

Dear Tim,

I have forwarded your request to over 29 businesses in St.Aubin, so I hope you get useful replies. Interestingly, I checked with one shop to see if she had received the e-mail but she said she won't have time to reply as she will be too busy. It has struck me that the busy retailers, that you don't hear from, may actually be the one's that would be most helpful to gain feedback from for some ideas for success!

I have some initial comments / observations which are completely personal.

I had some customers in recently who had specifically come to Jersey to shop. They had even chosen to travel to Gatwick (despite living close to a regional airport) so they could fly with BA and have larger luggage allowance so they could take more back. I didn't enquire further as to what they were shopping for in Jersey.

In the light of your enquiry it did make me wonder what encourages people to come to Jersey to shop, when they have such great choice in UK. Have any surveys been done at airport / ports in Jersey as to where visitors shop here and why?

The same customers commented on how friendly everyone is- so that's a plus for Jersey!

Again, a completely personal view, but how much is being done to check customer service and product knowledge in shops in Jersey? If I have choice to buy products locally or online, the main thing that makes me buy in shop, is if I get professional assistance, help and I can return for help if needed. Whether buying clothes, technical goods, gifts, whatever, I think it makes all the difference if staff offer help. I am not suggesting hard sell, but often staff do not know the products they sell and really aren't that bothered whether someone buys from them or not.

May be for years shop owners have been used to people coming and buying from them anyway and they have not felt the need to invest time in training their staff - and often it is a case of spending time with staff doing on the job training.

Interestingly I had just typed the above when I received leaflet in the post about the "Skills Accelerator". All sounds great, but in many retail environments, going on a course can be helpful, but it's continued on the

job training that helps people improve their day to day skills of working with people and learning the products they sell.

Since I started replying to your e-mail, I have heard on radio the ad re customer service awards. Again - this is great idea - but does it really achieve all year round customer service and improvement for those that need it?

Are mystery shoppers ever sent out out to collect impartial statistical data on how retail outlets perform?

The Facebook page "Bad and Good Jersey Businesses" seems to be a popular place for people to offer feedback - is this review considering the views given here and asking for feedback on this page?

In your list of review points, you ask for ideas. An idea I have had for a while that would help a wide variety of local businesses is tailored holidays, that could be available to locals and visitors.

E.g. Gourmet Holiday - which includes meals at certain restaurants, visits to La Mare Vineyards, Classic Herd, Oyster walk and such like food related activities.

Retail therapy holiday - includes trips to Jersey Pearl, La Mare, certain shops that can offer the personal service e.g. Makeovers, advice on clothes and colours, etc.

Action holiday - includes Les Ormes activities, kayaking, surfing, walks with Jersey walk Adventures, coasteering, etc.

These packages could be marketed to locals aswell as tourists.

For self-catering accommodation it can be linked in with " home" deliveries by local suppliers of breakfast hampers, veg. Etc.

Such holidays not only provide further business for the particular shops or activities involved, but also the potential for taxi/tourist guide type people to transport people from place to place. Also for a variety of types of accommodation.

The world will never be short of ideas, and I realise the bare bones of my suggestions may be met with "we can't do that because . . ." but may be it will inspire thoughts for ideas that can be actioned.

I am intrigued as to how the review's findings will actually help businesses? Surely government can offer reports and run programmes but at the end of the day it is up to individual businesses and retailers to come up with their own ideas to stimulate their own business and attract / retain customers?

I may have raised more questions than I have offered comments - but at least I have managed to reply.

I hope it's helpful in some way.

Kind Regards,

Mary

Mary Michael