encore performance soon.

[SEGMENT INTRO][THIS JUST HAPPENED]

Joey Coleman: We'd love telling stories and sharing key insights you can implement or avoid based on our experiences. Can you believe that This Just Happened?

[THIS JUST HAPPENED: The Penguin Parade]

Joey Coleman: When I say Australian animals what do you think of, Dan?

Dan Gingiss: Well I think of kangaroos, koalas, maybe crocodiles, perhaps the occasional wallaby or wombat.

Joey Coleman: Nicely done, all right. But what about penguins?

Dan Gingiss: I'm sorry did you say penguins?

Joey Coleman: Penguins, yeah penguins.

Dan Gingiss: Nah that's not one that I really equate with Australia. No.

Joey Coleman: Yeah. Here's the thing. Neither did I until I was planning our trip to Australia and my aunt Susie who had visited several years ago asked if I was going to see the penguins at Phillip Island.

Dan Gingiss: It's kind of funny you say that because when I went to Kenya once a friend of mine from high school asked me if I was going to eat the zebras.

Joey Coleman: Similar but different, we did not eat any penguins.

Dan Gingiss: And I didn't because they don't do that anymore but they did.

Joey Coleman: Just to be clear we didn't eat any penguins either no penguins were harmed in the production of this episode. No. But what's interesting is they actually have penguins in Australia. So just south of Melbourne, which is about as far south as you can go and still be on the continent of Australia, there is a magical place called Phillip Island. And on Phillip Island there are fantastic series of nature parks, and it is home to the Penguin Parade.

Dan Gingiss: OK I'll bite Joey. What's the Penguin Parade?

Joey Coleman: I mean come on. It's a name that chest not only explains what it is but it gets me excited right. It's not just a catchy name. Every morning some 1400 penguins swim out into the ocean to eat, and just after sunset they come back. Now the folks at the nature park have built some incredible viewing areas where you can watch the penguins as they come back from a day out to sea, come up on the sand, and then in their little penguin selves waddle their way back to their nest singing as they go. Their spouses that are back at the nest will call out to them so they know which way to go. It's like being in an episode of Wild Kingdom. But you're right there sitting there. I mean they've built the seats. It's kind of like stadium style seating right on the beach so you can watch this. Now for anyone who's curious we're going to include some photos in the show notes. These are not photos we took because they don't allow you to take any photos or shoot video because it harms the penguin's eyes, the flashes. But what was great about this is somebody was really thoughtful and conscious and conscientious when they designed this park. They have different seats that range in differing amounts so from free to pay a lot of money to sit up close. All the money that they raise goes to their conservation efforts. And the entire park and the setup is beautifully designed and I mean the architecture on this is ridiculous. From the moment you enter the park so that it maximizes your viewing. So there are these boardwalks that take you down to the beach that you don't notice when you're going down to the beach but they're lit underneath. So at the end of the night when you're walking back. You can see the few straggler penguins making their way up the mountain side or up the hill side back to their homes. Absolutely incredible.

Dan Gingiss: Well it sounds amazing and it's like it's like one of those experiences that you just can't get anywhere else. And I've had a couple of those as well. Kenya was actually one where I got to go on a nature safari at the Nairobi National Game Park. And you see animals in their natural habitat and it's not what you think of and it's not even always what you see on TV. And so this sounds absolutely amazing and when I finally cross Australia off of my bucket list and get there I'm totally on a see this.

Joey Coleman: You know it's funny you should say that, Dan, because I had some speaking gigs in Sydney and in Brisbane which are to be frank for folks that aren't familiar with Australian geography pretty much the opposite side of the country like they're pretty far away from Melbourne at least north to south. When I heard about this penguin thing, my oldest son is crazy about penguins. I went and saw a promotional video that they had which we'll link to in the show notes that ExperienceThisShow.com Episode 63. But the video sold me. I saw the video and I said to my wife we're going to add two days to our trip to fly to Melbourne to go see the penguins. Now I know that sounds insane but that's how magical and unbelievable this. It's a once in a lifetime experience really. There are three places in the world you can see penguins in the wild I think Australia, South Africa, which has a similar setup to Australia in the sense that the water's cold enough that far south, and Antarctica. But Antarctica is on my list of not visited continents that I'm hoping to cross off some day. But I just thought it was great the way they set it up. They also had a huge souvenir shop where all the proceeds went back to conservation efforts so they recognize that people come all this way are going to want to get souvenirs but they make the souvenirs very educational. So they're penguins in sweaters and they have a whole thing about how the fibers from these sweaters are the same fibers they used to clean off penguins when there's been like an oil spill or environmental thing. So everything is really designed to be entertaining but also educational.

Dan Gingiss: Yeah I love that and I think also I find it always nice when you have exhibits like this where people also learn about the environment, and about what happens in nature, and why it's so important to preserve it, and that sort of thing. And it sounds like they did this in a subtle but effective way.

Joey Coleman: I couldn't have said it better myself, Dan. You know, I think the business of environmental experience is something that we're going to be seeing more and more in the future

and what I mean by that is governments aren't getting it done. When it comes to protecting the environment and preserving the environment you know they've made good strides over the years but the attention that needs to be focused on the environment now is too fast, too big, and too significant to wait around for governments to handle it. And so what we see is a lot of businesses stepping forward and using profits or proceeds to buy land and turn it into game preserves like Patagonia has done or you know some of the safari companies that have bought up even more land where you can't go on safari. But where they're just creating these game preserves, and I think we're going to see a lot more of this in the future. Everyone's getting into the experience game. Even the penguins on Philip Island.

[SEGMENT INTRO][DISSECTING THE EXPERIENCE]

Joey Coleman: Sometimes a remarkable experience deserves deeper investigation. We dive into the nitty gritty of customer interactions and dissect how and why they happen. Join us while we're Dissecting The Experience.

[DISSECTING THE EXPERIENCE: It Only Takes One Person to Make an Experience Remarkable]

Joey Coleman: My 5 year old said something that absolutely shocked me after dinner a few weeks ago, Dan.

Dan Gingiss: Oh I like where this is going. This is going to be good.

Joey Coleman: Yeah so we had just finished a meal that had lasted more than three hours.

Dan Gingiss: Three hours with the kids?

Joey Coleman: I have a 5 year old and a 3 year old and we were also there with my wife and with my mom and we were all sitting down to dinner and I'll explain how we had this long dinner. But we were walking back to our Air BnB from an Italian restaurant in the South Bank neighborhood of Melbourne. And my 5 year old was on my shoulders and he said, "Daddy when you and Mommy die I'm going to move here, live with Paolo, and work as a waiter."

Dan Gingiss: Wow that's pretty deep for a 5 year old.

Joey Coleman: Yeah I was not expecting that at all. But I think a little back story is in order so the restaurant we had dinner at is called Rosetta Ristorante. It's an Italian restaurant. Beautiful food, great outdoor seating right on the river in Melbourne. And Paolo was our Italian waiter. He was energetic, he was engaging. He had incredible Italian accent. The evening was awesome. We had great food because folks you have to have an awesome product if you want to have a great customer experience it starts with the product. We had wonderful ambience. It was a summer evening with gorgeous views of the water. And then we met Paolo, our waiter, and he was a huge surprise. He started things off by coming to the table and immediately engaging my two boys. He treated them as adults. He took their orders. He was making recommendations to them and the fact that he was treating my boys like adults made them kind of rise to the occasion. They felt like they were part of the conversation and part of the experience instead of the afterthought or the annoying thing about parents that would bring a child to a nice restaurant. He made them part of the experience which needless to say immediately won over me and my wife and my mom, their grandma, who was along with us.

Dan Gingiss: It strikes me that sometimes in an experience it just takes one person to make it or

break it and go to this particular case it's Paolo. And if Paolo is not interesting and engaging we're not talking about this story, and you're not sharing her with your friends, and it's just a somewhat unmemorable dinner. But one person in really any organization can make that difference for a customer.

Joey Coleman: Absolutely. And we're three minutes into the sitting down at the table and already I'm looking at my wife and she's smiling because she knows, "oh he's get material for a future segment of Experience This," and I'm salivating, literally and figuratively, at about what about what is happening. Also, Paolo knew the menu inside and out. I don't know if you've had this experience, Dan, I presume you have where you go to the restaurant you ask, "What do you recommend here?" And they proceed to basically tell you everything.

Dan Gingiss: Or just the most expensive thing.

Joey Coleman: Right? No, Paolo was different. Paolo said, "Well what are you thinking that what looks interesting to you now?" And so we pointed to a couple of things and said a couple of things on the menu and he was like. Not that. He actually steered us away from some of our top choices because he was just like him it's not that good and steered us to other things. And when I actually looked at the price tag he was steering us to items that were less expensive than what we picked but that he knew were some of the chef's best dishes. He made us laugh. He showered us with compliments. I mean there was a point where he basically during the meal my boys were coloring they were kind of occupied and he sat down with my wife and I was like, "you are such amazing parents that you would bring your children to this restaurant that you would have them experience fine dining and he's showering us with compliments. Which by the way is just enhancing our experience, right? Paolo made the entire meal into a night that we'll never forget. And clearly my sons will never forget because in fact one of them plans to move there and live and be with Paolo after we're long gone. So yeah it was just absolutely incredible experience.

Dan Gingiss: So I love everything you're saying. I of course as I'm sure are eager listeners are thinking the same thing. I'm waiting to hear why this dinner took three hours.

Joey Coleman: So this is an Italian dinner, right? I mean if you're going to sit down at a fine dining Italian restaurant you're going to have appetizers. Then you're going to have Anti pasta. Then you're going to have your Primas in your seconds and your mains and you know we went through course after course and then it got to the end and we're like, well, at this point there was a fire show outside the restaurant and we had figured we would be long gone before it started. But at this point the fire show was going to start in about 20 minutes so we're like let's order dessert let's make an evening out of it. And he did special desserts for the boys because he was like I know you will enjoy this. You will think of this taste when you are back in America. And you know this amazing stuff. And the boys were like Yeah bring it on the ice cream. This will be fantastic. It was actually gelati right. And they were loving it. So it was over three hours but it didn't feel like that. And I think that's another key component of remarkable experiences. Remarkable experiences captivate you so much that you lose track of time and not only did we lose track of time which let's be candid adults can lose track of time pretty quickly. But two children sitting at a fine dining restaurant losing track of time and staying focused and enjoying the meal and being part of the conversation. That's a rare experience in and of itself.

Dan Gingiss: Yeah I can agree with that. Having kids myself and having been there that is tough to do so kudos to Paolo for that. And yeah I mean that old saying about time flies when you're having fun is true. Right, and when you're having a great experience time flies as well. And it definitely sounds like you had that now in this particular incident. I could tell you, Joey, I am currently craving Italian food so thanks a lot for that.

Joey Coleman: You're welcome. You're welcome. So moral of the story folks if you're going to Melbourne or if you live in Melbourne and you listen to the show go to Rosetta and ask to be taken care of by Paolo. You won't be disappointed. Now stop and think. When was the last time you gave your strongest referral and recommendation about a product that you'd sampled only once and instead of talking about the product, you talked about the salesperson. It's something every business could and should strive for. Gratz mile Paolo will be seeing you soon.

[SEGMENT INTRO][THREE TAKEAWAYS]

Joey Coleman: We've talked, you've listened, now it's time to act. There are many things you could do to take what you've learned in this episode and implement it. But at times that can feel overwhelming. Instead why not just focus on three takeaways.

[THREE TAKEAWAYS: Questions to Consider for Episode 63]

Joey Coleman: Takeaway #1 - Are you doing everything you can to make your products and services accessible to your audience? Is there a fun and entertaining way to let your prospective customers sample your offerings like our night at the Sydney Opera House? Can you design your engagements so your customers can join in the fun? Do you make participation with your brand and experience in and of itself? How can you find ways to involve your customers earlier in the relationship so their experience is both memorable and remarkable?

Dan Gingiss: Takeaway #2 - Are you creating experiences in every area of your business? Everyone has the chance to get in on the experience game. What are the causes you support, and the clubs, and nonprofits you belong to doing to maximize the experience they deliver? As causes and concerns like the environment draw more and more focus, the ones that will gain the most attention are those that intertwine experience into their mission.

Joey Coleman: Takeaway #3 - What are you doing to support your staff being part of your experience? Waiters are often underpaid and under supported components of the restaurant experience, yet Paolo at Rosetta in Melbourne, Australia was the experience. Are you training your staff to make personal and emotional connections? Are you hiring team members that are comfortable going off script in order to build rapport with your customers? Do your employees know the ins and outs of every product and service you offer so they can make educated recommendations as well as suggest which things to avoid? Are you willing to rest your reputation on the way your lowest paid employee shows up in your customer experience? If not it's time to make some significant changes and enhancements.

Dan Gingiss: And those are the three takeaways for this episode. Think about how you can apply this week's learnings to your business starting tomorrow.

[SHOW OUTRO]

Joey Coleman: Wow! Thanks for joining us for another episode of Experience This!

Dan Gingiss: We know there are tons of podcasts listen to, magazines and books to read, reality TV to watch... we don't take for granted that you've decided to spend some quality time listening to the two of us.

Joey Coleman: We hope you enjoyed our discussions and if you do we'd love to hear about it.

Come on over to ExperienceThisShow.com and let us know what segments you enjoyed, what new segments you'd like to hear. This show is all about experience and we want you to be part of the Experience This! Show.

Dan Gingiss: Thanks again for your time and we'll see you next week for more...

Joey Coleman & Dan Gingiss: Experience This!