

# How to Make a Holiday Miracle

Real Life Tales of Service, Technology and Spirit

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It was a true miracle! I ordered personalized holiday cards online from Tiny Prints and I received an email back within minutes from a real live human being - with her name and phone number in the signature - assuring me that she had personally handled and proofread my order. Could it be? Are companies finally figuring out how to use today's technology to deliver yesterday's customer service?

I had a very pleasant phone conversation this morning with an independent contractor, and within an hour of my hanging up, she gave my company a shoutout on Facebook. And yesterday, when I walked into a [local shop](#), the saleswoman dropped what she was doing, walked over to greet and wait on me, offered me refreshments, and helped me through every step of my shopping. In yesterday's mail, I got a personal note from the sales manager at [Michael Stars](#), with a special discount offer. She said I could call her if I couldn't get into the store, and she would handle the shipping.

Are businesses finally figuring out that smiles, caring, and convenience are as important as tweets and databases? I sure hope so! Just a few basic reminders of holiday treats you can offer your customers/clients:

- Thank them for their business. Whether it's an e-greeting, a handwritten card, a personal phone call (a rarity these days), or just a note at the bottom of your December invoice - let them know you value them.
- Train and retrain your team on the importance of service and creative problem-solving. A local retailer told me he listens to his staff especially carefully over the holidays and is quick to intervene if he sees that a customer's needs aren't being met.
- Remember the simple things. A customer "touch" does not need to be fancy or expensive to be meaningful. (As mentioned above, just the reassurance that my cards had been proofread made me feel better about the company).
- Consider making a special holiday donation in their name to a relevant nonprofit.
- Give a little "something extra" to your best customers and the colleagues who helped you throughout 2010. Offer a free hour of service, a meaningful gift with purchase or an invitation to a special event.

And above all, resolve to keep up this spirit of giving and caring long after the holidays have passed. Great customer service knows no season... make each day a miracle!

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