

## SOAPBOX

**DON'T GIVE YOURSELF AWAY!**

ROD HILLIER, BEKEN AND SONS, ISLE OF WIGHT

We are all constantly being told to give great customer service but am I alone in thinking an ever greater amount of people want after sales service from somewhere different from where they bought the product? It used to be if someone came in with a camera problem that a new battery would be the answer so they were happy and so were we but now you nearly always get told "well I did buy a new battery earlier from Currys/Jessops etc, etc"

After we get it going they then all say, "I knew you would be the people to help."

I think in independent retail we have made it bad for ourselves by giving many of our services and knowledge for free, which has given the impression that it has no value.

Go in to a café or restaurant and you get a service charge because your food has been brought to you. How else are you meant to get it? Yet we are meant to give help away.

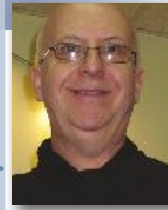
If you attempt to pay a bill by credit card you often get told this will mean an extra charge.

When did you last hear of a retailer trying that one?

How many of the people that you give that free extra service to, do

what you are hoping for and come back? In my experience: not many. Over the last few weeks we have started charging a small amount for putting things right and a bigger amount for showing how to work cameras etc. All of which is free if it came from here in the first place.

We have never had so many people say "thank you for your help" and in lots of cases they have bought something else or come back later to buy because we helped them before. Give something a value and it becomes memorable.



## SNIPPETS

**FIND US AT FOCUS!**

Of course, the Pixel team will be present at Focus on Imaging, catching up on all the event's latest.

Most of you know our names and faces so do say hello if you see us - we'd love to have a catch up with you!

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**LEGAL BRIEF****COMPANY ADMINISTRATION**

Following the changes to company law late in 2009, private companies need to decide how to deal with a number of aspects of their day-to-day management and administration. This article aims to highlight some key areas which private companies should consider to ensure that they comply with the new legislation and to maximise any potential benefit they might get from the changes.

**1.** You should undertake a review of your company's articles of association (i.e. your company's main constitutional document). Changing your articles may be beneficial as, now that the new companies legislation is in force, the articles may be misleading and refer to incorrect and out of date legislation. Further, you may be able to take advantage of changes providing for more modern and flexible ways for a company to manage its affairs.

**2.** The duties of the company directors have now been codified and directors should be aware of these duties. There are now seven general duties for directors: to act within their powers, promote the success of the company, exercise independent judgment, exercise reasonable care, avoid conflicts of interest, not to accept any benefits from third parties and to declare an interest in proposed transactions or arrangements with the company.

**3.** You should ensure that if your company has

corporate directors, there is at least one natural person who is a director.

**4.** A company secretary is now no longer necessary but if you choose not to have a company secretary you must decide who is responsible for statutory filings and maintaining records. The relevant people in your business should be brought up to date with the new Companies House forms and procedures.

**5.** You should ensure that all your company procedures on company meetings and resolutions are updated and, in particular, be aware that any written resolutions should be passed in accordance with the prescribed procedures. Standard documents and signing procedures should be reviewed so that, if desired, they permit one company director to be able to execute deeds.

**6.** Your business will need to comply with company trading disclosures. You should therefore make sure that your company's statutory details are included on all hard copy documents, emails and company websites.

**7.** You should review your company register (or statutory books) and ensure that they comply with the new legislation. In most cases there are relaxations but there are also some new requirements, such as the requirement for a separate register of directors' residential addresses.



**If you have any questions about the content of this checklist or you require further information on the Companies Act please contact Mark Williams of Gaby Hardwicke Solicitors on: mew@gabyhardwicke.co.uk 01323 435 900. www.gabyhardwicke.co.uk**

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