

# Experience This! Show Podcast

Hosts: Joey Coleman & Dan Gingiss

ExperienceThisShow.com  
Official Show Transcript  
Originally Aired: November 3, 2020

## Episode 111 - Take the Mystery Out of CX By Connecting with Your Customers

[SHOW INTRO]

Dan Gingiss (00:05):  
Welcome to Experience This!

Joey Coleman (00:08):  
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 (00:18):  
Always upbeat, and definitely entertaining customer retention expert, Joey Coleman...

Joey Coleman (00:23):  
and social media expert, Dan Gingiss serve as your hosts for a weekly dose of positive customer experience.

Dan Gingiss (00:30):  
So hold on to your headphones. It's time to Experience This!

[EPISODE 111 INTRO]

Dan Gingiss (00:39):  
Get ready for another episode of The Experience This Show!

Joey Coleman (00:44):  
Join us as we discuss the mysteries of mystery shopping, texting for help, and why channel switching is a good way to anger your customers.

Dan Gingiss (00:55):  
Mysteries, Queries, and Quandaries! Oh my!

[SEGMENT INTRO - BOOK REPORT]

Joey Coleman (01:03):  
We're excited to give you an overview of an important book you should know about, as well as share some of our favorite passages as part of our next Book Report.

[THIS JUST HAPPENED][The Secret Diary of a Mystery Shopper]

Dan Gingiss (01:15):  
Have you ever been a mystery shopper, Joey?

Joey Coleman (01:18):  
Well, Dan, if I tell you that kind of give away the mystery?

Dan Gingiss (01:22):  
Ladies and gentlemen, he's here all episode!

Joey Coleman (01:25):  
All right, no - I'm just teasing. Ahh yes, I actually have had the chance to be a mystery shopper in the sense that lots of times when I do consulting projects with clients, I will tell them that the first thing I want to do is come in and be a mystery shopper and experience their brand and experience their space, which always makes showing up for the workshops that I lead then with teams, really interesting. Because I walk in and invariably, some of them are like, "Oh my gosh, he was in the store yesterday. What's he going to say?" and that kind of thing. So yes, I have been a mystery shopper, but really only is a precursor to consulting engagements.

Dan Gingiss (02:02):  
Okay. I got it. Well, the former Mrs. Gingiss and I actually participated in a very extensive mystery shopping program.

Joey Coleman (02:11):

Why am I not surprised that you have a history with an extensive mystery shopping program - I love it!

Dan Gingiss (02:18):

It was awesome.

Joey Coleman (02:19):

Yeah - I mean, it sounds like a Dan Gingiss type activity.

Dan Gingiss (02:22):

It was so much fun. And I think I'm going to convince you, you're going to want to do it with Berit.

Joey Coleman (02:26):

Alright. Alright!

Dan Gingiss (02:27):

So Let Us Entertain You is a large restaurant group based in Chicago, it's got more than a hundred restaurants. They've also got some restaurants in a bunch of other States, but most of them are in the Chicago area. They're known for great food, huge dish sizes, you know, servings and really good service. And so we participated in their program, which is highly selective. And you have to go through this big training and all this stuff. And what they do is they send you out to a restaurant and you pay with your own credit card, but you're reimbursed for the entire meal. They give you some stipulations, but they're pretty minor. Like they'll say "don't order the lobster" or something like that. Pretty much you get, you can order anything you want. They, they pop for a bottle of wine. It's an, it's a lovely evening. And the only problem with it is, is that you have to go home afterwards,

Joey Coleman (03:22):

and write a book report!

Dan Gingiss (03:23):

And write a book report! The first time we did this, I'm not making this up, it took us two and a half hours.

Joey Coleman (03:30):

Oh, I totally believe that. Where you're like, "Oh, this would be a great way to have an experience." And then you're like, "Oh my gosh, this was not worth the free meal."

Dan Gingiss (03:39):

Well, the first time I thought that now, eventually we got it down to about 45 minutes. But what they were asking was fascinating. They wanted to know the exact words that the waiter or waitress said when they first arrived at the table, they wanted to know if at any point the food was auctioned, which was explicitly prohibited that's that's "Okay, Who has the hamburger? Who has the steak?"

Joey Coleman (04:05):

I understand. I thought you were meaning like who wants to take her \$5? Can I get, can I get a 7? I understand what you mean. Oh yeah. So if, if the wait staff didn't remember who got what and then decided to broadcast it to your table.

Dan Gingiss (04:19):

Correct. They would ask how many times was your water filled? And you know, I was the water person smiling at you there. I mean, the details were so specific. I remember the first couple times they must've, you know, cause you also can't share that you're a mystery shopper. Right.

Joey Coleman (04:38):

And I'm wondering like, as you're describing this, I imagine some of our listeners might be wondering too, like, are you taking notes during the meal? But an engine in a pre-social media era that was really difficult now it's like, Oh, Dan's tweeting again. Right. But you're really taking notes on it, oh, we're at five times they've refilled the water.

Dan Gingiss (04:56):

Well, let's put it this way. It was long enough ago that anyone watching my ex-wife would have thought that she had a bladder problem because she had to visit the bathroom like six times to go take notes, take notes. Because I mean, I think we had phones, but we didn't, but it wasn't.

Joey Coleman (05:14):

It wasn't the way we use phones today. Sure.

Dan Gingiss (05:17):

But in any event, I love this program. We actually got, we got to graduate after we did about 10 restaurants, we got to graduate to like their senior program, which was their fancier restaurants. Only let their, you know, their best reviewers go to their top restaurants. And it was a blast. I learned so much about paying attention and really focusing on what's going on around you. And this came to fruition late last year I met a former colleague of mine and we were working on a project together for a client and we met at a restaurant. We sat down at the booth and he was asking me to kind of describe what customer experience was and

what I was doing. And I said, well, let me give you an example. Did you notice when we sat down at this booth that the wall next to us was dirty, you know, his, his head switched to the left and was like, no, I'm like, that's the first thing I noticed before we even sat down because I'm trained to just look for that kind of short and this mystery shopper stuff taught me that. And uh, so I was very thankful for the opportunity. Not only because I got a lot of great food and wine, but because I really learned how to pay attention to those details. So I love mystery shopping, which is why I was particularly interested in a brand new book that came out in August called *The Secret Diary of a Mystery Shopper* by Claire Boscq-Scott. Now Claire is from the Bailiwick of Jersey and I'm going to admit to everybody to look this up, okay? I'm not so good at geography. The Bailiwick of Jersey is a British dependency off the coast of Normandy, France. It's part of the Channel Islands. It sounds lovely. But anyway, that's where Claire is from. And she, in her book, she defines kind of why mystery shopping is really important for businesses and how it relates to customer experience. And a couple of things that she noted is she says, you can't be in your business 24/7. Obviously you can't be in two or three or 20 places at once. If you have multiple locations, you can't improve. If you don't get feedback, you can't celebrate your successes. If you don't get feedback, you can't manage what you don't measure. And you don't know if you're following your business vision. If all you do is sit in your ivory tower and never get out and see how things are actually being done.

Joey Coleman (07:39):

All very good reasons to kind of get out of my speed. I mean, this is kind of the management by walking around theory, right? You've got to be on the frontline, you've got to have exposure. And the problem, I would imagine that most business owners and managers face is if they go into their store, all their employees know who they are. So you get, of course you get better treatment because quote unquote, the bosses there, right? Whereas if it's a mystery shopper, you get something closer to retail.

Dan Gingiss (08:08):

True. Although I would say as an asterisk to that Joey that a lot of executives set it up that way on purpose. So yeah, one of the companies I worked for, I won't say who it was, but it was set up so that whenever the CEO called customer service, it was like, you know, he was calling the bat phone and, and so a little, you know, siren went off and he got a supervisor who took right, who took care of them immediately. So he never got the experience of an actual customer. I had the opportunity to use the bat phone and I said, no, thank you. I'd like to call the 800 number and see what everybody else sees makes sense. So anyway, uh, as usual with a book report, uh, I connected with Claire. She's a lovely lady. And I asked her to introduce her new book to our audience. So here's Claire with an overview of her book, *The Secret Diary of a Mystery Shopper*.

Claire Boscq-Scott (08:59):

Hello, this is Claire Boscq-Scott mystery, shopping and customer service. Global gallery. Yes. I'm here and super excited to be here with you on this podcast and to introduce you to my you Burke. Yes. Hi, exciting. Is this, let me introduce you to *The Secret Diary of a Mystery Shopper*. This is my new book launched a couple of weeks ago, which has already ranked number one on Amazon bestseller on customer service and *The Secret Diary of a Mystery Shopper*. If he doesn't give it to you in the title, it is all about mystery shopping. Yes. How you can uncover hidden secret within your organization. How you can look at your employee performances and really improve your service, develop some new strategies and increase your customer loyalty. So the secret diary of a mystery shopper, it is, um, 11 years now, I've been running my own mystery shopping companies and I've been writing all those stories, the good, the bad and the exceptional, yes, because if we talk about exceptional, we will bring more exceptional stories in our book. So this is really a business book. It is, you know, for businesses to take it, read it with your team, read the stories, think about how this could affect your business. If you have that kind of experience and look at all the little tips and, you know, th the, uh, the consultancies, I guess also behind every of the stories. So, and I'm sure you're going to really unsure reading some of those stories. Um, I've had people, you know, giving me stories, you know, when you talk about customer service, everybody's got a story. So I'm looking forward to sharing them with you in the secret diary of a mystery shopper bye for now,

Joey Coleman (10:58):

I gotta admit Dan, I am intrigued. And I particularly liked the way Claire described the good, the bad and the exceptional. You know, I was waiting for her to say the good, the bad and the ugly, which lots of times I think is what people think of when they think of customer experience. I know you and I, when we started the Experience This Show made the conscious decision to tell the positive customer experience stories. And I think all too often, people are quicker to share the ugly customer experience story. So I like that. She's all about the exceptional to bring more of those exceptional stories to the book so you can model what to do in your business as opposed to learn what not to do.

Dan Gingiss (11:38):

Absolutely. And folks, when you learn what you're doing right by collecting positive feedback from customers, do more of it. I mean, when they tell you that they like it, that's a great indication that you should be doing more of it. Just like when customers complain. That's a pretty good hint that should stop doing something. And I have always said, whenever I get asked on podcasts, or when I'm interviewing, you know, what's one tip that you can give to people in customer experience. I always give the same tip and it is become your own customer, become a customer of your company. If you don't do that, there is no way that you can truly understand what it's like to be a customer. What does that mean? It means get onto your website and create a login and a password, and then forget your password and try to go through the, forget your password.

Joey Coleman (12:24):

And you'll realize just how insane your process is getting a new password. I really liked that Dan, I worked years ago with a company that was in the home heating oil and propane business, kind of a home services, energy company. And one of the things that really surprised me when we started is how many of their employees were not actually customers. And it actually, by the time we left there, a significant percentage were because we adopted a program where we said, we're going to help

subsidize getting employees to become customers because we wanted them to have that perspective and have that experience, even if they might not have the direct financial impact of the experience, we at least wanted them to go through the setup and the various customer service interactions so that we could hopefully make the business better.

Dan Gingiss (13:13):

Outstanding. It's so such a great idea. I mean, think about a customer service agent. Who's trying to help a customer navigate the website, but the agent's never actually been on the website because...

Joey Coleman (13:23):

Exactly. So what are they doing? They're reading through a manual or a click through on a web screen saying, Oh, and you should see in the top right corner, a purple box. Well, if they've never logged in, they don't know what they're seeing. And it does make all the difference.

Dan Gingiss (13:37):

And it can be very frustrating to the person on the other line. Okay. Joey, I think of all of our book reports, this is the best author, favorite passage that we've ever had.

Joey Coleman (13:49):

Ooh, pressure ladies and gentlemen tune in for this one. This is going to be interesting. I like it Dan!

Dan Gingiss (13:55):

Here's Claire reading her favorite passage

Claire Boscq-Scott (13:59):

Can you steal jewelry. Okay. So that was a first, I just received an email from my client, a large jewelers who had finished a big safety and theft training with their stuff and wanted us to go and try to steal something from one of their shops. Wow. Okay. This was taking mystery, shopping into a whole new dimension. As this could have secondary implication. We had to think about this one before. What would happen if I get caught? What if the alarm goes off? What if the police has been called?! What if we get filmed on CCTV camera, you see where I'm coming from. Hmm, but after a good conversation, with my clients and arranging all the possibility, we agreed to perform the visit.

Dan Gingiss (14:59):

Okay. Tell me you don't want to know the end of that story.

Joey Coleman (15:02):

Oh my gosh. Not only do I want to know the end of this story, but I'm kind of reminded, and this is going to be a little bit of a nostalgia throwback. We'll see, which of our listeners are old enough to remember this movie years ago? I think this probably would have been maybe late eighties, mid eighties. There was a movie with Robert Redford called Sneakers that was all about like this business that specialized in hacking into other businesses. And I remember watching this thinking, Oh my gosh, this is what I want to do. I now think that I want to go work for Claire on these jewelry cases! Forget the restaurant ones, Claire, if you need help breaking into a bank, or a secure facility or stealing jewelry, call me, I will be your mystery guy.

Dan Gingiss (15:48):

I love it. And, uh, I was actually thinking Ocean's 11 when I read that one, but yeah. All right. So I have a favorite passage as well. And, uh, you know, I combined two of my favorite things. Joey, I combined restaurants and bathrooms.

Joey Coleman (16:03):

Shocker - our loyal listeners are falling over right now. No friends. It's more of the same from Dan Gingiss.

Dan Gingiss (16:10):

So here we go with, uh, another story that she tells in her book. Once we had a restaurant group who wanted to get their branches measured, and I was asked to bring my family with me, we arrived at the restaurant and as she loved being a little mystery shopper, I sent my daughter to the toilets to check them out. She was gone a good 10 minutes and as I was about to come and see where she was, she reappeared running back from the toilet and said, mom, mom, mom, you won't believe what happened. I was on the toilet and the light went off. So I couldn't see anything. I was a bit scared and eventually managed to open the door. And the light came back on. You can imagine the situation, the toilet lights were activated by a sensor. The door was tall enough to trigger it, but she wasn't. The lights went off until she managed to open the door. Again. The point is what this group of restaurants did. After this visit, they readjusted all of their toilet sensors. So small people could also be picked up by the sensors. They also took it a step further. Having had this feedback from a six-year-old girl, they revisited their entire young customer experience and suddenly increased their family revenue by 40%.

Joey Coleman (17:22):

Ooh, I like it, Dan. I like it. You know, talk about taking a situation and not only fixing the problem, but using it to springboard into some additional enhancements for our customers as well. You know, we've talked about this on the show before, how often businesses miss the associated customers of their customers, right? The significant others, the spouses, the children of their primary customers who happen to be in their location or in their business, or tangentially touched by the business and how there's an opportunity to enhance things there. I love it. Well, my favorite passage was about, uh, Kevin Peters, the President of Office Depot. And here's the story from The Secret Diary of a Mystery Shopper.

Joey Coleman (18:09):

I parked and saw an associate leaning up against the brick facade, smoking a cigarette. Meanwhile, customers were walking out without any bags. This employee did nothing. He just watched them leave empty handed. At that point, I had a tough decision to make, should I blow my cover and alert the store manager? Or should I stay silent? I sat in the car a few minutes thinking it over. Finally, I decided I just can't let this go. I went into the store and looked at the station that stands at the front of every location, displaying the name of the manager and his, or her picture. Guess who the store manager was? Yes, the guy smoking outside the store. So I went up to him and introduced myself and we had a good, long talk. He was ashamed of his behavior and he was sweating during the conversation. You promise to do a better job of taking care of customers. And I promised to keep in touch. Even today, we exchange emails every month to discuss his performance.

Dan Gingiss (19:08):

Joey, I'm telling you I want to work for a company someday that has a president like Kevin Peters and that was actually part of a, a larger story where he talked about visiting dozens and dozens and dozens of stores. And I have to tell you, my father, who was a business owner, uh, of, of a formal wear business, did the same thing. He traveled all around the country and visited his stores. And that's when he learned the most about what was actually going on. You can't tell this stuff from a report or a spreadsheet, or even frankly, from talking with your employees, you have to go out there and do it yourself. And so great job, Kevin Peters for being your own mystery shopper. I love it. So guys check out The Secret Diary of a Mystery Shopper by Claire Boscq-Scott. It is available on Amazon. I hope you enjoy it as much as we did. And, uh, don't forget to be a mystery shopper in your own company.

[SEGMENT INTRO - THIS JUST HAPPENED]

Joey Coleman (20:06):

We 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 Evolving Role of Text Messaging]

Dan Gingiss (20:19):

Joey when you communicate with friends or family members, what's the most common way that you connect with them?

Joey Coleman (20:28):

I would say at this point in the game, text messaging is the most common. And the way I know that this has really increased, especially in the last few months, is I am currently looking at the little indicator on my screen and I have 19 unread text messages. So my text messaging is almost starting to feel like my inbox for email, but that is definitely the tool I use the most.

Dan Gingiss (20:54):

Well, that would make me break out into hives. I couldn't possibly let that happen, but I'm glad you said that because that's how you and I connect to almost always when we're in between shows where we're texting all the time, ideas back and forth and questions, et cetera. And so I think that's true of most people that that texting has become the mode of communication between two people. So there's a line that I remember from a really great business book called message me. And it was written by a friend of mine, Joshua March, who was also the founder of a social media and messaging service platform called Conversocial. He wrote quote, I tell my family and friends to message me why can't a brand. Just message me unquote. It seems so simple. Right? So during COVID-19, when customers have been stuck at home, texting has become a much more important communication method for companies, podium, a customer messaging platform for businesses reported that more than 60% of consumers received or exchanged text messages with a local business during the early days of the pandemic. Now I'm sure that number has gone way up since then. Joey, have you experienced texting with businesses during COVID?

Joey Coleman (22:11):

I have. And what's interesting. I talked about one of these early on, I think, uh, not to pull a Dan, but I think it was back at episode one Oh three, when I talked about the eye doctor experience that we had. But even just in the last episode, we talked about the experience I had with movers and what I didn't share. I don't think during that segment is that because of COVID we were texting back and forth and I was actually texting videos of the house. You know, normally when you do a move, somebody from the moving company comes and they walk through the house and you show them all the stuff. Well, because of COVID, I was like, I really don't want to have random people walking around inside the house if we can do this using technology. And so I would text, all right, I'm here. And we would, you know, I would shoot a little video and text it from that room and then I'd go to the next room and shoot another video. And so I basically just sent them a string of videos so they could do a virtual walkthrough of the house. So yeah, I've definitely been using texting more with businesses during this time, and I've really appreciated the businesses who've been willing to do that. Some are like, Oh, well, we don't really have the tools set up for that. And I'm like, what do you mean you don't have a cell phone? I come on. I don't know what tools you need.

Dan Gingiss (23:26):

Exactly. And I mean, I do it all the time as well. I've gotten a lot of notifications for doctors or dentist appointments for me and the kids when my grub hub is about to be dropped off. I get a taxed when it's time to pick up my groceries or my prescriptions, I get attacks. We talked in a previous episode about imperfect produce. I get every week they tell me when the drivers down the street and when he's arriving at my house, I think it's great. And it is, it's such a great way to keep in contact and to understand what's going on. So this got me thinking about why more companies aren't using this simple and effective communication method for servicing their customers. And I remembered a story from right before COVID that I had wanted to tell on the show, and then I kind of passed on it because people stopped traveling, et cetera.

Joey Coleman (24:15):

It might've felt a little tone deaf to talk about, but no, I hear ya. I hear ya.

Dan Gingiss (24:20):

You know what? I think it's relevant again. And so here it is. So I was on vacation in Miami. This was about December-ish. And I stayed at a hotel called the Confidant, which is owned by Hyatt. And when we checked in the receptionist pointed out that if we needed anything at all during our stay, we should text him. Now he said that sometimes there was a whole time on the guest services phone number. And of course the front desk was often helping other guests. But the text line he said was open 24 hours, seven days a week. And it had a response time of only a couple minutes because every hotel employee had access to it. Now, interestingly, during our stay, we forgot about the text line.

Joey Coleman (25:06):

Oh, of course you did, because most hotels don't have a text line.

Dan Gingiss (25:09):

Exactly. And so we ended up standing in line at the front desk to ask about getting some additional water bottles for our room. And we waited patiently because sure enough, there was a line, there were a couple of people in front of us. And then when we finally got to the front of the line and told the receptionist what we want, and he said, you didn't have to wait in line. You could have just texted and we would have dropped it off at our, in your room.

Joey Coleman (25:34):

Ah, Got it. So there they are trying to condition you and you know, it's not like they didn't tell you when you first checked in, but I do like how you got this reminder that you could save some time by texting. So it's like, it's a benefit to you, even though let's be candid, there's some business benefits to them to moving these to the texting channel.

Dan Gingiss (25:57):

Of course, of course. And they don't want to, you know, they don't want people seeing long lines at the front desk and all that sort of stuff. So I did some research on this because I was really interested in this texting program. Uh, you and I obviously, uh, when we are traveling and speaking, stay at a lot of hotels and this is the first time that I had experienced, uh, being asked to use a text line. So I found out that a company called SlalomBuild was actually the leader of the design and user experience for Hyatt's mobile app. And what they said on their website was they have a case study about Hyatt. And they said that Hyatt recognizes that travelers. Don't like to ask for things and they'll often go without things, if it's not easy to ask for it. Oh,

Joey Coleman (26:41):

Dan, this is so true. Are plenty of times where I've been in a situation in the hotel where I've thought, Oh, I wish I had blah, blah, blah, or whatever it may be. And I've thought, Oh, do I really want to go downstairs to the front desk? Or do I really want to call the front desk? Or, you know what, nevermind I'll deal with that. So that's an interesting that they kind of recognize that traveler behavior.

Dan Gingiss (27:03):

Yes. And folks, when you recognize a pain point in your customer experience, one of the best things you can do is fix it with their app. You know, obviously you could check in and check out, but at any point in the app, you can text the concierge to order room service, to ask for items, to be delivered to your room. If you need more coffee or another pillow or a toothbrush, you forgot your race or whatever. And not only can you request these items, but the app then gives you the delivery status and the timing of the items. Right. And so you don't have to sit there while the kids are running around or whatever's going on, or you're trying to get them to bed and not know when they're coming. And sometimes it seems like an eternity, right? Oh yeah.

Joey Coleman (27:47):

First of all, number one, I love the idea of digital hospitality. Number two. Yes. The status delivery and timing is huge because I will tell you, there have been many, many a time that we've been on the road and my wife and I have realized, Oh, we need, you know, an extra pillow or an extra sheet for the Haida to bed, or we're going to put the kids on the couch or whatever it may be, and you've called down and he asked for it and they're like, Oh, we'll send somebody right up. And right up turns into five minutes and then 10 minutes. And then you're like, Oh, are they coming? Or I don't want to call them bug them 15 minutes. Oh, finally, I'll call, Oh, just getting, we forgot about it. Sorry. And meanwhile, the kids are, or at least my kids are jumping off the walls. And it's like having the ability to check on that delivery status and timing would be very useful,

Dan Gingiss (28:34):

Useful. Absolutely. And so Slalom and Hyatt collaborated on this and they set three different goals for the app. Now, number one was to increase engagement and improve the guest experience from booking through post departure. And we've talked a lot about it.

Joey Coleman (28:52):

I like it! you had me at post departure.

Dan Gingiss (28:55):

Exactly. Now number two is to gain a better insight into guests needs and preferences. And then to use that information to continue to enhance future experiences. Then the third goal was to build a flexible, scalable digital platform that enables industry

leading features. And so one of the benefits that Hyatt saw from this is not only they did, they have more satisfied guests, but they also had increased bookings. They saw huge increases in mobile booking volume almost immediately after launching this app.

Joey Coleman (29:26):

Ahh, now see, Dan, I've got to admit in many ways, this doesn't surprise me, but I am thrilled to hear that that's what they saw because it gets back to a point that I made earlier in that often when we're a hotel, we don't think of using our personal mobile phone to interact with the hotel. And when you teach me that my phone is a way to communicate with the hotel I E via these text messages. Now I'm going to be comfortable thinking about using my phone for other ways to communicate with the hotel like mobile booking.

Dan Gingiss (29:57):

Exactly. So the takeaway here is that when you focus on improving the experience, especially in the channels of your customer's choice, those customers will spend more, be more loyal. And they'll tell their friends and family about you. In this case, Hyatt removed a customer pain point, which is having to ask for things. And they made it incredibly easy via text, which is a channel that they knew their guests were already comfortable with.

Joey Coleman (30:24):

You know, this makes perfect sense, Dan. And it really supports something that I saw from a report from the folks at Podium. The report was called Five Ways to Stay Ahead of the Competition and one of the main benefits of messaging for businesses is that they can be channel agnostic by employing a single messaging platform. So in other words, customer service agents don't have to learn different messaging platforms like Facebook messenger and WhatsApp and Twitter direct message, which let's be candid. They should talk to you, not to me, or really care what the customer is using because all of the messages can consolidate into a single agent inbox, which allows you to deliver a much more consistent experience across all your interactions. And let's be candid. It's like there's a new app every week. There's something new coming out all the time. So if you really want to be thinking and planning for the future, you've gotta be ready to handle this.

Dan Gingiss (31:17):

Absolutely. And it's a great answer to the question I always get, which is which channel should I be in? My answer is always wherever your customers are. Right? Right. So, uh, one more thing that Podium said, which I think is a great thing to leave our listeners with. They said now is the time to start messaging your customers or risk losing them to businesses that do.

[PARTNERSHIP WITH AVTEX][Playing Experience Points - Fake or Fact]

Dan Gingiss (31:47):

So as we've been telling you, Joey and I are hosting a brand new game show called Experience Points. We are having so much fun with our celebrity contestants. It's three different games in every episode. And one of them is called Fake or Fact. Let's learn how Fake or Fact works

Rules Hostess (32:06):

In Fake or Fact examine three similar experiences. Some are real, some are not. Your task is to determine the fake from the fact. Each experience correctly detected is worth 100 points. Three correct answers will earn you 200 bonus points for a possible school of 500 points.

Joey Coleman (32:28):

Well, I got to tell you, Dan, one of the reasons I loved the concept behind this game is we've got some amazing contestants who've been there, done that got the t-shirt they know customer experience inside out. And this was kind of a fun way for you and I to play around with them a little bit, right? Tease them a little with some things that might be real or might not be real because let's be candid when you've been in the customer experience game for a while, you come to realize that the horrors of customer experience, or the surprise and delight moments of customer experience, there's a ton of them and you never really know what's going to come next.

Dan Gingiss (33:01):

And I'll tell you in this era of quote unquote fake news, it was a lot of fun to try to create the fake experiences and see if we could get people to think they were real and actually Joey, you and I did a pretty good job of that because we think so. Yeah, it was great. Yeah.

Joey Coleman (33:18):

And I mean, I don't know if that speaks more to our character or our creativity, but we'll let the audience decide, but it was super fun to be able to do this. It ends up being a fast paced game. It ends up being a game where you get to see what's possible. And what I really loved about the games, not only Fake or Fact, but all the games we play unexperienced points is that they're designed to help us create some teachable moments, to have some conversations with our customer experience, expert contestants, to suss out how companies should be thinking about their own customer experience. So it's not just an entertaining way to spend a little bit of time, but there are some great takeaways you can apply in your business.

Dan Gingiss (33:59):

Absolutely. And I will say, I mean, Joey and I love recording this podcast Experience This, but I think this is the most fun we've ever had recording this game show because it is just so much it's so entertaining the entire time. If you like this show, you will love Experience Points. So do us a favor, check it out at ExperiencePointsGame.com. That's ExperiencedPointsGame.com. It's

brought to you by our friends, and sponsors of the Experience This Show as well, Avtex. Check them out at avtex.com. Thank you Avtex for keeping us employed and really allowing us to have a ton of fun!

[SEGMENT INTRO - THIS JUST HAPPENED]

Joey Coleman (34:41):

We 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][Don't Switch Them to a Different Channel]

Dan Gingiss (34:54):

So like many small business owners applied for a forgivable business loan through the government paycheck protection program.

Joey Coleman (35:03):

Uh, the dreaded PPP - I'm not sure I'm going to like what's coming Dan... Remember this is a positive experience program, I just, I know I have a number of friends who worked in kind of the administration of this program on the banking side and talk about some horror stories of just like wanting to do the best to help people out and just not getting good information and directions, especially at the beginning of how to process the applications, how to it, et cetera, et cetera.

Dan Gingiss (35:38):

Well, yes, you're. And now you're going to tell most of my story for me, but yes, this is about a bank. It's not about the government. Joey, I don't know what your hourly consulting rate is, but I can tell you that given the paltry sum that I actually ended up perceiving after all my castle, I think I pretty much broke even on the whole thing. So as I mentioned it, the Paycheck Protection Program or PPP, as you said, is a forgivable loan and it's designed to help small businesses stay afloat and keep more people employed during the pandemic. Now it was kind of hastily announced at the beginning of the pandemic, if I could. And it actually took banks by surprise, and many of them were not prepared for what was an onslaught of loan applications. So I chose an online bank that had a great reputation and it was actually one of the first banks to set up an online application for the PPP loans. The process was actually really fast and easy. And so after being conditionally approved, I had to submit some evidential paperwork.

Joey Coleman (36:39):

Ooo that sounds fancy!

Dan Gingiss (36:42):

I use that because I know that we have a recovering attorney on the program.

Joey Coleman (36:45):

Yep - the first step is admitting you have a problem...

Dan Gingiss (36:47):

Evidential. Yeah. So I had to submit like my LLC formation documents and uh, I had to give him some bank information, whatever. And I also had to tell him, by the way, this is the important part, where did I want them to send the money? Right. And so I go through that familiar process, I know all our listeners have done it. You've done it before where you set up a new bank account and they, they put like 31, send me a penny. And then yeah. And you have to confirm both. You have to confirm it. Right. So everything went through flawlessly and it all seemed set.

Joey Coleman (37:17):

I'm sensing a punchline, but...

Dan Gingiss (37:20):

Nope, that's the end of the story. See you next time on Experience This! Now the next time I logged in to check my status, the bank account that I had just set up was missing. Oh, of course. And there was a message asking me to add one. So this was curious since I had obviously already done it. And so I tried to add it again, but I got an error message. So I emailed the bank and I was assured that my account was registered.

Dan Gingiss (37:48):

Everything was fine. And even though the website didn't show my bank account information, don't worry. It was there.

Joey Coleman (37:55):

The age old theory of don't trust what you're seeing, trust what I'm saying. Oh great! Surprise, surprise!

Dan Gingiss (38:01):

I was a little skeptical, but okay. So a couple of weeks later I was told that I was approved for a PPP loan, but I never saw any deposit come through. So I checked the website again and I get this message. The small business association requires that paycheck protection program loans be dispersed within 20 days of approval. Since we did not receive signed loan documentation from you during this time, we had to spend your loan for the dime being, Oh my goodness. You gotta be kidding me. So yeah. So sitting here waiting for the deposit and then they basically tell me you didn't get the deposit because you didn't give us a bank account is essentially what happened. So I emailed them again. And this time I got no answer for over a week.

So I decided to call and people, we don't want to call it's a last resort. Yeah, exactly younger. Okay. But I called and I got this recorded message. Of course.

Joey Coleman (38:55):  
Surprise! Your call is very important to us. We are very overwhelmed right now..

Dan Gingiss (39:03):  
Volume, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. But what, the thing that annoyed me was is it the message kept telling me that everything I needed to know what's on the website.

Joey Coleman (39:12):  
Of course! Go to the website, go to the website! You'd already been to the website. Of course, of course.

Dan Gingiss (39:19):  
So this just made me madder and madder as I'm listening to this thing. And it kept telling me to go to the very website that was not providing any information on why my loan loan had suddenly gone from approved to pending.

Joey Coleman (39:33):  
You know, Dan, I think sometimes businesses just, they don't remember that they're dealing with customers that aren't from 50 years ago. Right? I think the average customer today knows well, before you call, check the website, now that doesn't always happen, but I know you always go to the website. First, most customers are trying to self serve and the best businesses should let them self serve. Let them go to the website and see, and guess what if they call you, it probably means that they couldn't find the answer easily on your website or it's not on your website.

Dan Gingiss (40:08):  
I mean, if you're going to tell people to go to the website, make sure the dang website works is all we're asking for here. So finally, this is the best part. So I'm sitting there on hold like an idiot for five or 10 minutes, whatever it was. And all of a sudden the recorded message says your time in queue has expired. Please call back another time and hung up on me.

Joey Coleman (40:28):  
So let me get this right... The hold service decided that it was tired of having you wait, so it kicked you out and have you call back another time.

Dan Gingiss (40:38):  
It wasn't after an hour, it was after five or 10 minutes and I was waiting on hold. So now I can't get my question answered on the website. I can't get my question answered on the phone and I'm literally handcuffed. I don't have any idea what to do.

Joey Coleman (40:51):  
You know - and I'm thinking somewhere, someone is being incentivized for hold times. Like someone on the bank is being incentivized for whole time. So they're like, I've got an idea. Let's kick people out after five minutes because then our longest whole time will be five minutes. Right? Write a brilliant sign, align the incentives here and make sure people do it not to mention. It's like how absolutely infuriating. It's like, you know, the person picking up and saying, Oh, let me transfer you. And you're like, no, no, no. Don't transfer me, click. And then you're like, great. Now I'm completely lost and we'll never speak to a human again.

Dan Gingiss (41:31):  
Exactly. So listen, folks, when customers call you, don't tell them to go to the website. What customers tweet you, don't tell them to call you rest assured that your customers know the service channels that are available and they're going to choose the channel they want, which isn't always going to be the channel that you want. It's the responsibility of the business to meet its customers where they are. My experience was so frustrating precisely because I tried to self-serve on the website. And then when I needed help, I was told to go to the website. Ugh!

[SHOW OUTRO]

Joey Coleman (42:10):  
Wow! Thanks for joining us for another episode of Experience This!

Dan Gingiss (42:15):  
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 (42:24):  
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 (42:43):  
Thanks again for your time and we'll see you next week for more...

Joey Coleman (42:46):

Experience.

Dan Gingiss (42:46):  
This!