

Experience This! Show Podcast
Hosts: Joey Coleman & Dan Gingiss
ExperienceThisShow.com

Official Show Transcript
Originally Aired: December 24, 2019

Episode 85
Stop Settling for Less than a Great Experience

Dan Gingiss: Welcome to Experience This.

Joey Coleman: 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.

Dan Gingiss: Always upbeat and definitely entertaining customer retention expert, Joey Coleman...

Joey Coleman: And social media expert, Dan Gingiss, serve as your hosts for a weekly dose of positive customer experience.

Dan Gingiss: So hold onto your headphones. It's time to experience this.

Get ready for another episode of the Experience This show.

Joey Coleman: Join us as we discuss how raising the bar can come back to hurt you later, why fixing what ain't broke might be a good idea, and why pricing mistakes can make you look silly.

Dan Gingiss: Driving, enhancing and calculating. Oh, my.

[This Just Happened] Rideshare Then and Now

We love telling stories and sharing key insights you can implement or avoid based on our experiences. Can you believe that this just happened?

Joey Coleman: Do you remember your first trip using a rideshare app or rideshare service, Dan?

Dan Gingiss: I do. I was a little bit nervous because I wasn't sure if it was going to work. I was kind of excited to try it. I was not in my own city, I remember that. And so, yeah, I got a really nice car, leather seats, the person was super friendly, I got offered a bottle of water and they got out of the car to help me with my

luggage, and I was like, "Man, this is not that far from being in a limo and certainly is very far from being in a taxi."

Joey Coleman: Absolutely. And I too remember my very first rideshare trip and thinking, "Oh, my gosh, the taxi industry is done, and this is so much more economical than town car service or a limo, but you feel like a celebrity. You feel like you're being treated incredibly well." As a general rule, my experience with rideshare apps, predominantly Uber and Lyft, I use both, has been like that until the last six months.

What I've noticed in the last six months is that I feel that the customer service has been dropping dramatically. I take rideshare services a lot because I fly to cities that I don't know. When I come out of the airport, I jump in one of those as opposed to taking a taxi. They don't get out of the car anymore, they don't help with the luggage, rarely is there a bottle of water, they don't have phone chargers, they often seem irritated. In the last few months, because it's been a little warmer in some of the places I've been traveling, I've noticed an aversion to using the air conditioners, which is kind of, no pan intended, a blast from the past or a lack of class.

Dan Gingiss: Oh, I see what you did.

Joey Coleman: See what I did there? That takes me back to taxis when I lived in Washington, D.C. that were notorious. D.C. is hot as can be in the summer. They were notorious for not running the AC, and if you asked them to turn on the AC, first of all, they would look at you like you just asked them to donate a kidney to you, second of all, they would say, "Oh, the AC is broken." And I'm like, "The AC is not broken."

Dan Gingiss: Just like the credit card machine.

Joey Coleman: Yeah, exactly. Exactly. And so what I think is interesting here is when rideshare apps came into the market, they set the bar very high differentiating themselves from taxis by the customer service and the customer experience. Now that that's going away, it kind of just feels like a taxi to me again.

Dan Gingiss: Well, it's interesting that you point this out because I'm going to add two things to your list that have been bothering me lately. The first is that way too many drivers use incredibly strong scents in their cars, and there's been times where I get in a car and the first thing I have to do is roll down the window because my eyes are watering at how strong the odor is. Relatedly, oftentimes I get into cars that smell like cigarette smoke, which is also something that I don't particularly want to smell. But the other thing is I'm absolutely shocked at how drivers have their own music on the radio that's

generally really loud, and for whatever reason, most of the time, not my kind of music. No joke.

Joey Coleman: And you have a pretty broad musical appreciation, in my experience.

Dan Gingiss: I do, I do.

Joey Coleman: You know what I mean? So it's not like Dan is... For those of you that haven't spent as much time in cars listening to music with Dan as I have, it's not like Dan gets in and it's, "I'm only listening to '80s diva music, okay? Nothing else, right? He's got a broad... There's nothing wrong with that.

Dan Gingiss: I like '80s diva music.

Joey Coleman: He does like '80s diva music.

Dan Gingiss: But no, for example, the last time I was in a rideshare, which was on the way to the airport to come see you here in Denver, Joey, the music that was playing was this extremely loud, extremely explicit song that had F-bombs flying all over the place, and I'm like, "That just doesn't seem appropriate for a service provider, regardless of whether I like the music or not. It just doesn't seem like it's the kind of environment that you would want to create for a customer.

Joey Coleman: Yeah. So here's the conundrum. We have the opportunity to rank the drivers. If you don't mind my asking, would that result in a lower star rating from you?

Dan Gingiss: Well, that's probably a subject for an entirely different segment. But I think one of the things that's gotten complicated about the rideshares is they almost make you feel guilty to leave anything below a five-star rating.

Joey Coleman: Exactly. That's the point I was hoping to get to. I 100% agree because there have been times where I've wanted to give them a lower ranking, but I also know that this is their livelihood and that this contributes to their overall ranking score, and that they're also ranking me. I've also heard through the grapevine, I'm not entirely sure if this is true, but that the app increasingly builds into their algorithm whether or not you tip. So if you don't tip, you get a lower score that the driver sees when they're deciding whether to accept your ride or not.

Dan Gingiss: Oh, wow. That's really interesting.

Joey Coleman: Right? That adds a whole other layer to this because it's like, wait a second. I think with some of the apps, I'm not 100% sure on this, I don't think the tip 100% goes to the driver. I think it gets factored in to the percentage that the business takes. So the rideshare apps are making more money by adding the

tip, and if they're taking a percentage, they're obviously incentivizing you to tip because that's going to increase their revenue.

Dan Gingiss: You and I were talking about this off air the other night about the number of places now that we're expected to tip, and to me, I tip and tip generously for great service. But as you described, if it's somebody that picks me up, doesn't say hello, doesn't help me with my bags, doesn't speak a word while he's driving and then drops me off, I'm not exactly sure why I'm supposed to tip for that. There wasn't really any service provided other than the four wheels that got me from point A to point B. Whereas when I do get a friendly driver and I have a really nice conversation with them, and we hit it off, and he helps me with my bag or whatever, then I'm more than willing to tip because the service has been provided.

But I want to get into the why that this has changed because I have a hypothesis I want to run it by you and see if you agree. So when Uber and Lyft first came out, I had the opportunity to ride. It happened to be with an Uber driver in Seattle. I remember this was early days because I was sitting in the front seat. So it was probably one of the first times I had taken it.

Joey Coleman: Rookie move.

Dan Gingiss: Yeah, I didn't know. I was speaking to her, and she used to be a taxi driver. What was interesting to me was she was explaining all the reasons she left taxi driving and became an Uber driver. A few of them were that she had to buy this really expensive taxi medallion that was thousands of dollars that didn't even get her any insurance on her car, whereas Uber provided auto insurance for her. She had to have all this cash in her pocket and she was afraid of being robbed. She had to go to different parts of the city that she was uncomfortable with, all these things and she's listing them one by one and explaining how Uber had basically resolved all of those.

This is when I realized that the rideshare industry, the reason it was so successful, is that it didn't just solve all the problems of the passenger, it also solved the problems of the drivers. And so when you are able to connect both of those and provide, what is in essence, a service to both, you have a successful business. Now, what's happened since then? What's happened since then is all the taxi drivers that are going to leave taxi driving and move to rideshares have already done that.

Joey Coleman: Right.

Dan Gingiss: And so now the drivers that rideshare companies are attracting are people who are driving because they have to, not because they want to. So they're doing it more begrudgingly, right? "I'm between jobs, I'm not making any money. I guess I'll go drive for Uber or Lyft," right? And you can see it on their

faces. You can see, as you were sort of pointing out, that there are a number of drivers that look like they want to be anywhere but driving that vehicle.

Joey Coleman: Which nothing makes you feel more comforted as a passenger than looking to the front seat and seeing a driver who is clearly irritated to be in the car.

Dan Gingiss: I have two friends who have held other full-time jobs in the past who have decided to become Uber or Lyft drivers out of necessity because they had lost their job, maybe they got laid off and they just weren't bringing in enough income to pay the bills. And so this is a relatively easy way for anyone with a car to earn some money and start paying the bills, but it doesn't mean that they enjoy doing it, and they're doing it out of necessity and there's a chip on their shoulder a little bit because they feel like, "Man, I wish I really didn't have to do this."

Joey Coleman: Yeah. I think the other thing that we should flag, because I imagine some of our listeners are thinking this, Uber is a company, Lyft is a company that has a fleet, no pun intended, of employees that they've never met, employees that are using the app and have not really been trained, have not really signed on to a certain code or ethic of customer service, or maybe they did, but there's really not a great way to police it. They're not getting performance reviews and don't have a direct manager necessarily who's checking in on them every day. And so, of course, we run into this challenge where our frustration with the rideshare app might actually be a frustration with an individual driver who is way, way, way removed from the organization itself. But as we talk about a lot on the show, how any of your employees or teams that are representing or holding themselves out as representing your brand, however any of them act, and the impressions they give you, and the experiences they create for you can spin into your overall feeling.

So here's the key takeaway from this segment, two things. Number one, if you distinguish yourself in the marketplace by having a better customer experience, you need to continue to maintain that bar. If you look at the marketplace and you say, "No one is providing a great customer experience. I'm going to raise the bar," but then you get it and you bring a bunch of folks in, and new prospects, and new customers, and then you go back to the norm of how business was done in that industry, you will not be able to maintain your customers long term. Number two, if your business has employees that are regularly interacting with customers, it's worth exploring, setting a standard for what that interaction looks like. The best way to set that standard is to model it by how you interact with your employees.

Look, rideshare apps are fantastic, they're a great invention. Let's just keep them moving forward. Let's keep them as elevating the transportation

experience instead of returning to the horse and buggy whip days of yesteryear.

[CX Press] If It Ain't Broke...

There are so many great customer experience articles to read, but who has the time? We summarize them and offer clear takeaways you can implement starting tomorrow. Enjoy this segment of CX PRESS where we read the articles so you don't need to.

Dan Gingiss: Today's CX PRESS comes to us from Becky Roemen, whom I met as part of the CX Accelerator group, on her blog, Tin Cans and String. It's called, "Don't fix it if it isn't broke. 10 reasons this phrase is holding your CX back."

Joey Coleman: Oh, I bet I can think of a couple of those 10.

Dan Gingiss: Seriously, well, Becky notes that corporate budgets are often allocated to the squeaky wheels, the things that are broken or maybe just the loudest executive. And the result is that many important initiatives can get ignored. "Technologies, processes, and workflows are the enablers of great customer experiences," she says, "just as easily, neglected technologies, processes, and workflows are the preventers of great customer experiences."

So the article lists 10 watch-outs to make sure your company is allocating resources in a way that will provide the most value to the customer. Now as always, we're going to include the link to the article in the show notes at www.experiencethisshow.com so you can check out the whole thing, but we'll list a few of the 10 things here that really stuck out to us.

Joey Coleman: Alrighty. Number one, you're defining broke wrong. Just because the IVR or any other technology is physically working does not mean that it's efficient, or hitting the mark, or a good customer experience. Blinking lights is not the inverse of broke.

Dan Gingiss: Number three on Becky's list, you're comfortable with that'll have to do. The phrase itself indicates that status quo is okay. Here, in 2019 and moving forward, nearly every industry is competing on customer experience more than price or any other factor. With that sort of competitive landscape, you can't afford good enough anymore when it comes to the customer experience or how you provide support to your customers.

Joey Coleman: Sorry, Dan, I'm still recovering from that'll have to do. That one drives me bonkers, right? So lazy. Fix it, folks, come on. Number six on the list, your voice of the customer program is weak. Investing in a good voice of the

customer program means that you will have the data you need to drive decisions with the customer's voice.

Dan Gingiss: And we've talked about this before, it's got to be action oriented data. So just reading reports about what your customers are saying is not enough. We don't need more reports. We need more data that will help us take action based on what the customer is saying.

Finally number 10 on Becky's list, you're focusing too much on the present day. Now, the current state of affairs doesn't reflect what can or will happen in the future, nor your preparation to take it on. Future state planning is an incredibly important activity for the customer experience team to take part in.

So Joey, I thought this article, and obviously there were six other items on the list, but I thought this was really interesting because she's right in the sense that we often are looking for that blinking light, or that shouting executive, or that squeaky wheel to determine where to put resources. And the thing is, is that at the same time, all these systems that we have are growing older every day and every year, and they're getting more and more out of date, but because they're still functioning, we're not working to improve them.

Joey Coleman: Yeah, so we're putting off until tomorrow a giant snowball that is building, right? I have a buddy who runs a technology company and he's in a mastermind group I'm in, and was explaining to us something he's been doing this year. Every three weeks, he carves off a day on his calendar, and on that day, he rebuilds one of their technology touchpoints. So he goes in and says, for example, "Oh, let's look at the first email that you get when you sign up for our newsletter. Today, I'm only going to work on that. I'm going to make it best in class, best practice, really focus in, hammer it down, and also make sure that that technology piece is properly connected to the CRM and all the automations, and that they're pulling the data they need and connecting everything together."

What he's found is while each of those days gives him the satisfaction of, "Wow, today I really fixed something. I accomplished something," he's a former technologist who's now the CEO of the company, so it allows him to roll up his sleeves and get dirty, so to speak, and kind of get into the code, but what it also does is over the course of three months, he's made dramatic improvements in these legacy systems that were working just fine, but he knew that they could be better.

Dan Gingiss: I love that. I have a similar example that is actually trying to fix things that are broke, but it's related to the story you just told because when I was at

Discover, I was finding that we weren't ever able to prioritize small fixes because the technology cue was all about these giant enhancements, so you couldn't get anybody's attention with small fixes. So what I did was I actually collected nearly 100 small fixes and put them into one giant project, and that's how I got it prioritized on the list, because when we finished that project, which really was only about a two-week or three-week project because these weren't difficult fixes, they just, there were many of them, we had made such a big enhancement overall because we had gotten rid of so many pain points.

Joey Coleman: Folks, he's not just pretty, he's smart. Now, I love that idea, and I don't know that there is a listener of our show that couldn't implement that idea in their business. Make a list of all of the little things that you've been meaning to get to, and then take a week or take two weeks and make that the entire team's focus, get everybody working on these things.

Lots of times, I think in larger organizations, so many of the projects are longterm, it's the project for this quarter, the project for this year, and humans want to have a feeling of regular progress and milestones accomplished. So by giving a bunch of little bite size projects, combining them all into one master project, it allows you to get lots of dopamine hits along the way and have the whole team celebrating a big lift in the overall enhancement of the customer experience.

Dan Gingiss: So the takeaway here is that the concept of if it ain't broke, don't fix, could actually be hurting your customer experience. Make sure you take stock of things that are working but not necessarily optimally and try to stay a step or two ahead, so you're focused on where you're going and not just where you are today.

[Start the Conversation] Avtex: Balancing Security and Customer Experience

Joey Coleman: Sometimes, all it takes is a single question to get your company thinking about an improved customer experience. Here's an idea for how you can start the conversation

This week's Start the Conversation topic is balancing security and customer experience. Security is a critical component of customer relationships. Protecting personal information from prying eyes is a must for any organization. As security concerns grow and efforts to ensure customer privacy evolve, customer experiences can be negatively impacted. It's important to balance security processes and policies with the needs of the customer and try to limit the negative impact security has on a customer's experience during a single interaction and throughout the entire relationship. The other side of the coin is actually protecting customer data from breaches

or leaks, which can cause catastrophic trust issues and affect brand perception.

Dan Gingiss: Here are three things to consider when thinking about security from a customer experience standpoint. One, remember the customers expect high security standards and that this is a key part of their experience with your brand. Two, you can still be creative in how you communicate security issues like password rules. While complex passwords may be valuable, complex instructions are not. Three, security, like customer experience, is really everyone's job. Limit access to customer data to only those that need it to perform their jobs and ensure that physical security measures are in place to prevent internal or external data theft.

Joey Coleman: Oh, my goodness, I'm a big proponent of paying attention to security issues, but I'm an even bigger proponent of bringing customer experience to the security conversation. All too often, especially when we're asked to create a login and password for a website, which by the way, unless we're doing a financial transaction, I shouldn't need a login and password for your site. If your site is just a content site where I can read white papers or watch videos, why are you passwording me in? I get that you might want to cookie me or track which ones I read, stop making me make a password to access your content that's free anyway, just makes no sense to me.

But I think there's a great opportunity as alluded to in Dan's comments to make the experience part of the security. So when you say to me, when creating your password, it needs to have 15 letters and none of them can repeat, and at least one needs to be a capital, and we need a number, and we need a symbol, and you can't use your name or any of your family members names, or variations of their names, or your pet's names, or the name of our business brand in the password, it's like they're encouraging me to come up with a password that I'm actually not going to be able to remember, which means I'm going to have to access the reset password tool, which is going to repeat the process all over again,

Dan Gingiss: Couldn't agree more. Don't forget that you can only use certain symbols and not other symbols.

Joey Coleman: Right.

Dan Gingiss: And now for this week's question about balancing security and customer experience, are our security policies or processes negatively impacting our customers? We encourage you to start the conversation within your own organization, and then continue it with our friends at Avtex, who are at experienceconversations.com, again, that experienceconversations.com.

[Say What?!] Don't Make your Customer do Math

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

Dan Gingiss: "It was my understanding that there would be no math." That line always draws a chuckle when I speak with people about how math is actually important in the customer experience. By the way, the quote is from a famous Saturday night live skit where Chevy Chase plays the role of Gerald Ford at a debate responding to a budgetary question.

Joey Coleman: I never knew that. That's a nice little... Dan Gingiss, ladies and gentlemen, man of a million facts.

Dan Gingiss: Math, like politics, always seems to divide people.

Joey Coleman: What a...

Dan Gingiss: Yeah, see what I did there? Ask someone if they like math, and it's usually either a confident yes or a defiant no. In many focus groups, some of which I participated in, the line, "I hate math," comes up way more often than you might think. Now, local driving range offers buckets of golf balls to practice your swing, but if you're not practicing math, you might miss the arbitrage opportunity presented by the sign out in front.

Upon first glance, it looks legitimate. There are several bucket sizes of balls; small, medium, large and jumbo, and correspondingly, increasing prices; \$5, \$9, \$20 and \$25, but the math doesn't make sense. When you buy a small bucket of 40 balls for \$5, for example, you're paying \$12.5 cents per ball, but when you buy the jumbo, which is 150 balls for \$25, you're actually paying \$16.7 cents per ball. Now, as consumers were trained to believe that the jumbo is the better deal, but in this particular case, it is a much worse deal, and in fact, it's the most expensive. Buying five small buckets cost the same \$25 as the jumbo bucket, but it gets you 200 golf balls instead of 150.

Joey Coleman: I agree with you, Dan. When we start talking about math, at least for me, it makes it a lot more complicated, which is why we're going to include some photos in the show notes over at experiencethisshow.com, so that you all can see the sign that Dan was talking about. I do think it's fascinating because we have been conditioned in our society to choose the jumbo option, especially if it says the best price or whatever it may be, because our presumption is that it's going to cost less, and this ends up being a trick, that in this case,

the driving range is playing on, folks. I also wonder, how do you think they would react if you walked up and said, "I'd like five small buckets of balls."?

Dan Gingiss: Yeah, they'd probably think you're crazy.

Joey Coleman: Because I know you did this, Dan.

Dan Gingiss: And I can tell you from experience, they think you're nuts, right? So I actually don't think they're trying to trick people. I think the answer is they can't do the math.

Joey Coleman: They just can't. So it's not that it's nefarious intent on their part. It's just lack of computational skill.

Dan Gingiss: Exactly. I want to give another example, which we'll also include in the show notes at experiencethisshow.com, and this one comes from my 13-year-old. So kudos to my 13-year-old who found this and recognized the problem. So he was at a big amusement park, a major brand, and he wanted to play one of the carnival games, and he noticed that one play of the carnival game was \$2 and three plays were \$5. Now, that part makes sense, but then there was the value play, again, the sign suggesting that this is the best value. It is, after all, called the value play. That one is five plays for \$10. Now, for those of you who hate math, that's the same \$2 as buying just one play, not much of a value, right?

Joey Coleman: So then, once again, could you go up and say, "I'd like two, three plays, so I'd like six plays for \$10."

Dan Gingiss: Right, exactly. And they'll probably look at you like, "Who is this guy who can't do math?" Right? And the three plays for \$5 actually works out to the best deal because it's only a \$1.67 per play instead of \$2. So if you were making an economic decision, that's exactly what you would do just as Joey said.

Here's one more from my hometown of Chicago. One of my favorite treats in Chicago is called Chicago Mix popcorn, and it's something that we do just wonderfully in my city. It is a mixture of cheese popcorn and caramel popcorn together in the same bag. It is absolutely addicting and it's delicious. But one brand has a sign that lists the prices of these bags, and it's similar to the golf balls in the sense that, as the size of the bags go up, so do the prices. But here's the weird thing about this one. The one pound bag, and one pound is equivalent to 16 ounces, is \$13.95, but the two smaller bags are 6 ounces and 10 ounces. So if you bought a small and a medium bag, you would have that same one pound. But those two bags together only cost \$12, which is actually 11% less expensive.

So again, Joey might ask, "Can you imagine somebody coming in and saying, "I'll have a small bag and a medium bag," instead of just ordering a large bag? But actually, you'd be saving money in doing so.

Joey Coleman: I think part of the challenge here is, we've just, as humans, gotten lazy. We see this when you go, and I don't know if you ever end up paying cash for anything, Dan, but lots of times when you give cash to someone, if the cash register isn't working, if they are, let's say below the age of 50, they really struggle to make the change. If they're above the age of 50, they have no problem cranking out the change. I'm not saying that to be ageist, it's that I don't think we're teaching basic math and basic math skills the same way we used to.

I agree with you, I don't think this is a nefarious intent by the majority of these companies, as much as it is just no one in the organization really likes to do the math, no one has actually looked at the numbers, and no one is actually feeling comfortable enough to say, "Wait a second, what we're charging doesn't make sense."

Dan Gingiss: But here's the thing. We talk a lot about how every single interaction with a brand contributes to the overall perception of the customer experience. And at least for me, somebody who can appreciate math, these errors make the companies look silly and they reduce my opinion of them. In fact, they make me not trust them as much because you do question whether it's nefarious.

Joey Coleman: Yeah, I was going to say, I think when you say you feel that it's silly, I think the majority of people would feel taken advantage of.

Dan Gingiss: I think that's definitely possible. Or they would look down on them and say, "These people aren't very bright," and neither one of those are particularly complimentary, right? So the point in saying this is that these mistakes seem like they're smaller humorous, but they can actually have a pretty big impact on your brand image. So the takeaway here, math is important even if you don't like math, and math errors can make your business look bad and cause customers to lose trust.

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

Dan Gingiss: We know there are tons of podcasts to 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: Experience...

Dan Gingiss: This.