

## Community Comment – January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017

By Jon Sapper

### Customer Service During the Holidays

From time to time I've commented on the importance of good customer service. It really does make the difference between having a good experience when buying something or leaving you with a sour taste in your mouth. Well, I have another story to tell you about.

One of my daughters lives in the far reaches of Northern Idaho. This time of year the only difference between that area and the North Pole is a few hours of daylight and location for Santa's workshop. The weather and temperature is about the same. About a month before Christmas, I asked her what she would like. She said...crab! Send me crab! She used to live on the coast and found out that the crab where she lives doesn't quite taste the same as fresh local Dungeness. I told her you can't expect it to taste the same since it travels across the country and probably Europe to get to where she lives. So, even though sending fresh cooked crab overnight costs about the same as a car payment,.....hey, that's what she really wanted.

The local guaranteed overnight shipper was great. I dropped off the package late morning and was told it would be there by noon the next day. A little dry ice in the container and we're set to go. By noon the next day, no crab had arrived. I said to my daughter, "They're really busy this time of year, so they might be a few hours late." Four o'clock that afternoon, still no crab. I said, "Well, I'm sure it's on the truck for an evening delivery." I looked up the tracking number and saw it had been put on the truck at nine that morning. Eight o'clock....no crab. I called their customer service number and listened to some great music.....for forty-five minutes before the call was dropped. I called back, this time there wasn't any music. Maybe the computer recognized my phone number and decided I had already heard enough Christmas music. After one hour, now it's after ten at night, I hung up.

The next morning, my daughter called the company in Spokane and was told they just didn't have time to deliver it the day before and it was still on the truck. Imagine if Santa did that and said to all the kids, I'll see you in March. Not good. They did tell her if she really wanted it THAT day, they would take it off the truck

and she could drive three hours round trip to pick it up. Are you kidding me? She drove and picked up the crab at about the same time I showed up at our local office. They profusely apologized, saying this was no way to have handled this up north, saying I shouldn't have to pay for the shipping and helped me start the refund process. Great customer service.

One hundred points for the local folks, zero for the Spokane folks. Oh yea, Happy New Year.

This has been Jon Sapper for Community Comment.