



WOMEN *in* MORTGAGE

MOVING INTO THE NEW CENTURY

A Supplement to *National Mortgage News*

Valuing Customer Relationships At an Uncommon Level

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In a world where many companies have boiled customer service down to response time metrics, calls per hour productivity and fully automated self-service applications, it seems almost passé to suggest that the customer should be central to the service and support equation. In fact, customer service excellence has become such a rare commodity that most people are startled when they experience it.

Granted, in today's world of intense competition, investor pressure and industry consolidation, most customer support and services organizations have felt the brunt of round after round of cost-cutting measures. To compensate, they have turned to automated technology, call center outsourcing and standardized, low-touch service models to handle customer inquiries. And while the deployment of these tactics can be tremendously beneficial when they help companies respond more quickly and serve more customers, they can also erode customer satisfaction if they are used to replace personal relationships.

At Fidelity National Information Services, we have made customer relationships the cornerstone of our award-winning customer support

and services group, which includes all post-sale customer touch points. This customer-centric organization, originally designed and launched over ten years ago, has remained relentlessly focused on FIS customers – regardless of how the mortgage industry has changed and how our company has evolved along the way.

The Customer-Centric Model

A truly customer-centric customer service model is 100% focused on the needs of the customer – not on products and solutions. As

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a result, our team members are highly skilled customer experts. The FIS support and services organization includes system conversion and implementation technicians, project managers, professional services consultants, trainers, and customer service executives - yet everyone who comes into contact with an FIS customer is deeply familiar with their account.

That doesn't mean we don't utilize technology to help make our team more efficient. But there is a world of difference, both philosophi-

cally and strategically, between the deployment of technology for the sake of cost reduction and technology that is driven by customer feedback and preferences. FIS certainly leverages technology to instantly deliver accurate, in-depth support and service to our customers – but we will never use it to replace the personal relationships we have developed with them.

Still, a customer-centric organization must offer more – much more – than personalized customer interactions. It must empower its support and services executives with the authority

to garner the resources of any department within the corporation - or any business partner outside the corporation - to resolve a customer issue. Only then can team members be certain their company is committed to this critical priority, and that customers truly are king.

This is the customer service model we embrace at FIS. I am proud and honored to lead a team of people who are deeply passionate about customer relationships and total customer satisfaction.

Great Service Distinguishes Great Companies

At FIS, we don't win awards for the highest productivity call center or the fastest call resolution time. We win awards for customer satisfaction. But that doesn't happen by accident.

Companies that relegate customer support and service responsibilities to entry level employ-

ees will get entry level results. Institutions must also structure their customer support and services organization so customer satisfaction is the predictable outcome. For example, our PowerCell customer support group is comprised of teams that are assigned to specific clients. These teams include experts from each functional area where clients may have questions or need information about solving business problems. If these experts can't resolve a client's need,

"Nothing can replace the confidence and trust that knowledgeable, experienced team members build when they serve their customers."

they are authorized to pull in talent from across the company to get the job done. Customers should also be given a full range of communication options so they can use their preferred channel with the same high quality result. Whether they call, email, engage in Web Chat, or attend a Webinar, clients should always be able to reach knowl-

edgeable professionals who understand their specific needs.

Ultimately, it's great customer service that distinguishes great companies. For FIS, it is both the lifeblood of our company and the unshakable foundation of our future.

About the Author

Cynthia FitzGerald is Executive Vice President of Fidelity National Information Services' Customer Support and Services organization. The group has won numerous All Star awards from the Help Desk Institute, was honored with a Mortgage Technology Magazine Help Desk Award in 2002 and the company's PowerCell group manager was recently honored with the 2006 Stevie® Award for the Best Customer Service Executive.

Cynthia joined Fidelity Information Services in 1993, and previously held positions with First Nationwide Bank and Homestead Savings in California. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and International Area Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles. ★

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