

C I Host Launches Large Scale Customer Experience Initiative - "Customers Rule!"

Even Managers, Executives Grab Phones When Wait-Times Exceed Limits

For Immediate Release

DALLAS/EWORLDWIRE/April 8, 2004 --- C I Host, a global leader in Web hosting and Internet infrastructure, has launched a new customer service program to live up to its mantra - "to hold customers' hands every step of the way."

"We have always put our customers at the center of our business and have developed technical support and customer service programs that have reflected that priority," said Christopher Faulkner, CEO of C I Host. "Today that is becoming more important than ever. Our new program, "Customers Rule!" will make a great service incredible."

The development of the program grew from C I Host's understanding that poor customer service is one of the major complaints of 21st Century society as people struggle to make sense of an increasingly complex and technological world.

In too many day-to-day transactions, customers must deal with impersonal and unresponsive online support. They become infuriated by computer-generated emails that don't answer their questions and chat rooms that crash just as a problem is about to be solved. They put their call to tech support on their speakerphone and cook dinner while waiting.

C I Host is different - always has been, always will be.

C I Host already has one of the lowest churn rates in the industry - 4 percent - and its new program is expected to increase customer satisfaction and drive that turnover rate even lower.

In developing the new Customer Experience Initiative - dubbed "Customers Rule," C I Host has examined every customer contact point and devised ways to reach out at crucial times. The company has spent eight years surveying its customers, compiling data and charting customer expectations. That experience and analysis has led it to the current program.

"Every contact made throughout the entire lifecycle of a customer's relationship with C I Host, whether it is through marketing, sales, billing, customers service or technical support, will be made with the utmost professionalism, accuracy and thoroughness," Faulkner said.

The new Customer Experience Program ties together several of C I Host's current programs, including its customer loyalty program, "It's Nice to Know You're Appreciated," its new ServerProtect Life Cycle" program, its callbacks and its customer surveys, into one complete customer enhancing program - "Customers Rule!"

The new program even enlists executives and managers in the quest to keep wait times down. When wait times reach a certain level, all 190 employees are alerted through a company wide wait-time monitoring program and jump in to help.

"Everyone at C I Host takes calls," Faulkner said. "No one is immune to helping our customers and no one can hide behind email. That is the C I Host advantage - customers receive personal treatment from people who care!"

"Customers Rule!" includes the following:

Twenty days after an individual or company becomes a C I Host customer, a customer service team will call to make sure the new customer has all the information, tools and knowledge required to set up the Web-hosting account on C I Host's network and use every feature.

Every time a customer contacts any C I Host department by phone, email or live chat, a member of the full-time Quality Assurance and Service Delivery Team calls to make sure that the service the customer received was top-notch and the issue was completely resolved.

The C I Host Welcome Kit has been revamped to streamline the content and built an online, interactive kit that customers can refer to as they get up and running. The new online kit includes basic login information, tips on

getting a higher search engine placement, working with credit card providers to reduce fraud, marketing and advertising tips and general "how to work on the Internet" information.

Set up times on new accounts have been lowered to 30 seconds from the previous five minutes. Customers will have logins in their email box within 30 seconds of hitting the "Submit" button on the order form.

Executives and managers pitch in to help take customers' calls when the wait-time reaches 30 second for sales, five minutes for technical support and one minute for customer service. The phone system has been upgraded to monitor hold times on all 190 employees' workstations so that everyone knows when the wait-time maximums have been reached.

Technical Account Managers, people with at least 10 years experience in a call center, are part of a new management staffing configuration in technical support. They will resolve customer issues and satisfy customers "no matter what it takes."

"We want to make sure that the services and support we deliver meets and exceeds our customers' expectations," Faulkner said. "We want every customer to be able to fully utilize every feature they are paying for. No one will fall through the cracks at C I Host."

To manage the new Customer Experience Initiative, C I Host has hired Gina Sanchez as the new Director of Customer Service/Delivery.

Sanchez has more than ten years experience in customer service management and related activities at Wells Fargo, Office Depot and other firms. She was recently honored for her creation of a Vice Presidents' Customer Relations Hotline for the Associates Financial Services Company, Inc., in Irving, Texas, by the Associates Presidents Association.

Faulkner said Sanchez' experience in creative problem-solving and people-centered customer relations makes her the ideal person to lead new "Customers Rule!" Program.

"We want to go back and use some old fashioned tools like the telephone to really add that personal touch to our service," Faulkner said. "With C I Host, you are not just a number. You are a partner and we are dedicated to ensuring our customers are successful in whatever online venture they pursue."

Improving customer satisfaction is the engine that drives all of C I Host's activities, especially those that deal with security and reliability. Over the past few years, C I Host has plowed millions of dollars into technology advancements that benefit customers.

C I Host increased the bandwidth available to customers with dedicated servers four times in 2003, bringing it to 1,000 GB, which is ten times the industry average. C I Host spent \$500,000 last year to expand the power system of its core data center in Bedford, an investment in reliability that is enabling the firm to back up its 100 percent Service Level Agreement and 30-minute hardware replacement guarantee.

C I Host also expanded its data center in Los Angeles and opened a new center in Chicago in 2003. A fourth data center is scheduled to open in London this year. C I Host has also consistently expanded its network, now the largest privately owned network in the world.

"All of this is part of our continuing commitment to our customers, especially those in the SMB market," Faulkner said. "Owners of small- and medium-sized companies are the backbone of the American economy. They make up an increasing share of the e-commerce market and need to be able to devote their time and resources to running their own business. We take care of the technical end and give them all the support they need so they can tend to their core competency, whatever it may be."

About C I Host

C I Host (www.cihost.com), based in the Dallas/Fort Worth market, is a Web hosting and Internet solutions provider, domain name registrar (DNR) and application service provider (ASP) serving 205,000 individual consumers and businesses in 182 countries worldwide.

C I Host creates business-class Web hosting solutions for the small- and medium-enterprise (SME) market, with the broadest portfolio of managed hosting and value-added services in the industry. C I Host is accredited by ICANN to register domain names.

C I Host is HIPAA-compliant and has passed the SAS70 audit.

C I Host has been ranked #1 in speed by the Adoloma Web Hosting Guide. C I Host has been consistently ranked among the Top 5 Web hosting companies out of 16,000 around the globe by c|net's Ultimate Web Host

List, HostPulse, WebHostsOnline.com and HostChart.com. C I Host was named among the Top 25 Web hosting companies by HostIndex.com.

C I Host offers turn-key services ranging from initial domain name registration to custom dedicated servers for e-commerce on today's Web. The company offers innovative packages and services to the Internet community.

C I Host operates three diverse data centers across the United States, with its main facility and Network Operations Center in Bedford, Texas. C I Host also has offices in Los Angeles, Chicago and London.

All telco-grade, tier-1 data centers are wholly owned and operated by C I Host and consist of redundant diesel generator backups and a temperature-controlled secure environment with fully redundant UPS capability. All server hardware is fully tested and configured for optimal performance. Daily Web server backups and full fire protection guard against any data loss. To deliver speed and reliability, C I Host's servers are connected to two OC-12 fiber connections, five DS-3 and two OC-3 lines from five diverse Internet backbones for a total of more than 2.6 Gigabits of available bandwidth.

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