

UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO INTERNAL AUDIT DEPARTMENT PROVIDE POST-SALES SERVICE

Control practices

The following control objectives provide a basis for strengthening your control environment for the process of providing post-sales service. When you select an objective, you will access a list of the associated business risks and control practices. That information can serve as a checklist when you begin reviewing the strength of your current process controls.

This business risk and control information can help you assess your internal control environment and assist with the design and implementation of internal controls. Please note that this information is at the generic business process level and many companies will need to go beyond generic models to address the specific business processes that support the financial and nonfinancial disclosures being made. You can combine the insight of this business risk and control information with your industry-specific knowledge and understanding of your company's environment when conducting internal control assessments and designing and implementing recommendations.

Effectiveness and efficiency of operations

- A. Customer needs continue to be satisfied after the sale.
- B. Customer service requirements are communicated to personnel.

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Effectiveness and efficiency of operations

A. Customer needs continue to be satisfied after the sale.

Business risks

- Sales and marketing objectives related to customer retention and "word of mouth" recommendations will not be achieved due to customer dissatisfaction with post-sales service.
- The collection of cash receipts will be impaired if customers are dissatisfied with the products and service support they receive.

Control practices

1. Organize the customer service department in the most efficient manner; for example, along product or geographical lines.
2. Communicate sales and marketing objectives to service personnel. (For example, communicate a new promotional program or a special allowance in a timely manner.)
3. Train service personnel to know company products.
4. Train service personnel in interpersonal skills.
5. Ensure that service personnel have a thorough understanding of customer needs and wants.
6. Base incentive and bonus criteria for service personnel partially on customer satisfaction.
7. Perform customer satisfaction surveys with existing and former customers to assess their satisfaction with service levels.

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B. Customer service requirements are communicated to personnel.

Business risks

- Unavailable or inaccurate pricing and product information will lead to unsatisfactory customer service.
- Customers will incur excessive service costs, resulting in dissatisfaction with the product and the company.
- High service costs will reduce profitability over the product life cycle.

Control practices

1. Establish cross-functional communication links to ensure that service personnel understand all of the company's interactions with customers.
2. Implement a CRM (customer relationship management) program and system to facilitate the interaction between the sales, marketing, and customer service teams throughout all touchpoints with the customer.
3. Provide customer service representatives with access to order processing systems that includes daily updates on pricing information.
4. Report all customer suggestions received by the customer service team to the appropriate personnel in a timely manner for their consideration.
5. Monitor customer service inquiries (calls) for quality purposes.
6. Give customer service personnel the authority to resolve most major complaints so they do not have to transfer customers to several other points of contact.
7. Log all customer complaints into a database and analyze them by individual personnel to determine the root cause of specific problems and how to prevent them from recurring.