

Can I Get Just One Rib? Looking For the Hookup

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney

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I found myself viewing one of my favorite movies, "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka," a parody of blaxploitation movies that was written by, directed by, and acted in by Keenen Ivory Wayans. There were some many iconic actors in the movie, but one of my favorite scenes in the entire movie is when Isaac Hayes, who played the character Hammer, was about to serve one of their first rib joint customers. It was that first customer, played by Chris Rock, who had one of the most memorable exchanges with Hayes in the entire movie.

Chris Rock: How much for an order of ribs?

Isaac Hayes: \$2.50

Rock: \$2.50? How many ribs come in an order?

Hayes: Ah...about 5.

Rock: So...each rib is about 50 cent?

Hayes: Yeah...that's about right.

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Rock: Well I'll have one rib.

Hayes: Okay, one order of ribs

Rock: No...no, no, I mean 'one rib.'

Hayes:...One rib?

Hayes: You want anything else with that?

Rock: How much is a soda?

Hayes: A dollar.

Rock: Aw come on man...be easy on a brother. Okay, I'm make a deal with ya, just pour it into a glass and I'll take a lil' sip for 15 cents.

Hayes:....my glasses cost more than 15 cents...

Rock: Okay, forget the cup, pour it into my hand for a dime.

Hayes: LISTEN.....YOU PAY ME AND GET OUTTA MY PLACE.

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Rock: Got change for a hundred?

Funny, yet sad and yet true.

While we find this exchange within the movie to be funny, it really can be a real problem for small businesses and needs to be checked. If you don't have the money to afford someone's services or products or goods, you should either come back when you know you have the money or stay away altogether. Stop looking for the hookup all the time.

Another thing! If you don't have a predetermined budget allocated to hire a firm for their services, don't tell them that they are too high when they tell you what their price or fee is. Business owners have learned their trade or craft and have invested the time and resources to gain invaluable knowledge, so why try and cheat them out of that as if they don't deserve what they charge? It's just not right.

More importantly, if you do ask someone what their price or fee is, and you have yet to share what your budget is when that business owner asks, don't ask that businessman or that businesswoman if they can lower their price or fee to accommodate your perceived value of their product or service. Discounts are a choice and a privilege, not an obligation.

And don't use the, "You don't get what you don't ask for" lingo, when trying to justify your lack of knowledge or ability to produce and deliver the requested product or service. That is nothing but a crafty way of trying to get the hook up. Not everything comes with a hookup tag attached to it.

When people respect your business for the quality of your product and services, they will pay your cost regardless to name recognition or business size. When someone tries to negotiate your price down to an unreasonable amount, then that goes from negotiation to begging. Negotiating is a choice, not an obligation. So a business owner can do what they want with their business. When you go into Tiffany's, can you negotiate the price of their bracelets or necklaces? No, they are set. What about McDonald's? I negotiate by choice and my business is not a Fortune 500 company per the current standard, but I function with a Fortune 500 mentality. I know that clients or folks like that will be problems later. Those you give the hookup to are the worst clients. They have the most demands and require the most attention Well, even beyond that. If someone is charging you less, why are you coming to me? Seems like you

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should have went with them, right?

Everyone operates their business by a set of values and I am one that believes that you can sell based on value, not just on price. With that, you can sell what you want, to whom you want, how you want, based on the value you place on your good /service. Of course there are consequences for that decision and for that choice, but that's basic economics.....OPPORTUNITY COST. You have to determine the value of your product and service and make the decision of whether you will sell your product or service based on the value of it or the price of it. It is your choice as a business owner though.

Many businesses drive consumer willingness to buy, by the value of the product or service that they offer. (i.e. Air Jordans, Tiffany Bracelets, Starbucks Coffee, Crave Cupcakes, Bentley, etc.) I've never gotten a "negotiated" pair of Air Jordans from Foot Locker, or a "discounted" cup of Starbucks Coffee or a "hookup" on a Crave Cupcake. Prices are set and fixed and I wouldn't dare ask them for a discount.

Every person has experiences and thoughts about how businesses should be run. Who am I to tell another business owner that how they handle their business is right or wrong? Needless to say, I can only offer advice, solutions and knowledge based on what I've learned and what I've experienced.

It's time to shift our paradigm and how we treat small businesses, compared to how we treat major corporations. You need to buy the whole order of ribs, not just one rib. You need to buy the whole soda, not just the soda in your hand.

We could all grow and learn to respect one another's craft and talent and pay them what they are worth, even if you don't agree, then let them be and stop counting their money.{jcomments on}