

12/10/09 - Robot Love

...or the practical meaning of **Indispensibility!**



A recent [MSNBC article](#) on "Scientists, lawyers mull effects of home robots" had some interesting observations on how people FEEL about their purchases. Specifically, there was a paragraph and quote that caught my eye:

"Shoppers personalize their Roombas, naming and decorating them, for example. Angle recalled an incident when a soldier plucked a banged-up military robot nicknamed Scooby from an Iraqi battlefield and carried it to a depot to be fixed. It's doing you a service, you're going to get attached to it."



Now, think about it. A Roomba ? or bomb-checking robot ? causes attachment. Enough for a soldier to accept some risk to "rescue" his loyal friend, Scooby! I think this just calls out the simple truth that when we offer a TRULY valuable service ? our customers can and do develop a real bond of attachment.

No amount of window dressing or "flash" can compensate for a product or service that fails to deliver on its core promises. And if those promises are meaningful ? affect the quality of (business) life of your customer, your reward could easily be loyalty.

Customer Loyalty doesn't mean an opportunity to presume on your customers (thinking they'll tolerate slippage in

quality ? as American automotive companies assumed for too long) ? but an opportunity to innovate and inspire your customers with new and better services.

In other words, if your customers name your products "Scooby" ? you have a golden opportunity to build on that affection (derived from your indispensability) and deepen the bonds with even better "stuff".

Don't squander the moment ? your competitors will look to grab their attention with "new and shiny" ? so do it first and your customers will be hard to steal.