

RATINGS

Customer Service Roundup

Video

Remember Me

Reviewed by Bill Ellet for *Training Media Review*

Now in its third edition, this video has an updated visual facade, but its core message remains the same: Each time you forget the customer, you damage your company. And the customer may not always be right, but he or she always wins.

Refreshed with new footage and improved with a meeting opener and closer, the latest edition of *Remember Me* is a compact package teaching a few customer service basics, each indispensable. The implicit message is that every service rep carries a substantial responsibility because his or her actions determine whether a customer stays a customer.

The brevity of the video makes it a favorite for the compressed training schedules in call centers and other service operations. You'll need to weigh the benefits of this program against the high-end price.

Secret Service Awards

Reviewed by Bill Ellet for *Training Media Review*

This video teaches the basics but not in a painstaking or condescending way; it assumes viewers have more than a cursory knowledge of customer service. It's also outstanding on diversity. How many videos would have a guy complaining about a rash from a skin lotion?

Peter Quarry has produced a fun video intended for young customer service employees. The delivery is intelligent and isn't spoon fed with bulleted lists. Effective vignettes cover more than the basics and require more than perfunctory participation. Viewers will have to watch them carefully and track what the service reps are doing with the help of a service scorecard on the screen at the same time.

If you want to put some snap into training sessions with the young and yawning, try this one on them.

Smile!

Reviewed by Dan Michaluk for *Training Media Review*

Smile! tells the story of a singing and smiling bus driver named Reggie Wilson. It's a story that will make your customer service employees feel good. Moreover, it will help you cultivate an infectious positive attitude that will

improve customer service. *Smile!* is a unique and compelling video because of Wilson. Enthusiastic motivational presentations may help sales and service employees improve their attitudes, but Reggie's story makes the case better than words alone. If you need to encourage a positive service approach (or have a difficult or "poisoned" service environment), *Smile!* is a great training choice.

Software

DialogCoach

Reviewed by Dan Michaluk for *Training Media Review*

Allen Interactions nearly conquers the ultimate challenge in simulated learning with DialogCoach, a virtual mentor for customer contact. It offers a customizable simulation engine that can model many common customer service scenarios.

DialogCoach is the training software, or front end, of Allen's solution. Using a sports metaphor, the learning exercise is divided into two modules: Training Camp and Contact Training.

In Training Camp, reps complete three scenario-based exercises. In two of the exercises, they listen to a customer interaction, analyze it, and then study an expert's analysis. In a third exercise, reps record a response to several call scenarios. Responses are saved in audio files and can be replayed and analyzed by the reps and their managers.

In Contact Training, reps handle a complete customer call. They listen to a customer query and respond by speaking into the microphone. If reps follow the proper script, voice recognition technology activates immediate feedback (a green checkmark), and the call progresses. If not, the call stalls and reps can ask for help.

Contact centers with highly scripted service processes should investigate this tool as a complement to live coaching and call monitoring, as should contact centers with customer relationship management systems. DialogCoach is an excellent tool for helping reps master system tasks.

Contact center trainers have already embraced simulation as a preferred training method. Indeed, there are many simulation-based solutions for contact centers on the market. But the successful use of voice recognition technology in DialogCoach distinguishes it from the pack. Also, Allen's efforts to deliver an inexpensive scenario-building solution are laudable, if not completely realized.

Our only warning: Organizations shouldn't underestimate the implementation effort required to launch this powerful, yet complex, tool.

Online libraries

PrimeCustomerCare
Reviewed by Dan Michaluk for
Training Media Review

PrimeLearning.com offers a comprehensive rundown of customer service best practice in PrimeCustomerCare. The content itself is strong, but the package needs to be implemented carefully if it's to deliver better on-the-job performance.

PrimeCustomerCare comprises 11 Internet-based courses that address a range of customer service issues. The first six courses help learners grasp the business context of customer care by defining customer service, emphasizing its personal and business benefits, and introducing key concepts.

PrimeCustomerCare will help service representatives, sales representatives, and employees indirectly involved in service delivery identify the benefits of customer-centricity and good and bad customer service behavior. In order to derive maximal value from this offering, use it as a primer in conjunction with activities such as mentoring, custom-built application exercises, or action learning that help learners apply their knowledge on the job. Those purchasing PrimeCustomerCare should also create an implementation plan that directs the intended audience to the most relevant parts of this broad offering and that considers innovative ways to motivate use of the PrimeCustomerCare chat rooms and discussion forums.

Course Details

Remember Me, third edition, video, 2000, 15 minutes, CRM Learning, 800.421.0833; www.crmlearning.com. Purchase: US\$845. Other material: leader guide.

Secret Service Awards, video, 15 minutes, Quarrymedia. Purchase: US\$395. Other material: user guide. Review copy furnished by VideoLearning Systems, 800.622.3610; www.videolrn.com.

Smile!, video, 2002, 12 minutes, SunShower Learning, 888.723.8517; www.smile-video.com. Purchase:

COMPARATIVE RATINGS (highest to lowest)

Title	Pros	Cons	Overall rating
Videos			
<i>Remember Me</i>	simple message, brief, production values	price	★★★★1/2
<i>Secret Service Awards</i>	vignettes, intelligent, price	lapses in tone, limited audience (entry level)	★★★★1/2
<i>Smile!</i>	story, support materials	content, deals only with motivation, not skills	★★★★1/2
Software			
DialogCoach	use of technology, voice capability implementation effort	limited audience (scripted call centers), authoring tool	★★★
Online Libraries			
PrimeCustomer-Care	content	price, conventional content	★★

US\$595. Other material: facilitator guide, buttons.

DialogCoach, software, 2001, 2-20 hours, Allen Interactions, 800.204.2635; www.alleni.com. Purchase: US\$130-\$500 per person.

PrimeCustomerCare, online, 2001, 18 hours, PrimeLearning.com, 860.526.3487; www.PrimeLearning.com. Purchase: US\$450 per user per year; \$8100 per 100 users per year. Other resources: mentoring, discussion boards, chats.

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