

Misty Jazz Records - Customer Service Standards

Our Service Philosophy

Every customer interaction is an opportunity to share our passion for jazz and build lasting relationships. We're not just selling records—we're creating experiences and fostering a community of music lovers.

Core Service Principles

1. Jazz Knowledge = Great Service

- **Know Your Catalog:** Be familiar with our inventory
- **Know Jazz History:** Understand artists, labels, and eras
- **Know Context:** Share stories that enrich the music
- **Never Fake It:** Say "let me find out" rather than guessing

2. Listen First, Sell Second

- **Understand Needs:** Ask questions before recommending
- **Read Cues:** Gauge customer knowledge level
- **Adapt Approach:** Casual browsers vs. serious collectors
- **Respect Budget:** Don't push expensive items inappropriately

3. Honesty Over Sales

- **Accurate Grading:** Never overstate condition
- **Fair Pricing:** Stick to posted prices
- **Authentic Info:** Correct pressing details
- **Set Expectations:** If reissue sounds different, say so

4. Create Community

- **Remember Names:** Use them in conversation
 - **Recall Preferences:** "You liked that Coltrane last time..."
 - **Build Relationships:** We're curators, not order-takers
 - **Foster Connections:** Introduce like-minded customers
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Customer Interaction Standards

Greeting (First 2 Minutes)

Do:

- Make eye contact and smile

- "Welcome to Misty Jazz Records!"
- Gauge if they want help or space
- Offer assistance without pressure
- "Let me know if you need anything"

Don't:

- Hover or follow customers
- Interrupt browsing immediately
- Assume knowledge level
- Be pushy about assistance

Engagement (During Visit)

Check-In:

- Re-approach after 5-10 minutes
- "Finding everything okay?"
- "Can I help you find something specific?"
- "Are you looking for anything in particular?"

Conversation Tips:

- **Ask Open Questions:** "What kind of jazz do you enjoy?"
- **Share Enthusiasm:** "This is one of my favorites because..."
- **Tell Stories:** Historical context, recording details
- **Play Samples:** Offer to play excerpts
- **Cross-Sell Thoughtfully:** "If you like that, you might enjoy..."

Reading the Room:

- **Serious Collector:** Technical details, pressing info, condition
- **Casual Listener:** Accessible descriptions, music quality focus
- **New to Jazz:** Friendly guidance, entry-level recommendations
- **Just Browsing:** Give space, stay available

Product Recommendations

Framework:

1. **Understand Preference:** "What have you been listening to?"
2. **Assess Knowledge:** Gauge familiarity with jazz
3. **Budget Awareness:** Don't always push most expensive
4. **Multiple Options:** Offer 2-3 choices at different price points
5. **Explain Why:** "I'm recommending this because..."

Great Recommendations Include:

- Artist background
- Musical style/era
- Pressing quality (if relevant)
- Why it's special
- How it compares to what they know

Handling Vinyl

Always:

- Handle by edges
- Use both hands for covers
- Keep records in sleeves
- Place carefully on counter
- Demonstrate proper care

Never:

- Touch grooves
- Stack records improperly
- Handle roughly
- Place on dirty surfaces

Sales Process

Ring-Up Standards:

- **Reconfirm Items:** "Is this everything?"
- **Check Condition:** Quick visual inspection
- **Mention Policy:** "You have 30 days for returns"
- **Payment Options:** Accept all listed methods
- **Receipt:** Always provide
- **Bag Carefully:** Records upright, padded if needed
- **Thank You:** "Thank you! Enjoy listening!"

During Transaction:

- Make conversation (not just silence)
- Share enthusiasm for their purchases
- Suggest complementary items (gently)
- Invite to events
- Mention newsletter

Difficult Situations

Pricing Disputes

Scenario: "I saw this cheaper online"

Response:

1. "I understand. Online pricing varies a lot."
2. Check actual Discogs/eBay current prices
3. If similar: Explain our value (grading accuracy, return policy, local)
4. If significantly lower: "Let me check with my manager"
5. Manager: Can match within 10% for good customers
6. If can't match: "I understand if you want to wait for that price"

Never: Get defensive, argue, or guarantee online listings are accurate

Condition Disagreements

Scenario: "This isn't Near Mint!"

Response:

1. "I'm sorry you're not satisfied. Let me look."
2. Re-examine record together
3. Explain grading rationale
4. If mistake: "You're right, I apologize. Let me offer [solution]"
5. If disagree: "Our grading is conservative, but if you're unhappy, full refund"
6. Always offer refund/exchange

Never: Blame customer, be dismissive, or argue

Damaged Item

Scenario: Customer returns damaged record

Response:

1. "I'm so sorry this arrived damaged."
2. Inspect damage with customer
3. No questions asked replacement or refund
4. If rare title: "Let me see if I can find another copy"
5. Apologize for experience
6. Process immediately

Document: Photos of damage, update inventory

Aggressive/Rude Customers

Approach:

1. Stay calm and professional
2. Listen without interrupting
3. Acknowledge feelings: "I understand you're frustrated"
4. Focus on solution: "Here's what I can do..."
5. Know your limits: "Let me get my manager"
6. Manager: Has more flexibility for resolution

Never: Match their tone, take personally, or escalate

Safety: If threatened, call police immediately

Haggling

Policy: Prices firm for individual items under \$100

Over \$100:

- Multiple items (3 +): 10% discount
- Collectors (regular customers): Manager discretion
- Bulk (10 + records): Up to 15% off

- Damaged items: Reflect condition in price

Response to Haggling:

- "Our prices are based on fair market value and condition"
- "I can check with my manager for multiple items"
- "We have layaway available if that helps"

Special Requests

"Can you order this for me?"

- Yes, for new releases and in-print reissues
- Require 50% deposit
- 2-4 weeks typical
- No guarantee on out-of-print

"Do you buy CDs?"

- "We specialize in vinyl only, but [refer to other store]"

"Can you hold this?"

- Yes, 48 hours free
- Longer with deposit (50%)
- Max 14 days

"Can I get a discount?"

- See haggling policy above
 - Employee discount (40%) not applicable to friends/family
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Phone & Email Etiquette

Phone Standards

Answer: Within 3 rings **Greeting:** "Misty Jazz Records, this is [Name], how can I help you?"

Common Calls:

- **Hours/Location:** Provide clearly, offer directions
- **Stock Check:** "Let me check for you" - always check
- **Pricing:** Provide if available, invite to see in person
- **Special Orders:** Explain process, take contact info
- **Events:** Describe enthusiastically, invite to attend

End Call:

- "Is there anything else I can help with?"
- "Thanks for calling Misty Jazz Records!"

Email Response Standards

Response Time: Within 24 hours (4 hours goal)

Format:

Hello [Name],

[Answer their question clearly]

[Add helpful context or suggestions]

[Call to action/invitation]

Best regards,

[Your Name]

Misty Jazz Records

[Phone]

[Email]

Tone: Friendly, professional, enthusiastic

Knowledge Requirements

Essential Jazz Knowledge

Artists (Know Major Works):

- Miles Davis
- John Coltrane
- Charlie Parker
- Thelonious Monk
- Bill Evans
- Ella Fitzgerald
- Sonny Rollins
- Art Blakey
- Dexter Gordon
- Sarah Vaughan

Labels (Know History & Significance):

- Blue Note
- Prestige
- Riverside
- Impulse!
- Verve
- Columbia
- Contemporary
- Pacific Jazz

Subgenres (Describe & Recommend):

- Bebop
- Cool Jazz
- Hard Bop

- Modal Jazz
- Free Jazz
- Soul Jazz
- Latin Jazz
- Jazz Fusion

Pressings (Basic Knowledge):

- Original vs. reissue
 - Mono vs. stereo
 - First pressing indicators
 - Audiophile labels (MoFi, AP, MM)
 - Rudy Van Gelder significance
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Service Recovery

When Things Go Wrong

Immediate Steps:

1. **Apologize:** Sincerely, even if not our fault
2. **Listen:** Let customer explain fully
3. **Empathize:** "I understand how frustrating that must be"
4. **Act:** Propose solution immediately
5. **Follow Up:** Ensure satisfaction

Service Recovery Options:

- Full refund (always available)
- Exchange
- Store credit (+ 10% bonus for inconvenience)
- Discount on future purchase
- Free shipping (if applicable)
- Priority notification on similar items

Going Above & Beyond

Examples:

- Playing an album in-store before purchase
 - Researching rare pressing details
 - Cleaning a record before sale
 - Special ordering without deposit (regular customers)
 - Calling when sought-after item arrives
 - Packaging extra carefully for valuable items
 - Writing personalized notes for gifts
 - Sharing personal jazz recommendations lists
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Building Customer Loyalty

Recognition Programs

Regular Customers:

- Remember names and preferences
- Personal greetings
- First notification on new arrivals
- Invite to exclusive events
- Special pricing consideration

VIP Treatment (Spending \$500 + /year):

- Email alerts for rare items
- Hold items before floor release
- Priority consignment
- Extra discount on bulk purchases
- Annual appreciation event invite

Communication

Newsletter:

- Weekly new arrivals
- Event announcements
- Staff picks
- Jazz education
- Exclusive offers

Social Media:

- Engage with customer posts
 - Share customer photos (with permission)
 - Respond to comments/DMs quickly
 - Create community feeling
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Metrics & Accountability

Individual Performance

Measured:

- Customer feedback (reviews, surveys)
- Sales per hour
- Return rate (low is good)
- Trade-in acquisition
- Event attendance (that you promote)
- Knowledge test scores (quarterly)

Goals:

- 4.5 + stars average review
- <5% return rate
- Positive customer mentions

- Growing repeat customer base

Team Performance

Store Metrics:

- Overall customer satisfaction (goal: 4.7/5)
 - Net Promoter Score (goal: 70+)
 - Return rate (goal: < 3%)
 - Repeat customer percentage (goal: 60%+)
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Resources

Quick Reference

Keep Handy:

- Vinyl grading guide
- Return policy summary
- Event calendar
- Staff contact list
- Emergency procedures

Lookup Tools:

- Discogs (computer at counter)
 - Store inventory system
 - Price guides
 - Artist discographies
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Questions or Issues

During Shift: Ask senior staff or manager **After Hours:** Email sarah@mistyjazzrecords.com
Emergency: Call Duke at (415) 555-5201

Remember: Every interaction matters. We're not just selling records; we're sharing our passion and building a community of jazz lovers.

Standards reviewed quarterly Last updated: January 2026