

I Didn't Get What I Paid For!

There is a certain advantage to having your own business. *You get to call the shots, and you don't have to adhere to corporate policies that you don't agree with.*

There is an added bonus when you have a business that you don't rely on to pay rent, buy food or meet the other necessities of life. *You don't have to kiss ass!*

Fortunately, I find myself in this position, and perhaps that is why I can write the things that my colleagues can only think or talk about in hushed tones with very trusted company. Unlike my colleagues, I won't die financially if you don't like me. I don't care if you think of me as Satan's Bride. I don't care if you band together and talk smack about me. I don't care if you change your mind and don't spend that damned \$20 on what I peddle, because frankly, it isn't about the money for me, or at least not so much that I have to tolerate the piss poor, rude, abusive treatment that some of you feel you need to dole out.

Before everyone gets their panties in a wad, let me say that that by far the *majority* of you are wonderfully fabulous appreciative customers. I *love* talking to you when you call. I *love* the e-mails we exchange. You realize that when a mistake is made, that I am only human and that I will fix whatever is wrong, with an apology to boot. It is **not** about you that I write. It is about the roughly 15% of the whole that are the slimy underbelly of our customer base. They are the manic, menopause infected, mentally deranged, Darwin Award winning customers that this whole tirade is about. So for the majority of you, just sit back and enjoy the read, because you know that I do appreciate *you*.

It seems that there is a suspicion amongst some of you that you hold dear

to your putrid little wretched hearts. This belief is the driving force behind how you interact in your business dealings with many bead stores, both on-line and the brick and mortar variety. I will confirm your suspicion so that you no longer need to wonder:

All of us who are in the business of selling beads, kits and assorted related bead paraphernalia have only one thing on our minds and that is:

WE WANT TO RIP YOU OFF!!

It is our collective goal to find ways to seduce you, lure you, swindle you and otherwise find ways to extract your cold hard earned cash. If there is *any* conceivable way that we can empty your pockets and sell you an inferior product, short you on your order, perhaps not even send the order so that we can blame the Post Office (of course they are in cahoots with us) or if we can send you poorly packaged, damaged *crap*, we will. And we will charge as much as we can possibly can.

There!! I've said it!! Does this make you feel better? Does this validate your suspicions? Are you jumping up and down with clenched fists yelling "**I KNEW IT!**" Do you really, truly believe this?

If you do, then you are a crumpet short of a tea party. You are nothing short of being a complete utter moron. And I hope you aren't breeding.

Sure, you may have encountered a bead store employee that was a tad grouchy one day, perhaps an order got screwed up, or perhaps you were short changed by a nickel when paying cash. I have news for you, it happens. F*&&%\$% Deal with it, POLITELY!!

The reality is, businesses that serve you, dear beader, DO try to do things right. We all work hard at offering not only the standard items that you depend on, but also the unique, hard to get items. We bend over backwards to give you great products at a fair price (and still make a living). We try to provide great customer service, as trying and as much of a pain in the ass you may be. In short, we DO try to please you.

The business world is driven by the philosophy of "*The customer is always right*", in an attempt to get the sale (and repeat ones). This philosophy requires a business to jump through rings of fire, walk

thorough burning coals, walk barefoot in the snow to use an outhouse late at night and to lick your butt, smiling all the while.

Think about it, we are a small community. True, the bead industry is growing by leaps and bounds, but we are still small. People talk. Would anyone of us business types knowingly and willingly create a reputation that is negative? Competition being what it is with stores in the “flesh” and online stores, service is something that we all try to do our best with. But there are times when YOU push us to our limits. YOU coax our alter ego Demons to come out. YOU create an unnecessary situation, that had you handled with tact and kindness, would never have become confrontational. YOU backed us into that corner. Did you not expect some sort of reaction?

I know that some will think (especially with this essay) that I am the “Soup Nazi” of the beadworld. (If you never heard of the “Soup Nazi, it is a GREAT episode on the sitcom “KRAMER”) I am not afraid to be outspoken, I despise “Political Correctness” and I don’t take a whole lot of crap that is dished out. So be it. If you read my previous installations to *The Cracked Bead*, you should understand where some of my attitude is coming from. Let me share some more of the communication that has inspired my pissy attitude.

The Package That Never Came

“ I ordered “Masterpieces For Beadwork “ two weeks ago. It still has not arrived. This is the second time I have ordered something from you and have had difficulty in receiving my order. Obviously, you are trying to steal my money. I never have problems from anyone else that I order from, and I order a lot from other places”

Well, well.... I remember this person from the year before. Yes there was a problem the year before. She didn't get a book she ordered in a timely manner, even though I sent it out the day after I received the order. I sent her a replacement, and asked her to “refuse delivery” if she ever got the second book.

Which she did. It was returned to me.

Seems to me there is something wrong with her Post Office. Even though

it is in a major city, things can go wrong. It has happened before. Why with *just my deliveries*, I don't know. Maybe the mail carrier likes beading too, borrowed the book, then later delivers it (Highly unlikely, but sounds good!)

If the problem occurred before, and she remembered that eventually, she did get delivery of *both* books, why couldn't she accept the possibility that the Post Office messed up *again*!!

When I sent her a copy of the receipt from the Post Office that had her city and zip as well as the date shipped, do you think I got anything resembling an apology for accusing me of trying to rip her off? Not on your life. The way her mind worked, I bet she thought either I forged the receipt, or the Post Office and I have some sort of scam set up together.

The second book never did get refused and returned back to me. Perhaps it truly did get "lost in the mail". Perhaps she kept it out of vengeance or embarrassment in being wrong in her accusations.

Maybe the "lost in the mail" complaint is a great way to add to a friend's library of books. Hey, if I can be accused of swindling someone, when I have proof of mailing, I can accuse someone of trying to duke me out of an extra book!

Those Bad Beads

I received my order yesterday. When I e-mailed you about the Delica Beads (which I never used before) you stated that the beads were the most uniform beads you could buy. You said that they are more perfect in size and shape than Czech beads I am used to using.

I took just one of the 28 colors in the kit I ordered and went thru them. I found 12 beads that were so badly shaped that I cannot use them. What's up with that?

I thought you said they would be PERFECT. I want a replacement, or a credit.

YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING!!!

First of all, for the particular kit she ordered, no color had less than 1 gram of beads. When I package kits, I package up more than what the kit needs so that if there are culls, or if someone spills a few, there should be enough to work through the project. The color she complained about had some 300+ Delica Beads. I am sure I had enough extra in this package to cover the dozen beads that were "bad".

I have to wonder about the type of person who takes the time to go through hundreds of beads, looking for culls before they start a project. Do they do this with a microscope? How much of a variance do they allow? If she was really this anal.....how did she ever manage using Czech seed beads?

I wonder if she goes through a box of Fruit Loops to make sure all the O's are in one piece, and asks for a refund if they aren't.

Color is wrong

I just received my Royal Elephant kit. The color of the beads shown on the web site do not match what you sent me. When I hold the beads to my monitor, they aren't even close!

If I could, I would reach through the computer and smack this idiot upside the head for being so stupid. All monitors are not equal. Has she never stood in front of a bank of TV's in an electronic store and noticed the difference in colors from one TV to the next? It is the same with computer monitors. Some are more vivid than others, some may have a darker cast, or a bluish cast. Don't hold beads up to a computer monitor and expect to have an exact match.

Shortage on order

I just received my kit today. I am missing 2 of the colors. How the hell do you expect me to bead this project missing two colors? Do you expect me to go and buy them or what? If you don't respond immediately I am going

to turn you in to the Better Business Bureau for not providing what you stated.

WOW!!! I am being accused of *FRAUD!* I will have to alert my mob leader Beadsy Houlligan that we are being found out. The FBI (Freakin' Bead Investigators) are on to us. I gotta tell my international bead smuggling operation to lay low while I am at it. Oh!!! I am so afraid to be put behind bars. How will I bead? Do you think this will get me 3-5, with time off for good behavior?

Free Candy!

My mom was happy to receive the book I ordered from you. But when I went over to help her with one of the projects, I have to say I was utterly disgusted. Between pages 34 and 35 there was a piece of candy stuck between the pages. You should have a talk with your shipping department about eating candy on the job.

We scraped it off and it's cleaned up. My mom still uses the book, she would never complain to you, but I feel we are due some compensation for this disgusting thing.

Dear Customer,

First off, your mom has more sense than you do.

I have no "Shipping Department" (refer to "I Wanna Become a Millionaire). I get an order for books, I go out to the garage where the books are stored in their original boxes as received from the printer, and fill the order. I do the cursory flipping through the book to do a fast scan to make sure the pages aren't stuck together, or have some really obvious defect. Then I send it off. No candy chomping employees involved. No candy in sight. I would have noticed a piece of Tootsie Roll between the pages just based on the bulk factor.

Maybe while it was sitting on your mom's table, SHE had the candy that got wedged between pages 34 and 35....maybe she doesn't remember having candy on her table or maybe she used it as a book mark. Maybe

that is the real reason she won't complain. She didn't want YOU knowing she had candy!

Compensation?? Are you TRULY TRAUMATIZED?? Fine....

The book in question is 64 pages long (not counting the covers which I will throw in for free). The book's price is 11.95. Which in turn cost you 18 Cents per page.

Since you have 2 "damaged" pages, the gross (pardon the pun) damage is 36 cents. The pages still being usable, and in your own words are "cleaned up", cuts the damages in half. So your net damage is 18 cents.

The cost of postage, envelope, check, and man power of my accounting department to cut the check (she thinks I have a shipping department, so why not accounting?) is an estimated \$3.00.

Please remit \$2.82 since the way I see it, you owe *me* money for your compensation!

Blank Pages

I just got my book The Magical Amulet Bag Vol. 1. You might want to check your books more thoroughly before you send them out.

It appears that on page 62 the printing got messed up. The top of the page says "Notes" but the rest of the page is blank. Can you send me the notes that are supposed to be on that page? I don't want to miss the notes that might be important.

Dear Customer,

There is only one "note" that should have been on that "blank" page. I am sorry to have not included it when I mailed it out to you, but I didn't know if it was pertinent at the time. The note is this:

"Buy Some Brains!"

Note to self: Perhaps I should include the words "*This page is intentionally left blank*", to save myself trouble like this. But then again....I would miss the fun of dealing with crash test dummies!

Damaged Goods

I received my book from you today. Why did you send me a book that is damaged? There were footprints all over the envelope, the envelope was torn, and the book has a corner of its cover bent.

Dear Customer.

I will be sure to have a talk with my shipping department. They must have used your packaged book as home base for the company picnic baseball game, I will get to the bottom of this and fire the employees involved.

However, the bent cover is intentional. It helps the book stand up for ease in reading as you are beading. With the bent cover, the book becomes a tripod and is much more stable when standing up. It is part of the design that I hope you will find ingenious once you understand how it works. I ought to patent the design, don't you think?

Note to self: Post office gets sloppy sometimes....perhaps I need to have a talk with them.

Slow delivery

I mailed an order to you some time ago. I have not received my book. I feel I should have by now. Please send a replacement or refund my money IMMEDIATELY. Your service is really poor. I will never order from you again!!!

Dear Customer,

I did indeed receive your order yesterday, May 12. I noted that that the postmark (the envelope is still on my desk) was May 8. I sent your order out to you today, May 13.

I am amazed at how fast mail comes to California from New York. Does your Post Office use have those new fangled things called "jets"? I understand they are *FAST!* We still use the Pony Express here in California. A smelly sweaty horse and grungy looking hungry rider should be arriving soon to deliver your book. Please be so kind as to offer them cool water and a bite to eat since the postage you included does not include their per diem costs.

Not as Shown

I ordered "Peepers" from you, which I received today. Why is it in a box, and all the beads aren't put together? For that price, I thought I was going to get a ready to wear necklace.....

I really need to design some idiot awards, and send them out.....

Files Incomplete!

I have just received my CD for the Christmas Stocking Collection.

When I put it into my computer it shows there are seven pictures and there are seven pdf files for the seven stockings.

I was extremely disappointed when I received this product, your web site says it comes with color code and list of Delicas needed . Are there any directions on the CD I am missing on how to get this from the CD? Please e-mail me full directions if at all possible

I have since purchased the teddy bear one on bead-patterns.com to see what it came with. I received a full color chart and list of bead colors needed.

You have some nice patterns but i will not buy anymore if this is all I get.

Dear Customer

Yes, there are 7 pictures (also referred to as jpg's). These are just extra images. They are larger than the "thumbnail" images that are on the

stats sheet of the pattern. If you took the time to open the pdf files, you would see that your color chart and list of bead colors are all included in the multi page pdf files.

If you really want me to include full directions on how to click on the arrows at the top of the page to flip through the pages, or how to use the scroll bar to navigate through a multi page document, I will be happy to provide that to you. But I will need at least one month to develop directions that are as complicated as this. It might even need to go to testing and research to make sure that the directions are complete and easily understandable.

Your patience and kindness in this matter are greatly appreciated.

I Only Want 1 Design in Your Book

I just received your book, "Masterpieces for Beadwork.". I have decided that I only want one design in that book. I have Xeroxed the design, and will be returning the book. I want a full refund.

Dear Customer,

I can't think of the right words to say. I am so happy that you actually liked one of the designs that the book has, so much so that you even Xeroxed it. I just don't know what to say because I feel so utterly flattered.

I just can't accept the book back. It is yours to keep. I am sure you will agree, that because I am so generous, that I deserve a reward. I graciously accept. I will keep the money you sent me for the book. Please don't offer me more than that, it's plenty enough, really!

I will never forget your kindness and generosity. You are one of a million.....

Note to self: Yeah right.....one of a million of other idiots I deal with almost daily!!

Your Web Site is Set Up to Rip Me Off!!

I just bought a pattern with an instant download. I could not get on the ftp site to download the pattern. Internet Explorer said "site not responding". Is this your idea of how to steal money from me? What gives? I want my pattern!!

Dear Customer,

I apologize for my greedy web site. It has been insatiable lately. I should feed it more. I do think it is in cahoots with Internet Explorer (IE) to rip people off. I see this note many times when I try to access some web sites. I know it is some sort of conspiracy because when I go back to that web site 15 minutes later, it works!! Perhaps IE is holding the web sites in question hostage, at 6 port PCI card gun point and threat of electronic death.

Whatever you do, *do not*, I repeat **DO NOT** try to go to that site ever again. They might still be held hostage! It could be a dangerous situation!

FINAL WORDS

When something goes wrong with your order, please do not assume that we did it *intentionally*. We are human just like you are, and make mistakes just like you do.

Remember the saying: "**YOU GET MORE WITH HONEY THAN YOU DO WITH VINEGAR**". Treat us with the respect and kindness that you would like to be treated with, and you will find us happy to see you come thru the door, and happy to serve you. It is human nature to be kind in return to those who treat us kind. There is no need to treat anyone harshly at the onset. Allow room for mistakes, and for corrections. All of us will be much happier as a result.

And if by chance you do find yourself short tempered and uncharacteristically nasty to us, and you find the error is quickly corrected, an apology for your bad behavior is something you should consider.