

The Care and Feeding of the Upright Customer
Maintaining a Quality Clientele
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Basic Biases

“It takes a village to raise a child.”

“It takes a community to be an adult.”

The PTG is our community, and we learn how to become adults together.

We both take and give back.

Self care is very important. Don't let the well get empty.

What is your preferred customer?

Jim responded, “A warm one: alive at 98 degrees and able to write out a check.”

Brainstorm ideas of the ideal customer:

Happy

Regular

Appreciative

Willing to maintain the piano in top-notch shape, whatever it takes

“Just send me the bill.”

Interested in what you do.

Doesn't vacuum or wash the dishes during the tuning

Loves to play a well-tuned piano

What socio-economic category is desirable?

Musicians are not necessarily the best customers: no money to maintain their pianos.

Professionals, like doctors & lawyers.

Customers who can't afford the work on pianos that really need the work.

Challenge ourselves with customers who are very demanding for absolute perfection.

How do we find optimum customers?

You can find things where you hang out and where you go.

Where are some places where you go? (No cost.)

Music groups, public work, piano stores, schools, other professionals.

You can find things where you don't hang out. (Generally cost money.)

Some ideas of finding customers in places where you don't normally go:

Web site, yellow pages, ads, music stores, teachers, customer referrals, word-of-mouth, good work builds a good reputation.

Style & ethics

With fly fishing, it's important to find and make the proper fly in order to catch a fish. If fish had word-of-mouth, word would get around that this guy has fluff.

With piano tuning, it is not just fluff and feathers, especially with barbed hooks. Know your stuff, and if you don't, know who does. Have your network of support handy.

Costs of customers

Getting customers cost money, and those customers produce a certain amount of money.

That phone call cost you.

Keep your referrals in mind. "Oh, I know somebody who could help you."

Instead of saying, "I know somebody in your area. Here's the number," say

"I tell you what. I know somebody in your neighborhood. If you give me your phone number, I'll have him call you," to make sure that the phone call gets made.

Taking care of customers: the care and feeding of the customer and the piano

Think of the customer and the piano as a unit.

Have knowledge of the product

Know the market

Know your value in the market

There are some basic rules to keep in mind when caring for the customer.

Communication.

- What are their needs with the piano?
- If they know and trust you with your work, they will
- What is out there? What should they expect from this piano? What should they not expect from the piano? What are their options?
- Contact and talk with the customers you never see.
- Communicate the piano's needs to the customer, and communicate the customer's needs into the piano.
- Remind people.
 - Phone calls with a tickler file.
 - Post cards. Send cards to the customers you want to keep.
 - Schedule next appointment right at the last appointment.
 - Few people use e-mails.
- Record-keeping
 - Card files
 - Database files on the computer
 - Microsoft Access
 - MS Outlook is compatible with tuning devices
- The customer is always right
 - If the customer is wrong, it is your fault, not theirs, because you have not explained or communicated properly
 - It's better to keep a customer than to make a little money.