

Guest Post: hold the cone

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This week on our Friends on Friday guest blog post, my colleague Denise Lee Yohn talks about how the customer experience can influence the service philosophy of the brand. She makes great sense about how important each experience is for your organization. – [Shep Hyken](#)

brand-as-business bit: Hold the cone! No, I don't mean "hold the phone." I'm saying "hold the cone" because that's what ice cream shop workers should do. Allow me to explain.

Recently while in the [Virgin America terminal at SFO](#), I decided to treat myself to some [Pinkberry](#). After preparing my cone of yogurt yumminess, the server rang up my order, swiped my credit card, and handed me the receipt, all while holding the cone for me. Of course those tasks are easier to do with two hands and doing them with one was clearly awkward for her – but here's the thing: It would have been me struggling with the cone if she had handed it to me before I got my credit card out of my wallet, put it and the receipt back in, and put my wallet back in my bag. So she held it for me and waited until I was ready to take it.

Contrast that to the check-out clerk who recently dumped a pile of bills and change into my hand at once and expected me to immediately move out of the way for the next customer – and the restaurant hostess who handed over a large, heavy take-out order and watched me struggle out the door and into my car – and the fast food order taker who made me repeat the last two items of my order because on the first one I didn't specify what size combo meal I wanted.

Yes, these are small details that aren't high on the list of customer experience impressions, but they speak volumes about the service philosophy of the brand. Are the employees trained to put customers' needs first? Are service procedures in place to take the hassles out of the experience? Does the company design its customer experience down to the last detail? Great brands know that every detail communicates — **every touchpoint matters**.

[Denise Lee Yohn](#) is a leading authority on building and positioning exceptional brands. In her new book [What Great Brands Do: The Seven Brand-Building Principles That Separate the Best From the Rest](#) she reveals the secrets behind how top companies develop standout brands that foster customer loyalty and increase profit margins. For more articles from Shep Hyken and his guest contributors go to customerserviceblog.com