



## Creating Memorable Moments

By Doug Fleener

Last winter my friend told me about an incredible "Wow" he received while on a business trip near Cape. One morning he looked outside and saw that it had snowed a few inches overnight. **As he left his hotel, The Residence Inn in Dedham, Craig was pleasantly surprised to discover that the hotel staff had gone out that morning and cleared off every car in the lot.** That's not a wow. Not even a Wow. That is a WOW! When Craig went back in to thank the hotel staff he was told it was the assistant manager idea to do it. I say, promote that person!

Think about the goodwill that created. The first thing Craig did was to call and tell me about it. Then he told his wife when he talked to her. Then he told every client he saw that day. **A simple act of kindness resulted in Craig telling a handful of people about the hotel.** There is no doubt where Craig will stay on his next business trip to that area. There is a good chance that the people to whom he told the story will mention that hotel to someone they know who is planning a trip to the area. And Craig was just one of many guests who were WOW'd by this act of kindness. **The assistant manager created the most powerful marketing tool there is, a Memorable Moment.**

**A Memorable Moment is created when a customer experiences something notable and impressive that makes a lasting positive impression. A Memorable Moment is something that a person will always associate with that business, organization, or person.** Memorable Moments in our lives are pretty special; they might include that first kiss, when we received a diploma, when we said "I do" and the birth or adoption of our children. Memorable Moments connected to a business may not be as life-changing as some of the person moments, but they are rare, and that's what makes them so powerful.

I have a few retail Memorable Moments myself. I remember the first time someone took me into a Build-A-Bear, back when they were first starting out. I knew I was looking at a brilliant concept. I remember walking into a clothing store in Scottsdale, Arizona on a scorching hot day and being offered not only a cold drink but a choice between a soft drink or a bottle of water. Of course every other store in the area had posted "no drink" signs on their doors. And I remember buying a pair of pants in a Nordstrom and when the salesperson heard I was visiting that city he insisted that he have them pressed for me.

These are facts about Memorable Moments:

1. **They are almost always a result of another person.** The hotel Craig was staying at probably had an upgraded bed, a bowed shower curtain, a large showerhead, and other amenities that almost all hotels are doing today. Don't get me wrong, they're nice things to have but they're things. It was the assistant manager's actions that created the Memorable Moment.
2. **They are the result of a culture of hospitality and focus on the customer.** Internally and product focused companies rarely create Memorable Moments.



3. **They are always created.** Memorable moments just don't happen; they are created by people who care. Sometimes they're planned, more often than not they're spontaneous.
4. **The Memorable Moment happens because an employee sees the chance to create it.** Companies who focus on creating Memorable Moments create zealous customer advocates, and that results in additional sales.

**To create a Memorable Moment, all a person has to do is to constantly ask themselves, "How can I WOW this customer?"** What unexpected surprise or generous action can I take that will result in the customer saying WOW? **Memorable Moments are not hard to create. The hard part is making it an integral part of your stores customer experience.**

I don't care what's happening in a local or national economy, Memorable Moments will create sales today and sales for tomorrow.

So let me ask, how will you create Memorable Moments for your customer today and everyday going forward?

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**About the author:** Doug Fleener is a veteran retailer with over 25 years of hands-on retail experience with world-class retailers including Bose Corporation and The Sharper Image. He has also owned and operated his own specialty stores. In his ten years at Bose, Doug grew the Retail Direct Group from four to 100 stores and was instrumental in developing Bose's unique and engaging retail methods.

Doug is now president and managing partner of Dynamic Experiences Group LLC, a Lexington, MA based retail and customer experience consulting firm dedicated to helping retailers improve their customer experiences that results in higher sales and profits.

Fleener is the author of the book *The Profitable Retailer: 56 surprisingly simple and effective lessons to boost your sales and profits*. He is a frequent speaker around the world on retail issues and his insights has been covered in leading business media including *The New York Times*, *Entrepreneur*, and *Shopping Centers Today*. Along with partner Matt Norcia they write the popular retail blog *Retail Contrarian*.

Doug lives in Lexington, Massachusetts with his wife and two daughters, where in his free time he barbecues while listening to Jimmy Buffet music.

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