

## **Customer Service 101 Making Your Customer's Life Easy**

### **Offering Credit Cards Is a Customer Service Feature Often Ignored and Misunderstood**

Are you leaving money on the table? Are you missing opportunities? Do you even know? In 1993 I opened my first real, traditional business. As part of the Business Support industry, I provided my clients with resume consultations and resumes. One of the challenges some of those clients faced was cash flow; specifically those who suddenly found themselves out of work. They were on a limited income for a limited time. I wanted to help those clients the most, but they were also a high risk for not getting paid. Then I went to a national convention of business support services and found out that my peers took credit card payments. For some reason, I never thought of that.

As soon as I got back home I called my local banker and within days I was processing credit cards. My business increased by 20% in the first quarter. My receivables decreased by 20%. It was amazing. Back in those days, I utilized the old fashioned paper system. You put a card in a machine, moved this mechanism back and forth and you were in business. We had a phone number to call in to get the order processed and in 48 hours I had money in my bank and my clients had their needs met.

Things are much different today. I now have a cool wireless system. My rates are much lower, and I have a company that actually provides customer support. What a concept? For me offering credit cards is essential to giving my clients the ability to receive the services they need and the flexibility in payment options. It is win-win. So what does accepting credit cards have to do with building your business? Good question; everything!

- It gives you access to money in 48 hours instead of the possible Net 30 or more.
- It gives your clients another option to have access to you.
- It gives you more exposure because your credit card service provider will gladly help market you through their web site (well mine does) See for yourself by checking out their web site <http://www.schmoozeinc.com/>.

- It gives you peace of mind.
- If you have long time receivables that you are having trouble collecting, it gives your clients another option. More than likely they want to pay you but they might be experience a cash flow problem. Most will use a credit card to help their vendor.

So if you are looking to increase your bottom line and improve your overall customer service. I suggest one simple thing you can do to build your business is add credit cards as an option for payment.

Lia Allen, Lia Allen & Associates, is a Business Development Specialist that helps small business get unstuck on the roller coaster ride of Business Development so they can have more fun and close more business – for more information go to [www.liaallen.com](http://www.liaallen.com).