Proposed Solution for Standardizing Geek Squad Service Performance

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Introduction

Best Buy Geek Squad offers a variety of computer services that are, for the most part, standardized procedures. Our agents generally perform these services correctly, but their knowledge is largely based on experience alone. Best Buy employs a system of "E-learnings" for the rest of the store's departments, but Geek Squad has no official training resources for its agents. Though we usually hire new agents with high computer qualifications, they may not inherently know how to perform every repair. This is a serious problem because the consequences of an incorrectly executed data transfer or system recovery, for example, can be detrimental to our customers and our company. Geek Squad agents need a straightforward, informative outline of our basic services with instructions on how to perform them. This manual would be a readily available reference for any geek squad agent, though it would be mainly targeted towards our newly hired agents.

Service Issues Cause Problems

Many Geek Squad precincts have occasional problems with their services. Because there is no standardized training for our department, the individuals performing our repairs can vary widely in expertise. Even moderately experienced agents can still make mistakes, and it is imperative that we eliminate any potential issues with our service execution. Though mistakes are uncommon, Geek Squad can face many serious problems when a service is not performed correctly.

Geek Squad's Reputation of Excellence

Geek Squad's customers are willing to pay a little extra for our help rather than seek an independent technician because we guarantee professional, reliable service. We rely on our customers' satisfaction with our performance so that they will come back to us whenever they have a problem. When an agents performs poorly, it makes our department as a whole look bad, and may result in a loss of future business with even a loyal customer.

Legal Issues with Data Privacy

Customer data privacy is a top priority in Geek Squad, but inexperienced agents can still cause issues. The average precinct performs 3 or 4 data transfer or backup services daily, and each one has the potential to be a problem. A customer's data being either lost or accidentally given to a different customer due to our negligence is unacceptable. The data can be extremely valuable, and some stores have lost millions of dollars in legal settlements for data privacy issues. Though these problems are rare, even a few can be detrimental to a store's net profit.

Correcting Problems Costs Money

Even simple services like optimizations or system recoveries can have negative consequences when improperly executed. Though they may not carry the same weight as data privacy, they are much more common and cost the company money. If a customer's computer is no longer usable or requires further repairs that he/she did not intend to pay for, the precinct must do all it can to remedy the situation. This can mean hours of free labor, refunds of service fees, or free merchandise from the store provided to fix the problem.

A Standardized Manual for Geek Squad Services

I propose that Geek Squad issue a standardized manual outlining the instructions for our most common procedures. The manual would serve as a reference to all geek squad agents. In addition, it would be required training material for newly hired agents. Because the performance issues with our services do not stem from simple mistake or carelessness as much as the agents simply not being informed on the procedure, this manual would greatly reduce the number of problems.

This manual would be the most efficient course of action. It would be relatively inexpensive to produce and distribute, and would be more effective than an online course. The manual would not replace the current hands-on experience agents use to learn the procedures, but would supplement them just enough to reduce the possibility of an issue as much as possible.

The manual would include specific, step-by-step instructions for performing standard computer services offered by Geek Squad. It will begin with a table of contents, followed by an outline of the performance upgrade procedures including the basic optimization and memory or other hardware installations. The next chapter will contain the instructions for standard software diagnostics and repairs, including virus removal. Finally, the manual will outline the procedures for data management. The following is the proposed structure of the manual:

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Performance Upgrades

      1.1 Optimization
      1.2 Hardware Installation

Chapter 2. Software Repairs

      2.1 Virus Scan/Removal
      2.2 System Diagnostics
      2.3 System Recovery

Chapter 3. Data Management

      3.1 Data Backup
      3.2 Data Transfer

Timetable for Completing the Manual

The estimated time for the manual is three weeks. During the first week, I will interview with a number of experienced agents and managers to determine the standardized procedures for each service, and what they feel would be the best way to present the information. During the second week I will begin writing the manual and organize all the information. During the third week I will finish writing the manual and design it to be easy to understand and visually appealing. On the final week I will edit the manual and submit it to the company for review and distribution. I will schedule all interviews based on the availability of the individuals, and will not require to complete any work at the precinct. Assuming that I start the manual on December 6th, 2010, Figure 1: Manual Work Schedule Timetable provides a timeline for the project. For this project, I would only require an hourly wage for myself.

Week	Task
1/3/2010 – 1/9/2010	**Monday:** Interview Geek Squad Agents **Tuesday:** Interview Geek Squad Agents **Wednesday:** Interview Geek Squad DCI **Thursday:** Interview Geek Squad Supervisor **Friday:** Organize Information
1/10/2010 – 1/16/2010	**Monday:** Write Table of Contents **Tuesday:** Format Document, Outline Draft **Wednesday:** Write "Optimization" Section **Thursday:** Write "Hardware Installation" Section **Friday:** Write "Virus Scan/Removal" Section
1/17/2010 – 1/23/2010	**Monday:** Write "System Diagnostic" Section **Tuesday:** Write "System Recovery" Section **Wednesday:** Write "Data Backup/Transfer" Sections **Thursday:** Edit Manual Design and Format **Friday:** Finalize Design and Organization
1/24/2010 – 1/30/2010	**Monday:** Edit Manual **Tuesday:** Meet with Agents for Review/Advice **Wednesday:** Edit Manual **Thursday:** Edit Manual **Friday:** Submit Manual to Company

Figure 1: Manual Work Schedule Timetable

My Qualifications for Creating This Manual

I have worked for the Best Buy Geek Squad in Denton for over a year. I am an in-store agent, and have thorough experience with all of our procedures. I have also taken several classes in technical writing at the University of North Texas, where I am currently a student. I believe the hands-on experience I have gained at Geek Squad, combined with the technical writing education I have acquired at the University of North Texas, uniquely qualifies me to produce this manual.

Conclusion

A standardized, informative manual outlining the proper procedures for the basic Geek Squad services will introduce a universal standard for Geek Squad agent basic experience. This will greatly reduce the number of improperly performed services, which will result in greater revenue generation due to improved customer loyalty, and a reduction in net profit loss that would have otherwise gone towards provided labor or legal fees. The manual would be inexpensive to produce and distribute, and would greatly benefit the company overall.