

Chris's Corner: What is value?

The concept of value is actually a relative term.

It doesn't matter what business you are in; the most basic premise of business is to provide something of value to your clientele and in return they give you a monetary return.

A common issue is that what one customer or person perceives to be of value may differ dramatically from another one. How can you be all things to all people?

The truth is you can't. Everything you attempt to provide in terms of value, be it a product or service, has a distinct cost associated with it. Sometimes what customers desire on the one hand doesn't match what they're willing to pay. There often is a disconnect, so you have to keep this in mind.

In the service business we have a saying, or perhaps it is an inside joke. We say the customer wants it fast, cheap and good, but they only get to pick two.

Fast and quality, you are going to pay for it.

Cheap and good, you're going to wait for it.

Fast and cheap, you get what you pay for.

I am sure it is the same in any business.

In this business, our number one focus is the quality of our products and service. To focus on the quality being given to the customer, you have to focus on quality in the entire process. This means investing in people, technology, tools, training, superior products and ability to stand behind your workmanship and products with a guarantee. You can't deliver quality on the cheap; therefore, the price to customer maybe slightly higher than something of lesser quality.

My experience in business and my experience as a consumer shows me if the overall experience is high quality consistently, people, myself included, are willing to pay a fair premium for the product or service.

There, of course, is the time old adage, you get what you pay for. Obviously, it is true and if you can live with that in certain areas then there is no reason not to do or buy certain things on the cheap.

The biggest thing to consider in your value proposition is determining why most customers do business with you and then emphasizing the best possible representation of that to the customer at a mutually acceptable price.