



555 East Pikes Peak Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80903-3612
877.442.0505 | 719.442.0505

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Shari Rodriguez, Associate Vice President of Public Relations
866.621.0124 x2513 • shari.rodriguez@rockies.edu

Cyberspace Complainers Counteract Stress and Command Power



COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (October 24, 2011) – Prior to the Internet, consumers’ unfortunate experiences were traditionally heard by a small sphere of influence – a customer service representative, family members or friends. Today, cyberspace has opened the gates to a plethora of grumblings. From posts on social networks to blogs, tweets and yelps, consumers have the capability of voicing their opinions with grandeur on a global scale.

Dr. David Solly, a psychology professor at University of the Rockies, a graduate school specializing in social and behavioral sciences, says that complaining is a verbal release of tension and, oftentimes, anger that causes a release of chemicals in the brain and body helping us to counteract stress and feel physically better. It also tends to make us feel better emotionally because we feel we're more in control of our circumstances.

- more -

1st Add

Cyberspace Complainers Counteract Stress and Command Power

"Complaining via social media maximizes the impact," Solly said. "We feel we are reaching more people when we use social media as a vehicle. Using social media or any form of communication that does not require face-to-face contact with another person tends to be more comfortable and less threatening. We feel we have more anonymity. Complaining via social media gives the person a feeling of commanding great power and control over their situation. They have the perception that they are broadcasting their message to the public... and they are."

On the flip side, Solly says successful businesses recognize the psychology of social media complaining and acknowledge complaints, as well as accolades, from customers. Now, more than ever, unhappy consumers voice their complaints through social media outlets. However, customer service excellence through social media acknowledgement can turn unhappy customers into strong advocates.

"People want to feel they have been heard and that the business cares about them and what they feel," he said. "Again, this makes the complainer feel that they have power in the situation. The positive effect for the business is that the customer feels more valued and more connected to the business. Showing customers that the business cares about them, regardless of whether it's acknowledgement of a complaint or a compliment, provides a sense of belonging and builds loyalty."

Editor's Note: University of the Rockies psychology professor Dr. David Solly is available for interviews, expert commentary or by-lined articles.

About University of the Rockies

University of the Rockies is a graduate school specializing in master's and doctorate degree programs in social and behavioral sciences. Accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (www.ncahlc.org), classes are offered online and on-campus in Colorado Springs. For more information, please visit www.rockies.edu or call Shari Rodriguez, associate vice president of Public Relations, at 866.621.0124 x2513.