

Quality Moments

By Rus Kinzinger

When you pause to think about it, a “Moment of Truth” is just that. It’s when a customer comes into contact with your store (or business) and experiences your level of quality. In short, it’s “no more pretenses” time. It’s the moment of truth—who we *really* are to our customers. If we are brutally honest with ourselves, it can also be the foundation on which we build quality offerings for those who shop our stores.

Here are some things you need to know about moments of truth.

- **They start long before customers even pass through your doors.** For example, does your building say *quality* to passers-by? Has the grass been mowed? Recently? Is there litter anywhere? Are the windows displays fresh and inviting? For that matter, are the windows clean? Does the exterior entice customers to shop with you?
- **There are many moments of truth.** Literally, a moment of truth is *any point of contact with your store that affects how a customer sees you*. Here are just a few:
 - Advertisements
 - Entry
 - Displays
 - Cleanliness
 - Signage. Handwritten signs never communicate quality.
 - Staff interaction with customers . . . and each other
 - Ease and quickness of checkout
 - Problem resolution
- **Moments of truth can vary by publics and demographics.** For example, your mailman may never get past the first few feet of your entryway but will the moments of truth he experiences tell him that yours is a quality operation? How will the various moments of truth affect the senior shopper? For that matter, how do male shoppers experience the quality of your offering? How do female shoppers see it? Understanding your various publics can be tough, but very rewarding work.
- **Moments of truth are not always *directly* influenced.** They are often 2nd, 3rd, or 4th generational in impact. The mailman might never have shopped your store, but he might have told his neighbor, who in turn told his daughter.

Good luck!