

*SERVICE IS UNIVERSAL, BUT DELIVERY IS PERSONAL.
MASTER BOTH.*

PRACTICAL GUIDE TO SERVE DIVERSE CUSTOMERS



BY PRISCILLA D. UDAM
2025

FIRST EDITION 2025

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Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

Published in Malaysia by

Politeknik Mukah
KM 7.5 Jalan Oya
96400 Mukah
Sarawak, Malaysia
084-874001
www.pmu.edu.my



Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the National Library of Malaysia

eISBN 978-629-7710-10-5

Preface

Customer service isn't about following a script—it's about seeing, hearing, and valuing every person who walks through your door.

Today's customers come from all walks of life: different ages, cultures, abilities, and backgrounds. Yet many businesses still treat them all the same. That's a missed opportunity.

This book is a practical guide for anyone in retail who wants to:

- Connect better with customers of all backgrounds
- Solve problems with creativity and empathy
- Build loyalty by making every shopper feel welcome

You'll find real simple strategies, and actionable tips you can use immediately—whether you're a cashier, manager, or store owner.

Good service starts with understanding. Let's begin.

Priscilla D. Udam

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Creativity is intelligence
having fun.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Introduction

Customers are potential buyers of a certain product or services and has potential to repeat their purchases in the future.

Customer service plays a vital role in ensuring business sustainability by getting new customers and retain customers for a longer period of time.

Customers service must aware that there are several types of customer that have different needs and treatment in which will impact their level of satisfaction.





Basic Customers Service

90% of customers rate an "immediate" response as essential when they have a customer service question. (HubSpot)

Basic Customers Service

#1 Aware



Be aware of your customer existence

Greet your customer first politely

Be confident!

Basic Customers Service

#2 Communicate



Ask the customers' wants or needs.

Create small talk to get to know
your customers.

Basic Customers Service

#3 Listen



Listen actively.

Make eye contact.

Pay attention to the unspoken expression (facial expression, body gesture, tone of voice etc)

Basic Customers Service

#4 Understand Your Customer



Pay attention to customers' verbal & non-verbal expression.

Ask questions for clarification.

Adapt your customer service style to solve customers' problem.

Basic Customers Service

#5 Build rapport



Be empathy

Follow up the customers after
sales/service

Make sure your customers leave with
happy feeling.

Basic Customers Service

Recap

#1 Aware

#2 Communicate

#3 Listen

#4 Understand Your Customer

#5 Build rapport



eMarketer, Accenture 2024

2025 Prediction

70%

of customer service for Gen Z will happen inside TikTok/Instagram shops.



The Diversity of Customers Group



The Diversity of Customers Group

The term "customer diversity" describes the **range of backgrounds, requirements, and traits of people looking for goods or services.**

Effective customer service requires an understanding of and **ability to adjust to the diversity of customers.**

Four important client groups are examined in this presentation, along with communication techniques.

- Customers with language differences
- Customers with disabilities
- Elderly customers
- Younger customers

2024-2025

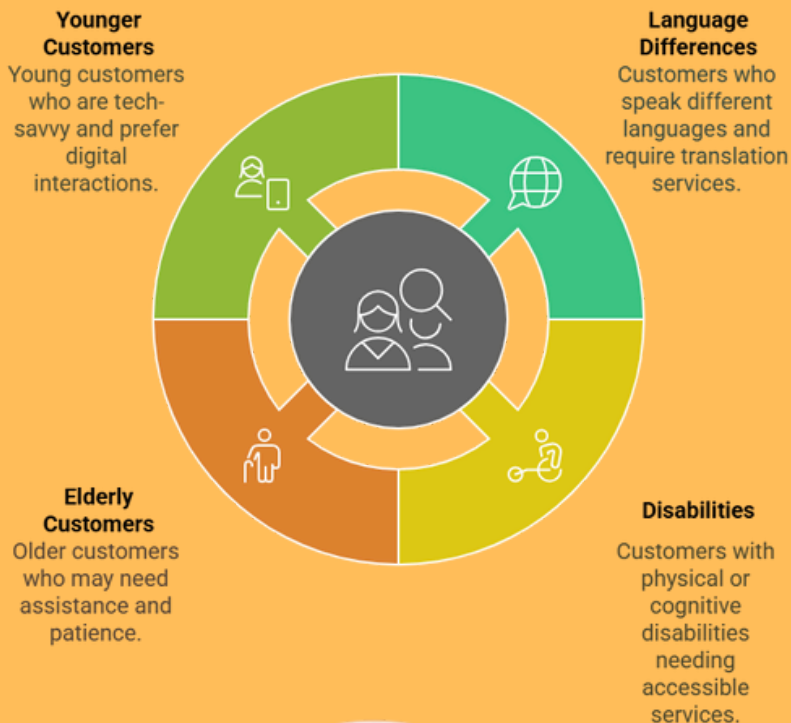
AI & INCLUSIVE DESIGN

Future trends

More chatbots trained on diverse datasets to avoid bias.

Customer Diversity

Understanding Customer Diversity



Customer Diversity

Harmonizing Customer Diversity



Varied Backgrounds

Understanding cultural differences for personalized customer interactions.



Diverse Needs

Addressing unique customer requirements for optimal service.



Key Customer Groups

Identifying and targeting specific customer segments effectively.



Communication Strategies

Implementing strategies for clear and effective customer communication.

Customer Diversity

Customers with language differences



Customers with language differences face unique challenges in accessing products, services, and support due to linguistic barriers. These barriers can affect communication, customer satisfaction, and business outcomes.

In 2023, the higher retention
is

30%

Companies offering multilingual
support (Zendesk).

Customer Diversity

Customers with language differences

1. Communication Barriers

Customers who do not speak the dominant language of a business may struggle with:

- Understanding product information (labels, instructions, websites)
- Accessing customer support (phone, chat, or email services in their preferred language)
- Navigating purchasing processes (checkout, returns, refunds)

2. Impact on Customer Satisfaction & Loyalty

Customers facing language barriers may experience frustration, leading to:

- Lower satisfaction rates due to misunderstandings
- Decreased brand loyalty if they feel excluded
- Higher likelihood of switching to competitors offering better language support.

Strategies to Support Linguistically Diverse Customers

Businesses can improve engagement by:

- Offering multilingual customer support (human or AI-powered translation)
- Providing translated marketing materials & product information
- Training staff in cultural sensitivity & basic multilingual communication

Customer Diversity

Customers with disabilities



Customers with disabilities face unique barriers when interacting with businesses, products, and services. These barriers can be physical, sensory, cognitive, or technological, affecting their ability to access, understand, or use offerings effectively.

Disabled Consumers Report,
2023

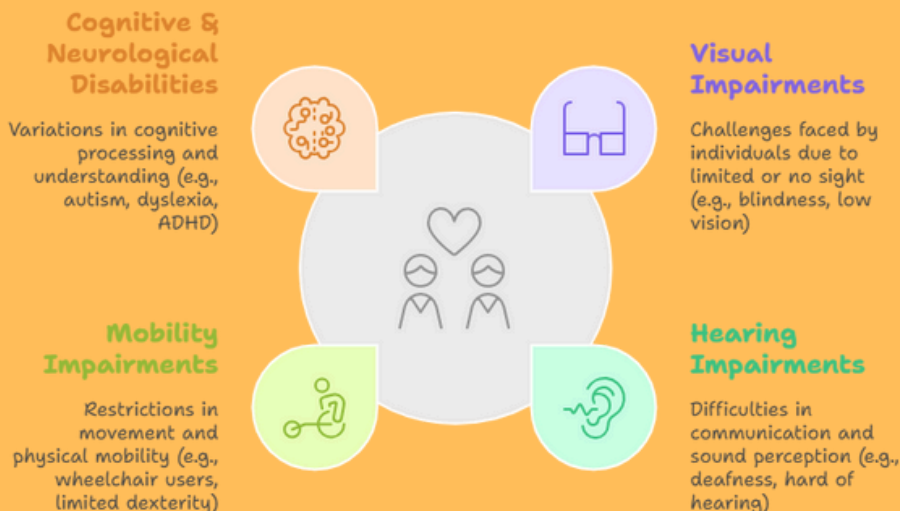
82%

**of customers with disabilities
prefer brands with accessible
services**

Customer Diversity

Customers with disabilities

Understanding Customer Diversity in Disabilities



Customer Diversity

Customers with disabilities

Strategies for Inclusive Customer Service

Businesses can improve accessibility by implementing:

Digital Accessibility

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) compliance (e.g., alt text, keyboard navigation).
- Screen reader-friendly designs and voice-assisted technologies.
- Clear, simple language for customers with cognitive disabilities.

Physical Accessibility

- Wheelchair ramps, wide aisles, and accessible fitting rooms in stores.
- Adjustable counters and assistive devices (e.g., hearing loops, Braille menus).

Employee Training & Awareness

- Disability sensitivity training for staff.
- Alternative communication methods (e.g., sign language interpreters, text-based support).

Customer Diversity

Customers with disabilities

Customers with disabilities represent a diverse and valuable market segment. Businesses that prioritize accessibility not only comply with legal requirements but also enhance customer satisfaction, brand reputation, and revenue.

Proactive measures—such as inclusive design, staff training, and assistive technologies—can create a more equitable experience for all customers.

According to EY, 2021

60%

would pay more for a product/service
if accessibility was guaranteed

Customer Diversity



Elderly customers (typically aged 65+) represent a growing and economically significant demographic. As the global population ages, businesses must adapt to meet their unique needs, preferences, and challenges.

Harvard Business Review.

3 times

Seniors tell people more about negative experiences than younger customers



Customer Diversity

Elderly Customers

Key Characteristics of Elderly Customers

Purchasing Behavior

- Brand loyalty: Older consumers tend to stick with familiar brands and are less influenced by trends.
- Value-conscious: Many prioritize affordability, durability, and practicality over novelty.
- Preference for in-person shopping: Some seniors prefer physical stores over e-commerce due to trust issues or difficulty with technology.

Communication Preferences

- Face-to-face or phone interactions over chatbots or digital self-service.
- Clear, simple language—avoiding jargon or overly complex instructions.
- Patience required: Some may need more time to process information or complete transactions.



Customer Diversity

Elderly Customers

Challenges Faced by Elderly Customers



Physical & Sensory Limitations

- Reduced mobility may make navigating stores difficult.
- Declining vision/hearing affects reading labels, hearing announcements, or using digital interfaces.
- Arthritis or dexterity issues can make handling small packaging or touchscreens challenging.

Technological Barriers

- Low digital literacy—some struggle with online shopping, mobile apps, or self-checkout kiosks.
- Security concerns—higher susceptibility to scams or distrust of digital payments.



Cognitive & Emotional Factors

- Memory decline may lead to forgotten passwords or missed appointments.
- Resistance to change—some prefer traditional methods over new processes.
- Social isolation—many elderly customers value friendly, personalized service.



Customer Diversity

Elderly Customers

Business Strategies to Better Serve Elderly Customers

Improve Accessibility



- Larger fonts & high-contrast designs (in-store signage, websites, packaging).
- Seating areas & mobility aids (wheelchair access, walking carts).
- Assistance programs (personal shoppers, priority checkout lanes).



Enhance Customer Service

- Train staff in patience & empathy—avoid rushing elderly customers.
- Offer phone or in-person support as an alternative to digital-only services.
- Simplify processes (e.g., easy returns, straightforward loyalty programs).

Adapt Digital Experiences

- User-friendly websites & apps (big buttons, voice commands, step-by-step guides).
- Tech support for seniors (tutorials, helplines, in-store training).
- Fraud prevention measures (clear warnings about scams, secure payment options).



Customer Diversity

Younger customers



Younger customers—typically categorized as **Gen Z (born 1997–2012)** and **Millennials (born 1981–1996)**—represent a tech-savvy, socially conscious, and influential consumer base. Their behaviors and expectations differ significantly from older generations, requiring businesses to adapt strategies to engage them effectively.

Salesforce 2024, Statista 2023

70%

Gen Z expect a response in under 5 minutes on live chat/social media.

Customer Diversity

Younger Customers

Key Characteristics of Younger Customers

Digital Natives & Tech Dependency

- Mobile-first consumers: Prefer shopping via smartphones, apps, and social media.
- Short attention spans: Engage best with quick, visually appealing content (e.g., TikTok, Instagram Reels).
- Prefer self-service: Favor chatbots, AI assistants, and seamless digital transactions over traditional customer service.

Value-Driven & Socially Conscious

- Ethical consumption: Support brands that align with sustainability, diversity, and social justice.
- Influencer & peer-driven purchases: Trust reviews, UGC (user-generated content), and micro-influencers over traditional ads.
- Experience over ownership: Prefer subscriptions, rentals, and digital services (e.g., Spotify, Netflix).

BrightLocal, Edelman Trust
Report 2024

62%

Millennials trust influencers more
than brand ads.



Customer Diversity

Younger Customers

Key Characteristics of Younger Customers

Financial Pragmatism

- Price-sensitive but willing to pay for quality: Use price-comparison tools, discounts, and BNPL (Buy Now, Pay Later) options.
- Less brand loyalty: More likely to switch brands for better deals or values alignment.
- Side-hustle economy: Many freelance or monetize social media, impacting spending habits.

Salesforce 2024, Statista 2023

45%

Millennials expect a reply within 10 minutes.



Customer Diversity

Younger Customers

Challenges in Engaging Younger Customers

High Expectations for Convenience

- Frictionless experiences: Abandon carts if checkout is complicated.
- Instant gratification: Expect fast shipping (same/next-day), real-time support, and seamless returns.

Skepticism Toward Traditional Marketing

- Ad-blocking & skipping ads: Prefer authentic, organic content over hard-selling commercials.
- Demand transparency: Reject brands with unethical practices (e.g., greenwashing, poor labor conditions).

Privacy Concerns

- Wary of data collection: Prefer brands with clear privacy policies and minimal tracking.
- Prefer anonymous browsing & payment options (e.g., cryptocurrency, cashless but secure methods).

Brand loyalty

60%

of Gen Z switch brands after just one bad experience (PwC).



Customer Diversity

Younger Customers

Business Strategies to Attract Younger Customers

Enhance Digital & Social Commerce

- TikTok & Instagram Shopping: Leverage shoppable posts, live selling, and AR try-ons.
- Gamification & rewards: Use loyalty apps, points systems, and exclusive drops (e.g., Nike SNKRS).

Prioritize Authenticity & Social Impact

- User-generated content (UGC): Encourage reviews, unboxing videos, and influencer collaborations.
- Sustainable & inclusive branding: Highlight eco-friendly practices, diverse representation, and fair wages.

Offer Flexible & Personalized Experiences

- Subscription models: Curated boxes, memberships (e.g., Amazon Prime, FabFitFun).
- AI-driven personalization: Tailored recommendations (e.g., Spotify playlists, Netflix algorithms).

Customer Diversity

Younger Customers

Younger customers are reshaping industries with their digital-first, value-driven, and experience-focused preferences.

Businesses must prioritize convenience, authenticity, and social responsibility to capture this influential market.

Salesforce 2024, Statista 2023

52%

of millennials will complain publicly on social media if ignored



The Diversity in Customer Service

Accenture, 2023

59%

of consumers are more loyal to
brands with diverse customer
service teams.

The Diversity in Customer Service

Diversity can be defined as the practice of including people from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Diversity is the characteristics, values, beliefs, and factors that make people different yet similar.

Diversity is encountered everywhere (eg. Over the telephone, on the internet, in supermarkets, in religious organizations, and on public transportation) and is an important aspect of everyone's life.

Although it presents challenges in making us think of differences and similarities, it also enriches our encounters with another person and **allows us to expand our knowledge of others and build relationships while growing personally.**

One significant impact that diversity has on customer service is that **people from varied backgrounds and cultures bring with them expectations based on the “norm” of their country or group.**



The Diversity in Customer Service

Whether this diversity pertains to cultural or ethnic differences, beliefs, values, religion, age, gender, ability levels, or other factors, **a potential breakdown in customer satisfaction can occur if people get other than what they want or expect.**

Part of creating a positive, diverse customer business environment is **to train each service provider on the nuances of dealing with people who have backgrounds that are different from their own.**

Additionally, this effort involves each **employee taking ownership for enhancing his or her knowledge and skills related to working with a diverse customer base.**

By taking such initiative and expanding their understanding of others, employees become a valued asset for their organization. They also enhance their career and professional opportunities.



The Diversity in Customer Service

Cultural diversity - the different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic varieties, based on factors such as values, beliefs, and experiences that are present in people grouped together in a given situation, group, or organization.

An important point for service providers to remember is that **diversity occurs within each cultural group; however, many other characteristics are involved.**

For example, within a group of Japanese people are sub-groups such as males, females, children, the elderly, athletes, thin people, Buddhists, Christians, grandparents, and married and single people, to mention just a few of the possible diverse characteristics, beliefs, and values.



Communicating with Diverse Customer Groups

HubSpot

93%

of customers are likely to make repeat purchases with companies that offer excellent customer service.



Communicating with Diverse Customer Groups



Active listening:
Pay attention to verbal and non-verbal cues



Empathy:
Put yourself in the customer's position



Flexibility:
Adapt your communication style to the customer's needs



Respect:
Treat all customers with equal dignity and consideration

Communicating with Diverse Customer Groups

Cultural Sensitivity in Customer Service

- Research and understand different cultural norms
- Avoid stereotypes and assumptions
- Be aware of cultural holidays and observances
- Train staff on cultural competence and diversity

Forrester

79%

customers prefer live chat for its immediacy.

Communicating with Diverse Customer Groups

Technology and Accessibility

- Ensure website and apps are accessible to all users
- Offer multiple contact options (phone, email, chat, in-person)
- Use assistive technologies when appropriate
- Keep up with technological advancements in accessibility



Communicating with Diverse Customer Groups

Creating an Inclusive Customer Service Environment

- Develop a diverse and inclusive workforce
- Implement ongoing diversity and inclusion training
- Establish clear policies for non-discrimination.
- Regularly seek feedback from diverse customer groups.
- Continuously improve and adapt service strategies

Conclusion:

The Power of Diverse Customer Service

Diversity in customer service teams improves customer satisfaction, innovation, and brand reputation.

Diversity in customer service teams leads to better customer experiences, higher innovation, and stronger brand loyalty.

Embracing diversity in customer service leads to:

1. Increased customer satisfaction and loyalty
2. Expanded customer base
3. Enhanced company reputation
4. Improved employee satisfaction and retention

Every customer interaction is an opportunity to celebrate and respect diversity

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PRACTICAL GUIDE TO SERVE DIVERSE CUSTOMERS

e ISBN 978-629-7710-10-5



POLITEKNIK MUKAH SARAWAK
(online)