

# GBM Insiders

In Honor of Breast Cancer Awareness

FALL 2010

## GBM Continues to Be Praised by Customers



One of GBM's major clients – with over a million square feet of facility – responded favorably to a quality service survey sent out by a third party/potential client to its selected clients in early September 2010. The question was: Identify the contractor's overall strengths and weaknesses. The client responded without hesitation: "GBM has a solid management team starting from the home office right on down to the site manager and supervisors: I can not identify one weakness in this organization."

GBM earned a similar title – "Solid Team" – in 1987 from AT&T, and many other clients have responded positively to quality service surveys. Since its founding in 1983, the GBM team has worked diligently towards its corporate goal of "Zero Defects." The solid quality assurance tradition continues!

## Better Customer Relationships Help Us Grow

By BOBBY MOORE, GBM REGIONAL MANAGER, MID-ATLANTIC COAST



Why are customer relationships so important and how do you know that you have the proper business relationship with your clients? These are very complex questions because there are so many different reasons that people make buying decisions. I believe that sustainable relationships are developed through quality service. That is the basis, or foundation, on which our customer relationships are built. That is one reason why the GBM motto, Zero Defects, is so effective. Most clients are ultimately looking for a business partner that they can rely on to provide quality, efficient service. This is why we have been so successful in the Greensboro market with our clients, including a world-class manufacturer and a national property management firm.

Over the past three years, this market has undergone a transformation and it continues today because we have proven ourselves to be a valuable asset to our clients. In the case of the

See **Better Customer Relations**, page 2

### One satisfied GBM client says:

**"I value the openness and great communication I have with all GBM employees. They understand where we're going as company and are willing to help in any way to get us there."**

### William Choi Celebrates 10 Years



*William Choi, center, GBM senior vice president, is recognized for his ten years of service at GBM. Pictured with him are GBM President Donovan Wolf (left) and Chief Executive Janitor Sunny Park.*

# Better Customer Relations

continued from page 1

manufacturer, we have been successful there in completely integrating GBM into the entire custodial, facility maintenance and landscaping operations. GBM has a full staff of electricians, plumbers and maintenance workers onsite with 24-hour coverage to handle any facility-related maintenance task they need. One satisfied GBM client says: "I value the openness and great communication I have with all GBM employees. They understand where we're going as company and are willing to help in any way to get us there." Our program has been successful in reducing their overall maintenance budget considerably and we are constantly evaluating where we are and how we can continue to help them drive costs out of their operation. We have developed a preventative maintenance program for their facilities that has enabled us to find and repair things before they



Brian White, GBM Director of Maintenance at P&G Greensboro

cause an interruption of production. When I asked one of the clients what the deciding factor was in moving forward with GBM managing the facility maintenance for the two important plants, he said: "You all had been very successful with janitorial services and I knew working with GBM to make the facility maintenance program work would be just as successful."

In many cases, we have proven to property managers what our capabilities are by reducing tenant complaints in every building that we have taken over in their portfolio. Furthermore, we have developed a very specific program designed to help them make their buildings more sustainable through more efficient dispensing options for paper products, soap and green cleaning chemicals. We have enabled them to achieve Clean Zone certification for all of the buildings that we service in the Greensboro market as well. We have become a valued business partner to them because we understand their needs and we work every day to exceed their expectations. This is the basis for a good customer relationship.

I want to thank the entire Mid-Atlantic team for fostering these relationships and enabling GBM to become our client's preferred vendor. In closing I just want to stress that GBM is more than a cleaning company. We have the ability to develop specialized programs designed to fit our individual client's needs. We understand that one size does not fit all and we work very hard to determine what their needs are how best to satisfy them.



GBM Maintenance Truck

## NEW ACCOUNTS



Dobbs and Cook Elementary are two of the 11 schools awarded to GBM from Atlanta Public Schools.

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# 5 Truths That Lead to More Referrals

Many businesses enjoy receiving referrals, but feel they come by mixing good work with chance mentions from satisfied customers.

Certainly, many referrals happen this way, but if you understand the realities of referrals listed below you might rethink your approach to referral generation, with an eye on taking a more proactive view of the process.

## 1. People Make Referrals Because They Need To

Some people hesitate asking for referrals out of fear that it feels like begging for business. If done with that frame of mind, it probably is. But if you realize people enjoy making referrals, and do so to build their own social capital, or to create a flow of referrals for themselves, then you might start to look at this entire subject a little differently.

If you truly believe in the results you or your products can bring, then maybe you're doing your customers a disservice by not showing them how to bring those results to their friends and colleagues.

So, how can you change how you view what asking for a referral means?

## 2. All Referrals Involve Risk

While people enjoy making referrals, they also represent a great risk. If you refer a friend to a business, and that business doesn't perform, you bare some of the responsibility.

When you refer a business, you loan some of the trust you've built to that business or individual being referred. You minimize risk with out of this world guarantees, a great education process, and a professional follow-up system.

So, what can you do to eliminate risk?

## 3. People Don't Refer Boring Businesses

Think back, when's the last time you got excited about a perfectly satisfying experience? People make referrals most when they are excited about a business. Having a great product or service is a great start, but you must also look for ways to drape that great product or service in an equally great experience.

This is the place where investing in a culture of great service can pay big. I recently interviewed Tony Hsieh, CEO of Zaapos, and he claims that Zappos is a customer happiness company that happens to sell shoes and apparel.

Remarkable businesses rarely happen by accident. This might be the hardest work yet. But get the customer experience right and you won't need to spend much on lead generation going forward.

What can you do that no one else in your industry is doing?

## 4. The Greatest Referral Truth Is Trust

I've long used a non-textbook definition of marketing for the small business. Marketing is getting someone, who has a need to know, to like and trust you. While you can buy a little know and like in your marketing efforts, trust is hard earned and easily eroded. Without trust, referrals rarely happen.

Trust comes from keeping your promises, doing the right thing, and setting proper expectation. These days it also comes from working very hard on a fully developed web presence.

Even a referred lead is likely to turn to the Internet to research that great company their buddy keeps raving about. It's a fact of business these days,

*See Five Truths, page 6*

## EMPLOYEE PROFILE

### Maryanne Raymond

As GBM's business development/market-ing coordinator, Maryanne Raymond is responsible for coordinating bids, developing marketing materials and communicating with prospective clients all in an effort to get new business. Juggling all of this can be sometimes be a challenge – especially when she is working on multiple bids – but she takes it all in stride.

Maryanne sees her job as communicating to prospective clients that GBM is committed to providing quality service to all their clients. She does this by creating ads, brochures and letters aimed at customers. To Maryanne, it is the best part of her job.

"I am currently working on an ad letting prospective customers know that they need to compare Apples to Apples, and janitorial companies are not all the same when you get into quality work," Maryanne says. "I have to convey to them that GBM is all about quality assurance and no matter what the pricing is, GBM is committed to their quality assurance program and makes no exceptions."

Maryanne, who has been with GBM for three years, also likes working with the people at GBM. "There is a family-like atmosphere here," she says, "and I really enjoy that."

A self-professed "animal lover," Maryanne has three dogs and a cat; all are adopted but one. She also loves to cook and has catered parties on occasions. Currently she has undertaken a huge project: renovating her house inside and out, which takes up a large chunk of her time.

And one more thing you may not know about Maryanne Raymond: "I am great at shopping for deals," she admits. "It takes effort to find bargains but is well worth the time if you can wait." An example: She recently bought \$1,800 worth of tile for \$158 by shopping at several different stores. "Not to say I am cheap, but a deal is a deal."

# Bad Customer Service Stories Travel Faster

*Angry consumers can harm businesses that don't care.*

BY JENNIFER HARSHMAN

## Business Has Changed

In the past, consumers didn't have many options when it came to doing business, and some businesses took advantage of that fact. Gone are the days when a business owner could cheat a customer with little worry about repercussions. A consumer's options aren't limited to the corner grocery or the local television and appliance store anymore. If a business doesn't live up to expectations, a customer can go elsewhere without any problem. A business prospect can check out another company with just a few clicks of the mouse, and a dissatisfied customer can take his business to another company just as fast.

## Technology Helps Bad Customer Service Stories Travel Faster

Advances in technology have made it easy to spread the bad news. Now, it is possible to share a customer service nightmare faster, and with more people. A dissatisfied customer may still tell the

**A dissatisfied customer may still tell the "bad customer service" story about a dozen times, but he's not telling one person over the back fence. Now, he could be telling thousands of people each time he recounts the story.**

"bad customer service" story about a dozen times, but he's not telling one person over the back fence. Now, he could be telling thousands of people each time he recounts the story. Utilities such as Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, discussion boards, Internet forums and chatrooms make it easy to tell the world about an infuriating experience with a company's rude or lazy employees. In the interest of protecting their friends and family, they might just pass along the warning, which could mean falling profits for that company.

What is worse for businesses than this word-of-mouth "badvertising" is that the words aren't passing from mouth to

ear once or twice and then disappearing. Words that pass from person to person aren't found by others down the road. Now, Angry Joe Customer's words stay posted on the Internet, accessible to any searcher or surfer who comes along, and they can do damage years after the bad customer service experience has happened. The employee who cheated a customer or refused to honor a guarantee may be long gone, but the complaint posted on a website might still be there, doing damage to a business for years to come.

*Copyright Jennifer Harshman – the author is a contributing writer for Suite101.com.*

## Video Teaches a New Way to do CPR

Every three days, more Americans die from sudden cardiac arrest than the number who died in the 9-11 attacks. Doctors at the University of Arizona College of Medicine say you can lessen this recurring loss by learning a new form of CPR they developed: Continuous Chest Compression CPR. This hands-only CPR method doubles a person's chance of surviving cardiac arrest. It's easy and does not require mouth-to-mouth contact, making it more likely bystanders will try to help.

The University of Arizona's Sarver Heart Center developed a video to make it easy for people to learn Continuous Chest Compression CPR.

"This video is worth sharing," says Dr. Gordon Ewy, director of the Sarver Heart Center, and one of the research

pioneers who developed the method. Dr. Ewy is hoping the video, which is posted on YouTube, goes "viral" and gives more people the opportunity to be lifesavers.

So, visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcbgpiKyUbs> and watch the six-minute video, and then send it to everyone in your address book. You may not get gold from a faraway land, or become thinner, richer, luckier or more popular, but you are likely to make a huge difference; perhaps saving someone's life.

*Written by Katie Maass, University of Arizona Office of Public Affairs. To read the original article, please visit: <http://opa.ahsc.arizona.edu/> and type in "new CPR video" in the search engine.*

# GBM Supports WPBA - Public Broadcasting Atlanta

Great cities are known by their museums, theaters, symphonies and parks. But the greatest impact on a city's cultural life radiates invisibly through the air.

For Atlanta, that cultural force is Public Broadcasting Atlanta. WABE 90.1 FM and PBA 30 bring NPR News, music, the arts and PBS programming to hundreds of thousands of listeners and viewers each year. Today, people turn to public broadcasting for their news, music, arts and entertainment and it is all donor funded. Yet, few people realize that public broadcasting began as "educational television" – strictly a learning resource. GBM is long time supporter of NPR/ WABE and CEJ Sunny Park has served on its Board of Directors since 2002.



## Understanding Carpet Care for High Traffic Lanes

You just shampooed the carpet on a hallway two days ago but already it looks dirty, and you wonder what happened.

Possibly, the carpet is still dirty because you may have missed some areas while shampooing, as it is hard to judge the cleanness when wet. However, sometimes the carpet just appears dirty even after it is cleaned. There may be different reasons this can happen, and often there's not much you can do about it. Yet, customers judge our services by appearances and it may damage our image. It is important to communicate to the customers about the situation and remind them often because people will forget things. The following facts may help you to explain the situation in a way the customers understand.

**1. Wear & Tear.** The carpet is old. It is ideal to replace well-maintained level-loop carpet for traffic lanes every three to four years to maintain the original color. Carpet fibers in high traffic lanes tend to flatten over time, and there is actually a reduction in the amount of face fiber compared to the adjacent non-traffic areas. Until the carpet is replaced, we can try to change the pattern of vacuuming in the opposite direction.

**2. Dirty Fiber.** Dirt soaked the carpet. Tenants bring several different types of dirt each day into buildings, which are very abrasive to carpet. It will get ground into the carpet, scratch the fibers and as a result, the carpet will look dirty and lose its original color. Some of us tried to dye the carpet, only to darken the color, if the client wanted us to.

**3. Faded Color.** Defective carpet will lose the original color as it reflects light at different angles. It actually happens more near window areas than high traffic lanes. One good thing is that customers need no explanation. Dyeing the carpet is the only option before replacing the carpet.

## Thanks to Our Troops!



*Pfc. Seth Mattox, left, mans a sniper rifle as an Afghan army soldier scans for threats from a different direction during guard duty in August. Pfc. Mattox, the nephew of GBM Regional Mgr Bobby Moore, is with the 3rd Platoon, Bravo Company, 2-502 Infantry, 101st Airborne stationed in Zhari district, Kandahar province, in southern Afghanistan.*



*GBM has been very supportive of the USO. Shown above, a golf course at Fort McPherson, at which GBM sponsored a hole.*

# ¿Puede permitirse un edificio sucio?

POR BOB MERKT

Los estudios han mostrado que el nivel de limpieza de un edificio impacta directamente el éxito del negocio. Un edificio limpio reduce la responsabilidad (hay menos accidentes), el cansancio, las ausencias por enfermedad, la rotación y el número de empleados descontentos. Un ambiente limpio y saludable impulsa la moral de los empleados aumentando, en consecuencia, la productividad en el trabajo.

De hecho, de acuerdo con el Dr. Michael Berrt, la apariencia y salud de un edificio tiene un efecto directo sobre el éxito de las operaciones globales. Ya sea que las instalaciones sirvan al público en general o a un pequeño grupo de gente, la limpieza es uno de los factores más importantes para la efectividad y eficiencia de los ocupantes del edificio.

Los beneficios de trabajar en un ambiente limpio y saludable no puede y no debería subestimarse. Las organizaciones inteligentes hacen de la limpieza una parte de la cultura de negocios

y entienden que no cuesta, más bien retribuye.

Un 5% de pérdida de productividad debido a un edificio sucio puede costarle a su organización miles de dólares cada año. Por el otro lado, un ambiente limpio y saludable incrementará la productividad, el ánimo y el espíritu de la compañía además de elevar la auto-estima de los empleados.

La idea principal es: Un ambiente limpio y saludable incrementa la rentabilidad. Use estos hechos para ayudar a vender el beneficio de la limpieza: Salud, no precio.

Bob Merkt es propietario de Merkt Educational Group and Associates. También es un instructor certificado del Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) especializado en pisos duros. Puede contactarlo en bobmerkt@execpc.com; al teléfono 262-334-1881. Para conocer más del IICRC y los programas de certificación que ofrece, visite [www.iicrc.org](http://www.iicrc.org).

## A daredevil in Dubai showed his head for heights by taking part in a spot of window cleaning – perched precariously on a 400ft high ledge.

Onlookers were shocked at the man's lack of safety equipment

The fearless occupant of the 34th floor apartment in the Jumeirah Beach coastal district was photographed as he leaned across to scrub a hard-to-reach pane of glass.

The daredevil was armed with just a squeegee. Onlookers spotted the bare-chested DIY cleaner armed with nothing but a long-handled squeegee and a distinct absence of any safety equipment.

Residents of neighboring tower blocks said they were shocked to see the man without the harnesses, cradles and helmets normally used by high-rise window cleaners.



*The man clambered on to the ledge on the 34th floor*

## Five Truths continued from page 3

if a referred lead can't find significant content, including reviews, video lessons and social network participation. The sum of participation online is a large trust factor.

What would I find if I searched your name on a search engine?

### 5. Marketing is a System

Businesses need to view marketing much like they view other aspect of

business. Most businesses have processes of some sort to allow them to deliver consistent work in an efficient manner.

I think marketing needs to work this way as well, and this certainly applies to referral generation. It's important to create a referral strategy, a set of steps or processes to make referrals happen, a set way to educate and collect from referral sources and a rock solid follow-up

plan. Once in place, all you need to do is operate the system. Market get a lot easier when you view it this way.

What does your referral system look like?

*John Jantsch is a marketing coach, award winning social media publisher, and author of Duct Tape Marketing and The Referral Engine. This article appeared on the following website: <http://www.openforum.com/idea-hub/topics/marketing/article/5-truths-that-lead-to-more-referrals-john-jantsch>*

# Why Do GBM Customers Love Us?

BY LOU RALABATE, GENERAL MANAGER, ORLANDO



Building customer relations can be a result of good follow-up, excellent cleaning, and of course the personal attention given to property managers by GBM management. But there are others who work with GBM who also do their part to build customer relations and they make an important contribution in building strong customer relations.

This past month there were two different instances with two different night cleaners and two supervisors who, as of a result of their actions, did a great deal to build customer relations. In one instance, a very alert night cleaner found a ring that a tenant had lost. Immediately, he brought the ring to the supervisor, who in turn sought out the rightful owner. As you can imagine, the tenant was very pleased to see the priceless jewelry again. Please note what the company's administrator said in an email to the property manager:

*"I would just like to bring to your attention that while cleaning on Tuesday evening Nelson Martinez came across an employee's ring lying on the floor. Schwab would just like to thank Nelson for taking the time to seek out someone and help to return the ring to its owner. Nelson's honesty and integrity should be recognized as well as his nighttime Supervisor Johanna Pereira for reporting it. Go GBM and Thanks as always."*

On another occasion, one of our night cleaners found a laptop in a trash container. The cleaner approached the supervisor and they both went directly to the security officer, who logged the findings for the property manager. This honest cleaner did the right thing. He was also alert enough not to put trash of this sort in the dumpster, which is against building policy. The tenant was

**We work hard to maintain the GBM traditional values, and, as a result, keep our clients very happy.**

so impressed with the cleaner's alertness and honesty that the company gave a gift certificate to the cleaner and also the laptop computer that was in the trash container. *(Note: The reason the computer was in the trash container was because it only worked while it was plugged in and not by the battery.)*

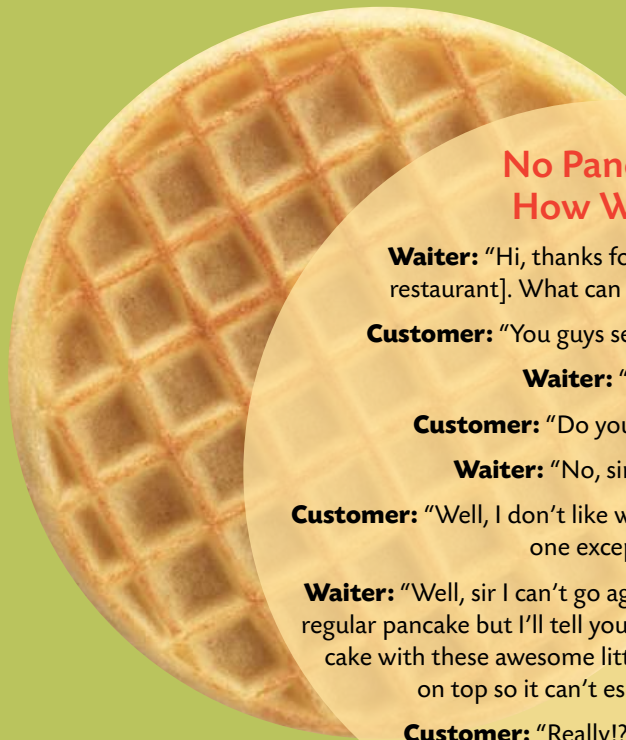
Now I ask you, do you think that the honesty and the alertness of the two night cleaners, along with their supervisors, had anything to do with building

strong customer relations? The answer is obvious. The property managers, assistant property managers, the engineers in the buildings, and tenants extended their thanks, appreciation and gratitude to these GBM night cleaners. Oodles and oodles of praise go to these honest and alert night cleaners.

It reminds me of reading the letter of appreciation to GBM from a bank in Tampa on GBM National Headquarters' Wall of Fame, thanking the GBM cleaner who found and returned a bag containing \$13,040 in cash. We work hard to maintain the GBM traditional values, and, as a result, keep our clients very happy.

This article is short and sweet, but the information and action described is powerful for building good customer relations.

## Creative Customer Service



### No Pancakes? How Waffle!

**Waiter:** "Hi, thanks for choosing [name of restaurant]. What can I get for you today?"

**Customer:** "You guys serve breakfast all day?"

**Waiter:** "Yes sir."

**Customer:** "Do you serve pancakes?"

**Waiter:** "No, sir. Just waffles."

**Customer:** "Well, I don't like waffles. Can you just make this one exception?"

**Waiter:** "Well, sir I can't go against code and grill you up a regular pancake but I'll tell you what: I can make you a pancake with these awesome little holes used to trap syrup on top so it can't escape off the side."

**Customer:** "Really!? You would do that for me? I'll take two!"



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## **“Power of Yes” Is the Key to Good Customer Relationships**

SUNNY K. PARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE JANITOR



On a nice fall Friday afternoon in 1987, at 6:00 p.m. to be exact, I was just leaving my office to pick up my wife and kids by 6:30 for dinner at the newly opened Dave & Busters. Before I closed my office door, the phone started ringing. I turned around a bit fearfully and answered the call. Mr. Hall of BellSouth, our customer for almost two months, wanted me to stop by his office to discuss cleaning issues. I asked him when, and he responded without delay, “as soon as possible.” Without hesitation and almost as a reflex, I told him, “Yes sir, I am on my way!” His office was about 15 minutes away and I knew that I would be late, again, for the long awaited family event.

What are GBM customers looking for from us? I often write down each item that our customers want from me and GBM. I do this because the best customer relationships come from the following action: deliver the quality services that clients are promised in time and before the customer even thinks about it. The key words are “in time.” Why should we delay delivering services since we have to deliver them sooner or later anyway? In fact, I try

to deliver way before the deadline. Just as credit card companies reward us (or at least don’t penalize us) for making payments early, our customers reward us with big smiles when we deliver services early or on time.

Nothing makes our customers as pleased as providing them with good service on time, each and every day. Good chatting skills and a pleasant personal relationship help to communicate and build ties with our customers, but don’t be confused: Customers want us there to fulfill our contractual obligations according to the specifications in the contract. That’s our primary job.

Mr. Hall of BellSouth had a reputation among us as someone who was tough to please, but he became a GBM fan in less than eight months. He then became our biggest customer. Later I asked him what caused his attitude to change. He said, “You people never said no or showed hesitation to any of my requests in the last eight months.” GBM has grown to its present position with the power of Yes! I want to thank you all for helping us maintain this reputation. In our line of work, such a reputation is precious and priceless. It’s something that can’t be bought. Please keep up the good work!

**We want to hear from you!** The theme of the next issue is “Goals for 2011: Personal, Family and Professional Goals.” Please send us pictures and stories by Monday, December 27, 2010.