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As rightfully stated on the flap of this book “The Internet gold rush is over”. It is this adagio that drove Zemke and Connellan to write *E-service: 24 Ways to Keep Your Customers – When the Competition Is Just a Click Away*. Unfortunately and sometimes painfully, companies active on the Web have started to recognize that presenting customers with all kinds of flashy stuff and possibilities to make bargains is simply not enough. It is clear that just like bells and whistles do not guarantee success in the offline world they also will not in an online environment. According to the authors the magic words have and always will be “service” and “service excellence”. More specifically, it is the delivery of excellent service that makes customers coming back, also to the online storefront. In doing so, the principle of “hockey-stick loyalty” seems to be essential; the positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty is rather modest for lower satisfaction levels. On the other hand, a customer scoring a five on the satisfaction scale (representing an excellent rating), is two to six times more loyal than a customer scoring a four. This illustrates that also online organizations should strive for customer delight, both with the organization as well as its offerings.

Based on extensive research on what online buyers expect and experience, Zemke and Connellan are able to present proven and ready to implement ideas that should enable companies “to move into the ranks of premier e-service providers and ignite the growth of your business”. Readers are presented with seven principles put forward as the “secrets of e-masters”. If adequately followed, these principles lead to success at creating customer pleasing and company distinctive e-service. They go from practicing easy-to-do business with thinking (ETDBW), via personalizing the e-experience and delivering end-to-end service to building a retention strategy aimed at stimulating repeat business in the future. Next, the authors formulate 24 key or practical lessons referred to as “rules of the road for applying the seven principles to your organization's e-service efforts”. Among others, these keys involve mastering the ETDBW design basics, making systems employee as well as customer-friendly, building in – and on – security, speed, and easy navigation, communication and building trust, personalization, creating communities to add value, fast and efficient fulfillment, making human contact easy, mastering service recovery basics, and building and practicing retention strategies.

The book concludes with “a seven-lesson crash course in e-service improvement”. This is an interesting exercise, encouraging readers to go out on the Web to do some comparison-shopping. The purpose of this is to see what can be found out there, what is good, and what could be improved. These observations should then be compared to one's own Internet practices,

resulting in what the authors refer to as “basic competitive analysis”. In addition, the authors take a look in their crystal ball and formulate predictions likely to occur in the e-service arena in the (near) future. Indeed, some of these can already be observed in daily life, such as the use of personal digital assistants (PDAs) for e-service purposes. Others are just waiting for the right technology being developed and put into operation.

Summarizing, *E-service: 24 Ways to Keep Your Customers – When the Competition Is Just a Click Away* deals with a crucial and intriguing topic, namely customer retention on the Web through e-service. Based on extensive research, the authors are able to present readers with an intuitive and easy-to-understand approach that should appeal to practitioners, theorists, as well as university students.