



# **Make Their Butt Look Good:**

## **10 Ways to Move from a Mindset of Customer Service to a Culture of Customer Care.**

White Paper

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## Overview of the Customer Experience:

Today's consumers have more choices on where they can spend their money than ever before. Brand allegiance is no longer something that can simply be purchased through spending money on tv, radio, billboard, social media post or any other form of advertisements. There's simply far too much *white noise* and distractions in the world for consumers to notice what you are saying; plus there is always someone or some other company who will be willing to outspend you to create more white noise.

***Big Point: Consumers are inundated with companies trying to get their attention, so your voice gets lost amidst all the other noise.***

Your “*new competition*” is actually not another company in your industry; Your true competition is the customer experience that your customer receives from other industries and companies such as Amazon, Zappos and Apple... or the attention to details they received during their last visit to their favorite hotel or restaurant. These things have now set the standard for how they expect to be treated, and ultimately where they choose to spend their hard-earned money.

And the customer is willing to seek out a company that offers them the attention they feel like they deserve, after experiencing it somewhere else.

## What this means for you:

***The Bar has been raised*** to stay relevant in today's ever-changing business environment. The challenge for Title Companies is not to simply to *close on-time* or to *have accurate closings*, but to stand out and create an experience that the customer (*Consumer, Real Estate Agent and Mortgage Professional*) cannot imagine you not being a part of, because ***the Cost of Entry is having accurate, on-time closings. Exceeding expectations raises the bar.***

The question remains, how do you ***Stay the Center of the Transaction?***

**The Answer: Standing out and creating the best experience for the consumers, real estate agents and mortgage professionals.** My friend Geoff Bray, the Co-Founder of Engel + Volkers Minneapolis (*a boutique real estate brokerage*) has a phrase that he tells all of his real estate agents so frequently that it should be engraved above the door to be seen on the way out of their office each day. He says it like this,



*“Spend less time focusing on how many people are on your ride, and more time focusing on how to make it the best ride the people who have already gotten on have ever experienced.”*

Fashion designer Tom Ford puts it another way when he says,



*“Marketing is used for hollow products that cannot stand on their own. So when a customer walks into the store, tries on a pair of pants, if they don’t make their butt look good, they’re walking out. They’re not buying those pants, no matter how much marketing you did.”*

For Tom Ford it’s never been about just making pants, but about making pants that make the customers butt look good; and for everyone that has stood in the dressing room, trying on pants and looking the mirror, you know how true that statement is.

There’s a BIG difference between simply making pants and making pants that make your butt look good.

My question is this: ***Do you have the same mindset as Tom Ford- creating an experience that a customer literally could not imagine their life without?*** Or if you are being 100% honest, are you just going through the motions?

Title companies that truly stand out are the ones that are going above and beyond the bare minimum (merely closing on time or have accurate closings). They are the ones crushing the competition because they create such an amazing experience that consumers, real estate agents and mortgage professionals could never imagine their life without that title company at the center of the transaction. Whatever they do, they do with Excellence.

That’s worth marketing and talking about.

## How to Capitalize on this Opportunity:

Title companies trying to get ahead in this customer-first shift are the ones that will move from simply offering Customer Service, to offering Customer Care.

**Service is reactive.** “Service” carries with it the connotation of needing to get your oil changed, requiring you to go to the Service Department; or needing to call the Customer Service Department because something went wrong with a new purchase.

**Care on the other hand is proactive.** “Care” implies receiving something that you didn’t even know you needed, but after experiencing, you could not imagine your life without it. Care is the spa treatment; it’s the warm towel over your face while getting shampooed at the salon, or receiving a warm chocolate chip cookie & milk or coffee, while waiting for an appointment.

Care goes above and beyond what was ever expected.

**While Service is the Cost of Entry in any industry, Care is what separates and raises the bar.**

I always like to say, “You don’t need to advertise a good party,” why? Because a good party advertises itself. When you shift from a Culture of Service to Care, everything in your business will change and your current customers will become your largest agents of growth because they will no-doubt become your best advocates.

***Big Point: If you Care More, your Customers will Share More.***

Here are the 10 things to shift from a Service Mindset to a Culture of Care:

## I. Close your Customer Service Department.

Want to see a big shift in your team’s outlook on Service vs. Care?

Stop calling it Customer Service and start calling it Customer Care.

Start telling your Real Estate Agent and Lender/Mortgage Partners about aspects of your Customer Care, and what they should expect to receive on each order that they send over.

Rally your team around Care (and maybe do the Zappos Challenge - #8 on this sheet), and watch what they will do in return.

**Takeaway: Changing our vocabulary can change what our customers experience looks and feels like.**

## II. Put yourself in your customers shoes.

When was the last time you thought about your closing process from the view of your customer? By saying “customer,” I’m loosely referring to the Consumer, Real Estate Agent and even Mortgage/Loan Professional.

On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, if you were the customer, how would you rate the process of closing with your company?

I love the idea of looking at things from the customers perspective because it allows me to get out of my business for a few minutes and into the shoes of a customer.

How does the email or phone communication look/sound? Have you tried calling your phone number lately? How does the receptionist sound? How does the voicemail sound? Does the dial-by-number directory work?

Moving on to email communication, how long does it take your team to reply to a customer’s email?... and have you recently looked at those emails? How does the subject line look? And what about the email signature?

If you were a customer, would you look forward to receiving these emails, or would

they be a “hot mess” of random information?

Then coming to the closing day, how does that look and feel? Each state’s closing process is slightly different, but is the closing experience something you can be proud of? I.e. something that a customer would gladly talk about with friends? Was it enjoyable for them, or was it a hassle, filled with awkwardness?

What could you do at each of these parts of the transaction to make it more enjoyable for the customer?

**Takeaway: Putting yourself in your customer’s shoes allows you to see things from a brand new perspective.**

### III. Stop Sending Thank You Notes

Thank You Notes have started to become cliché and overused in business.

**Example 1 (Service Mindset):**

*“Jim, thank you for closing with XYZ Title it was great helping you close on your new house and we look forward to serving you again! ~Dan”*

You know where a note like that goes? Right in the circular filing cabinet called the trash basket; so instead of writing Thank You Notes, **try sending Appreciation Notes**, which go something like this:

**Example 2 (Culture of Care):**

*Jim, just wanted to say how great it was to meet you and your wife Stacy. It was a pleasure meeting you two, hearing a bit about your story and playing a part in helping you move into your new home. There are lots of title companies in this area, but as the owner, I wanted to personally let you know how much I appreciated that you choose my company to help with your closing. I hope you feel like we added value at each step of the process and should you ever know anyone else looking to buy or sell a home, I’d love to help your friends through the process too. Enjoy your new home and talk to you soon! ~Dan”*



In fact, I’ve taken it as far as not buying any notes that say “Thank You” anymore. Instead, my new notes feature a large exclamation point on the front (conveying an emotion).

They make the recipient wonder what is on the inside, building anticipation and evoking a more emotional response.

Sure, crafting a note like I'm describing (and finding the right stationary) takes a bit more time and thought, but what's a customer worth to you? Do you simply see them as a transaction, or a customer-for-life? Do you simply see them as a dollar amount in your checkbook, or as someone that will lead to many more referrals?

Doing this for consumers, real estate agents and mortgage professionals (maybe not each transaction for real estate agents and mortgage professionals) could be the thing that changes everything about your business.

**Takeaway: A little Appreciation can go a long way from having a note thrown into the wastebasket, to getting hung up on the wall.**

#### IV. Make All of Your Customers Butts Look Good.

In line with Tom Ford's quote on page 2, when's the last time you not only made your buyer or sellers' *butt look good*, but also the other parties in the transaction (Real Estate Agents, Loan Officers or Attorneys)?

One of the best ways to make all your customers butts look good is to go out of your way to praise them for the great job they are doing to make the home closing happen, because the reality is that we are all looking for a compliment. What if you treated people better than they ever expected to be treated? And what if you made the conscious decision to acknowledge the little things that others do, that help you do your job well?

Maybe consider sending an email to the consumer (buyer or seller) and copy (not blind copying, just copying) the Real Estate Agent on it. Write the consumer something like this:

*Steve and Mary, just wanted to let you know how excited I am to help you during the home closing process. We absolutely LOVE working with your Real Estate Agent, Jim, and he's one of our favorites because he always does such a great job of doing the prep work to make the closing process go smooth. Rest assured that we'll take it from here with the most care and attention, because we wanna make sure Tom and his Buyers/Sellers always receive the best experience with us. Looking forward to closing day and seeing you move into your new home!*

What kind of impact do you think that type of email will have on Jim, the Real Estate Agent?

He'll probably go ecstatic to see his name alongside that type of compliment... and who do you think he's going to be calling next time he needs to refer a title company? You!... the company that makes his butt look good to his customers.

You can do the same with other referral sources, or anyone involved in the process.

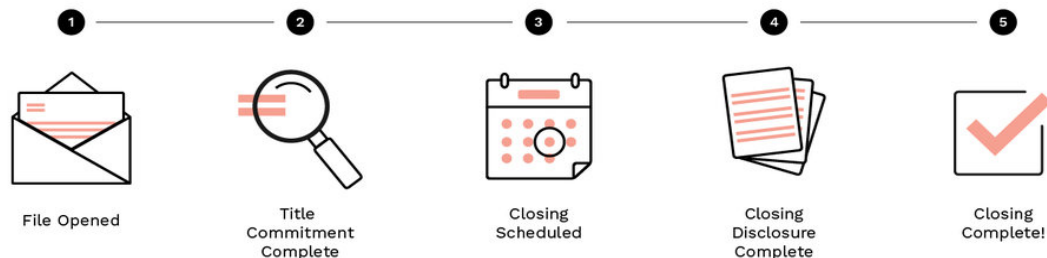
**Takeaway: Compliments are one thing that are always free to give. Say kind words about everyone involved in the closing process and watch your referral relationships bring you more referrals.**

## V. Do your Customers actually know what the Closing Process looks like?

Most consumers don't even understand what title is, so how can we expect them to understand all the work that a title company is doing for them?

While each state deals with the closing process a little different, how awesome would it be for a consumer to clearly see what is going to happen? This could be the start of a huge shift for you to move from reactive Customer Service to Customer Care, because you would be addressing questions that the consumer never even was asking (yet).

Have you considered clearly illustrating the process by using a linear timeline to show them a few of the big milestones in a closing like this?



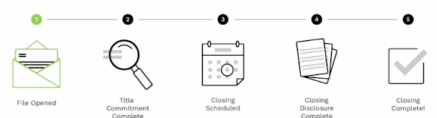
You might consider a software like CloseSimple to help with this, otherwise maybe building something yourself, to help with your workflow. We have the “*Pizza Tracker for Title™*” to help with this, but maybe you could just list the steps?

Either way, it's easy to put into an email like this:



We are pleased that you've chosen to do business with us. We are working on your behalf to ensure all aspects of the closing goes smoothly. As part of our process, we'll keep you updated as we check off important milestones. Here's a quick look at what's coming up next

This is a custom note!



As we get started, we'd appreciate it if you took 2 minutes to watch this important video on wire fraud. We'll work together throughout the closing to ensure all funds end up in the right hands. Just remember that we will never ask for a change in wiring instructions leading up to the closing.

Imagine how much stress something like this could take out of the process for a first time buyer/seller? If you wanted to see a demo of CloseSimple to see how this could work for you in our Automated System, let me know via the email in my signature below.

At each step of the process they will actually know what is going on- and they will know what is coming next. This may be one of the biggest things you can do to move from being reactive to proactive.

**Takeaway: Help the Consumers know what is happening and what will happen.**

## VI. Welcome the other party to your Party.

How often do you think about the other side of the transaction (the other Real Estate Agent)? Consider sending (*or Auto-generating through CloseSimple*) a welcome email to the non-referring agent when the welcome email from your title company goes out. Invite them into the process and explain what the referring agent is getting by choosing you, and what they're missing out on.

This is very easy to do and might just earn you some BIG points with the other real estate agent, who *might just* be looking for a pro-active title company for future deals.

**Takeaway: Welcome the other side to the party and don't be surprised if they join the next one without an invite.**

## VII. Text Messaging Real Estate Agents.

Real Estate Agents get so many emails, the last thing they might want is another email, so here's an idea...



When you begin a new file, send a quick text to the Real Estate Agent (along with an email) to let them know that you got the file and that you are working on it. The text can be super short- something like, *“Hi Steve, we got the information for Bob and Stacy’s closing and I’ll be working on it. Please let me know if you had any questions by calling XXX-XXX-XXXX or emailing me (your\_name@your\_title\_company.com) because this is a No-Reply Text Message.”*



They’d gladly receive a quick text like that and you can also follow up with an email to tell more. Since no Title Production Software allows Text Messaging, here’s some workarounds:

- Have an Office Phone that any closer can use. This is good for smaller teams, not for larger.
- A 3rd Party system like [Zingle](#), [SendHub](#) or [TextMagic](#). The only issue with these is that there will be Double Data Entry, as your customer info will not pull from your Title Production Software.

**- CloseSimple will automatically pull your customers data in from the Title Production Software, so No Double Data Entry** and will automatically send with the touch of a button. (see screenshot).

Text Messaging might be great for Real Estate Agents, but we don’t recommend it for consumers (yet). Focus on communicating better with your best referral sources and then watch the referrals keep coming in as they feel more confident about the great job you’re doing.

**Big Texting Tip:** Do not use this as a substitute for current communication. It should compliment. Please do not look at texting as a way to communicate everything about the file. It’s ideal use-case would be for milestone completion or big notifications, not day-to-day questions that arise.

**Takeaway: A quick text can help a Real Estate Agents know that you know what you are doing and are actually doing it.**

## VIII. Do the Zappos™ Challenge.

Since so much business is done online today, it’s important to have everyone on your team understand what Customer Care should look like in a virtual environment (not face-to-face). You can have a memorable in-person closing process, but if the communication leading up to it is sub-par, the customers opinion of your overall

closing process will be sub-par as well.

It's important to have your team understand how to deliver a great customer experience up to the in-person closing.

If you're looking for a way to have your team actually experience what that looks like, I recommend doing my **Zappos Customer Care Challenge**. We did a full blog post on how to do this (step-by-step), but the overall goal is to allow your team to see/feel/touch what exceptional online support looks like; and then collaborate among themselves as to what standards they should be held up to.

You will give each member of your team between \$50-\$150 to spend on shoes that they can order through zappos.com, but prior to ordering, they must have 3 touch-points with Zappos- a company that most regard as offering the best online support.

Once they make the 2 phone calls and 1 live chat (which should lead into an email), then you regroup to talk about what they learned and your team will then discuss how that experience should shape how they interact with customers. It's a great way to bring your team into the process of moving from a Service Mindset to a Culture of Care.

Here's the 10,000 foot view of the Zappos Challenge (for a full story, check out these two blog posts:

<https://www.closesimple.com/closesimple-blog/2018/2/22/please-close-your-customer-service-department>

<https://www.closesimple.com/closesimple-blog/2018/1/23/zappos-challenge-step-by-step-process>

**Takeaway: Sometimes seeing/feeling what superior Care looks/feels like, can help you define what it should look like for your company.**

## IX. Offer Care as a Core Value.

When's the last time you freshened up your Company Core Values? Does one of them emphasize Care instead of Service?

One great way to emphasize Care over Service is to put it in your company's core values.

Anything you put in your Core Values should be measurable, so if you were going to emphasize your Care, maybe make the measuring tool your Customer Reviews. If you are using Google Reviews to capture customer feedback, you know that all reviews are based on a 5-Star scale, so if you are going to offer superior Customer Care, here's a Core Value that might be a good fit for your company:

***“We offer 6-Star Customer Care since Google only allows us 5.”***

Now, if you get a 5-Star review, that’s not good enough. You will want to have a 5-Star Rating, plus a comment below, preferably featuring the employee’s name that helped the customer. Talk about measurable! That’s what 6-Star Customer Care looks like! Before you put time into putting Care into your Core Values though, please be sure you have a way to measure it- whether that is a Google Review, Survey Monkey Survey or any other form of collecting feedback.

**Takeaway: If your company is going to be dedicated to offering Care instead of Service, be sure to have a way to measure that you’re delivering on what you are promising.**

## X. Simplify The Words You Use.

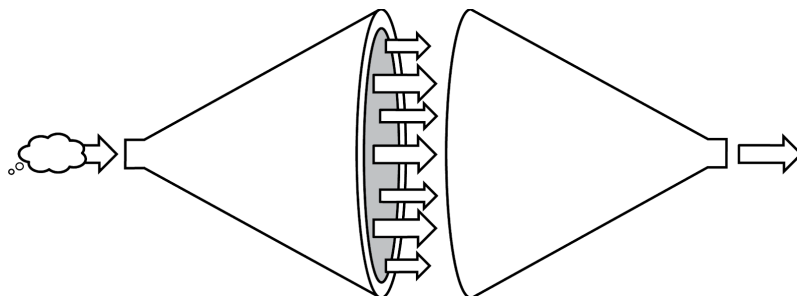
When you’ve done everything else, simplify.

Make sure you are using words that the consumer (or maybe even the agent) can actually understand. Sometimes it’s easy to slip into “industry” mode, using industry speak that you are used to, instead of common words that the consumer understands.

Einstein once said that “you should make things as simple as they can be, but no simpler.” What if you had that same mentality? How can you simplify your processes and how you describe them so that the average consumer can better understand what you are saying?

No one ever set out to make something that is complicated, so I constantly marvel how things may start simple, but as time progresses, become complicated. Ideas may start as one thing, but evolve into twenty.

The job of every owner, manager and employee is always to simplify things that have become complicated. It looks kind of like this:



The second you think things are becoming complicated, take a break and re-look at what your end-goal really is; and simplify.

**Takeaway: The simpler, the better.**

## Thanks for reading.

If this has helped you in any way, or if you wanna chat about how to implement any of the things I outlined, please let me know, because I don't just wanna see you win, I wanna see you win, BIG!

Thanks for reading and talk to you soon!

~Bill Svoboda

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CloseSimple™ helps Title Companies communicate better during the closing process through Automated Text Messages, Email Updates & our Pizza Tracker for Title™, ultimately helping drive your business forward while adding efficiencies to let you focus on growing your business.