

THOMSON CLAMPS DOWN ON HABITUAL COMPLAINERS



The old-age phrase “the customer is always right” is a good base for companies to provide ultimate customer satisfaction. However, what happens when this satisfaction is impossible to provide?

Some customers are never satisfied and the introduction of Internet advertisements and television advertisements encouraging people to complain in order to get either reductions or refunds further supports such attitudes. Therefore, there is a new category of customers: those looking for excuses not to pay. Add these to the perpetual complainers who thrive on complainers and travel companies have a serious problem.

The travel giant TUI travel, which covers Thomson and First Choice, catering for around 7 million British tourists on an annual basis, has come up with the solution of adopting the attitude the customer is mostly right only in cases of just complaints and has invented a blacklist for persistent complaint-makers, who are subsequently banned from making further orders with the company.

This system seems to be the lesser of two evils, yet certainly the cheapest. Customers who look for thinks to complain about and purposely cause damage to have reasons for complaints bring nothing but bad publicity and extra costs to the company.

The decision to create the blacklist has been fuelled by incidents whereby customers have entered hotel rooms with the sole incentive of destroying something in order not to pay for the stay. Classic examples include pulling wires out of the wall in order to complain about bare wiring or purposely breaking some electrical appliance in order to claim damages.

The truth is, even if TUI was to bend over backwards in order to try and please these people, it will never work. The only solution is to create the black book and avoid such problematic clientele in the first place. The Customer2Avoid.com or GuestsBehavingBadly.com websites have also been created with a similar aim.

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