

SECTION: Pest Prevention

SUBJECT: Guide for Saving Customers

P & P No.: 708**Section:** Pest Prevention**Subject:** Guide For Saving Customers**Approved By:** Eddie Faircloth**Effective Date:** July 24, 2000**Last Reviewed Date:****Policy Owner:**

Despite other reasons expressed, the real reason behind an overwhelming number of cancellation requests is customer dissatisfaction. We must make a personal visit to learn what needs to be corrected to prevent dissatisfaction of customers.

In order to save these accounts and satisfy these customers,

- Pursue immediately by a personal visit
- Act with a sense of urgency
- Display a genuine concern

After announcing ourselves to the customer, we must **LISTEN**.

We can now use the following procedure as our guide toward saving the account.

Apologize for any inconvenience or unhappiness caused by our actions or by our failure to act. **LISTEN!!**

Thank the Customer for taking the time to let us know. **LISTEN!!**

Explain that we're only as good as the service performed by our representatives in the field, and the quicker we learn of our shortcomings, the quicker we can and will take action to rectify them. **LISTEN!!**

Insist that you are not going to leave the customer with a problem.

Suggested Replies

- "You've placed your confidence in us, Mrs. Jones, and we're not going to let you down."
- "You've invested your money, Mrs. Jones, and I'm here to see that you receive full value for it."
- "You've taken your valuable time to inform me of the problem, Mrs. Jones, and I'm here to spend whatever time is necessary to solve it to your satisfaction."
- "Mrs. Jones, I'll not waste more of your valuable time in **talking** about what we can do. Just let me get to work on the problem now. I'll let the results speak for themselves."
- "Mrs. Jones, I understand and appreciate your feelings about this situation, and regardless of what

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you decide about future service, I'll correct the problem for you right now."

Assure the customer that you are prepared to solve the problem **NOW! ACT!!**

1. Inspect and verify the problem
2. Perform the service
3. Schedule a follow-up treatment, if necessary, and arrange for the technician to be with you. Follow-up to make sure the appointment is kept.

Thank the customer for taking the time to tell you of the problem and for giving you the opportunity to correct it.

Reassure the customer that you will do everything possible to protect against a recurrence of the situation.

Remind the customer that you are "as near as the telephone" if he or she has any problems or questions.

Bring back information and **EDUCATE!**

1. Inspector - When you find the sales plan is not being followed
2. Technician - When service procedures were not followed
3. Administrative - When billing or administrative procedures were not followed so as to avoid future similar problems

The following is a list of the reasons used most frequently by customers requesting cancellation and some suggested responses, which might be used to save the cancellation:

1. **DISSATISFIED WITH SERVICE** - Remember that "The Customer is Always Right" and regardless of how we feel about our service, the customer may not feel the same way. However, never let a customer cancel for what they feel is poor service. We have the ability to correct the situation and we should.
 - **NEW ACCOUNT** (less than 30 days) - "Our materials have not had a chance to work completely. I'll send a technician out to provide an additional service at no charge." Identify the specific problem.
 - **OLDER ACCOUNT** (over 30 days) - "Some problems need extra attention. That is why Massey gives you unlimited service calls at no charge. I'll notify your technician right away. He/she will return your call today." Explain that trouble can happen very suddenly (roaches coming in on grocery packages, etc.)
 - **ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS**
 1. "We have a very good service reputation, and we earned it by taking care of our customers. If you have a problem, we want to get it solved for you. When is the best

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time for us to come by?"

2. **GET 30 MORE DAYS** (last resort) - "Please give us 30 days to satisfy you. If we don't have satisfactory results in that time, regardless of how many trips our technician makes, there won't be a charge for this 30 days of service."
3. Confidently assure the customer that there is not any pest problem that Massey Services cannot handle.

2. **DISSATISFIED WITH PERSONNEL**

- **NEW TECHNICIAN** - Of course, he/she is different, but he/she has been thoroughly trained and will try very hard. We believe that in a short while you'll like this technician just as much or more than our previous technician.
- **POOR WORK** - When strong objections as to sloppiness, work or attitude is mentioned, send a Service Manager. Thank the customer for telling you. Our company is proud of our neat and professional image.
- **CHANGE TECHNICIAN** (last resort only) - Switch technician if absolutely necessary. Have the Service Manager or General Manager contact the account.

3. **DISSATISFIED WITH BILLING** - Use a "You are right" attitude here very strongly. If they are right, we will be glad to correct the situation. Thank them for calling you. Be personally involved. Arrange to call the customer back after checking records.

- Generate a computer printout of the customer's account history.
- Check for the customer's signature on service tickets.
- Look for "outside service" where no service was rendered on inside.
- Have Service Manager take a copy of signed service ticket where this information will convince the customer.
- Last Resort - Write an allowance if necessary to save a worthwhile customer. Follow through and **BE SURE** this problem is solved **PERMANENTLY**.

4. **LOST TO COMPETITOR (Lower price)**

- **FIND OUT WHY** - Get the name of competitor and customer's reason for change. If the customer is changing companies because he/she is unhappy with our service, the cancellation reason would be #1 or #2.
- **SELL SERVICE OVER PRICE** - Massey technicians are not just providing a spray service. Each technician carries special materials and tools besides spray equipment. Application

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methods are prescribed to achieve professional results. Massey technicians are thoroughly trained.

- ENFORCE CONTRACT - If not expired, tell the customer we BOTH have a contractual obligation to fulfill. Try to enforce the contract, but be tactful.

5. MOVED / SOLD / DECEASED

- If the customer is moving, attempt to transfer service to our service center in the new area (if applicable) rather than cancel it. (See Office Policy & Procedures #425 for details on transferring accounts.) If the customer is moving out of our service area, get their new address and phone number. Collect any balance due!
- Get new owner's name. Sell our service and offer free termite inspection. Should be the responsibility of the technician / specialist servicing the route.
- Get the name of the realtor handling the property, either selling or renting. Inquire about continuing protection.

6. FINANCIAL (Cannot afford) - Explain that pest prevention is a necessity in Florida, not a luxury. Collect any balance due.**7. DELINQUENT BALANCE / BAD DEBT**

- Check records for accuracy, pay pattern, time on books. Don't lose valuable long-time account(s), but make sure that they make regular attempts to pay.
- Get technician's opinion on ability to pay.
- Phone customer and explain collection policy.
- Offer 5% discount for year's payment in advance.

8. CREDIT BALANCE / REFUND

- Run Customer Menu 1 Report 29 - Cancelled Accounts with Credit Balances report at the close of business each month.
- Any account appearing with a credit balance must be refunded.
- Check records for accuracy.
- Prepare an A/P to refund the balance less any discount for PIA.
- Submit A/P along with a copy of the customer A/R copy and cancelled credit balance report

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to Corporate for approval and issuance of refund check.

9. PRICE INCREASE

- "No type of service is delivered to a home as economically as Massey's Pest Prevention Program". "Our charge is considerably less than the charge for a TV repairman, a plumber, or an electrician, and our materials and labor are included in the price. In addition, we provide extra service without charge".
- "Prices on our materials, equipment, vehicles, gasoline, and other overhead expenses such as taxes and insurance have increased substantially over the last couple of years. We make every attempt to control costs, however, some increase in our operation costs are beyond our control."

10. CONTRACT COMPLETED (Service not needed - no trouble)

- **ADVANTAGES IF CONTINUED** - We consider them a valued customer and will continue the service on a month-to-month basis without obligation of a contract. Some advantages are:
 1. Unlimited extra service calls, as required.
 2. Rodent control especially needed in colder weather when rats and mice move into homes for harborage.
 3. Refer to pests prevalent during this month and coming months. Pest prevention is a year round necessity to protect health of family.
 4. Avoiding additional initial charges, price increases, re-infestations, and damage.
 5. We will render outside preventive work and continue efforts to keep problems out.
 6. Interest the customer in Massey incentive programs if such are available (free service for leads, prizes, etc)
- **DISADVANTAGES**
 1. **If the customer cancels and re-infestation results, there will be the nuisance of a re-inspection, initial charge, and new contract, with possible price increase.**
 2. **If the customer chooses to do their own pest control, explain that the cost is ultimately higher because retail insecticides are sold at a lower concentration percentage for safety reasons, which limits effectiveness. Also, the potential for hazard is greater for an untrained person. Some materials are not available to the general public.**
 3. **It is not just a question of applying a material, more important is where, how and when. All Massey technicians are trained and study continually about this. This is especially true with today's materials, such as baits.**

11. OUT OF BUSINESS

- Move fast, contact customer, and collect balance due. Call the customer before the phone is disconnected.

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- Send the salesperson to determine if the customer is in fact out of business. Check with the realtor or owner of the building. See the neighbors to locate a customer who has skipped. (Sell the new one).
12. **BURNED / TORN DOWN / DESTROYED** - Check to see if the owner is opening up at a new location.
13. **TEMPORARY DISCONTINUANCE - SEASONAL ACCOUNT**
- Cold weather - no trouble. It may be winter outside, but it is always summer in your home.
 - If seasonal, with the customer going away, remind them that the roaches and pests are staying. Arrange for a neighbor to let us in.
 - A monthly account may be able to be converted to a Four Seasons account in order to save.

OTHER (Explain)

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