

## Sushi and more...

### The Importance of the Moment of Truth

By Uwe H Kaufmann

A typical Friday evening starts with a family dinner in a nice atmosphere. This time we decide to visit one of our favourite restaurants for a light dinner with Sushi. Upon arrival we are amazed. Usually, this place is packed on a Friday evening. Today, more than half of the seats are empty. Therefore, going in and taking a seat at the conveyor belt is very easy. Before the waitress has a chance to approach us we have taken some plates with Sushi already.

We tell the waitress that – apart from some drinks – we don't need to order from the menu. She confirms "So, you take the buffet for two adults and one teenager?"

"You call it buffet? We just want you to count the number of plates as usual."

"Sorry, we don't offer this anymore. We offer buffet instead. The prices are... ."

A bit disappointed and caught in the act we decide to stay and surrender to the new scheme. And, of course, we eat more than intended since we pay for it anyway.

Whilst eating and enjoying the Sushi we draw some conclusions: No wonder that this place is half-empty. People definitely don't like the new scheme. Did you see that half of the self-service screens are broken? So is the product knowledge of the staff.

After finishing more food than originally wished-for we ask the waitress for the bill. Another waitress approaches our table and starts counting the plates.

Now, we are very puzzled. "We thought you don't count plates any longer? Your colleague told us that we have to take the buffet...?" During some forth and back we do not get any answer on our question about what the pricing strategy of the restaurant is. I give up and approach the cashier – still feeling cheated, hoping that they admit their big mishap and compensate us with a rebate or a voucher or so – and apologise. Nothing. I paid the buffet price.

For sure, they will not see us at this place again.

### Conclusion

A "Moment of Truth" is the moment that the company interfaces with the buyer. Careful product development, successful marketing and perfect product preparation can easily be shattered by small misfortunes during the moment of truth. Unfortunately, in a restaurant you have a series of these moments, all of which are able to shape the impression of the experience dramatically. Often, this experience is much more important than the price or even the food itself.

The later in the service delivery the Moment of Truth turns bad, the less time remains for a remedy. If the remedy is not applied on the spot, the chance may be gone forever – together with the customer.