

ive Me My New New Monitor....Maybe

By Mike Smith

I splashed out the other week and bought a brand new AppleVision Studio Display. Informed opinion has it that it is the first flat screen worth buying and I'd coveted the idea since it first raised it's (thin) head several years ago.

o I didn't. D'you want me to live a lie? Why would I, a relatively sane, yet impecunious, graphic artist chuck my extremely hard-earned 'ackers' down the toilet for a first generation bit of tat that can't yet give you either the size or the resolution that the same company just a few months ago told you was vital when they were trying to sell you their 21 inch graphics monitor? To add insult to injury they have now slashed the price from £1699 to £899! Can you imagine the early adopters who proudly brought their new purchase home the week before the price cut, amazed their friends with the cutting edge styling not to mention their ability to pay out so many notes for so little? A week later and their friends are buying the same machine (with a week longer on the warranty) for half the price!!! To say that I would be incandescent is something of an understatement.


This happened with my 1710AV. I paid nearly nine hundred plus V.A.T .and five minutes, O.K. six, later it's half the price. Now, either Apple have found a fourth world country (where things are really bad) to build these boxes, where the child labourers are so afraid of the influx of paedophiles and sex tourists that they'll work for next to nothing to avoid being punctured by a pervert, or Apple were previously making an outrageous profit. I favour the 4th world argument as I'm on my fifth one, (or is it the fifth world and I've had four?) because they've had a depressing tendency to keep breaking down. Perhaps with the Studio Display they are tearing the screens off the returned, self-imolating PowerBooks of a couple of years ago, re-sizing them in PhotoShop, and glueing them to some plastic sticks they got from a bankrupt stock of Kinder

Eggs. I've done some serious in-depth research and have determined that this is absolutely the only way they could still make a profit given that the original price was justifiable.

What are they doing with all those profits? They are certainly not putting it in to R&D, witness my 1710 saga. Well the shareholders are getting a good deal, that's for sure. Gil Amelio got a few bucks. Steve Jobs is probably paying the rent. Certainly, the advertising morons are being paid handsomely for producing their usual creative vacuum, so no change there. What about the customers though? What about the loyal band of punters, evangelists one and all, who buy this overpriced office furniture? Where's the improvement in customer care that people have been pleading for for years? It's nowhere to be seen, and it won't be.

Customer service takes ages to become effective. If I got good service from Apple I would think that it was a one-off. It would take at least a year of my complaints and a lot of reading about other people's good experiences before I was convinced that a change had taken place. That's not good enough for Wall Street. They want results and they want them now. Look at the overriding city interest in the share price. If the venal short-term meisters in the various financial centres can't see an immediate change they move on. It's true of every business not just Apple's.

The farce that is customer relations in most companies is a sham that should be exposed for the ridiculous exercise in corporatist crap it is. Some half demented bint with a headset, sing-song-reciting the flaccid script of the golf-playing, Cavalier driving, toupee-wearing, Viagra candidate 'customer relations manager' does not amount to real service any more than a half eaten meat pie on a desk [Dixons, recently].

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