

Andrew Smith
[REDACTED]

Tel.: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

Thursday 11th October 2012

Tesco Customer Service Centre,
Baird Avenue
Dundee
DD1 9NF

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to make you aware of some issues I've been having with your grocery delivery service, in the hope that you will be able to improve the way it currently works and allow me to once again make full use of it.

We live in London and I work from home. I therefore don't feel the need to own a car. As a consequence, carrying heavy shopping home is a problem for us. Fortunately, online grocery shopping has existed for a number of years, and in most respects your online grocery shopping service is one of the best ones out there.

I like Pepsi Max. When you have a special offer on Pepsi Max, I want to take full advantage of it. For quite a while I have been happily doing so, ordering around 16 two litre bottles of Pepsi Max from you whenever you have a special offer on it. We usually order around £35 of other groceries at the same time. Mostly heavy things or things that don't expire.

Just in the last month though I've started to experience problems actually getting you to deliver the Pepsi Max that I have ordered. I'm talking about the following orders:

- Order #[REDACTED], Wednesday 10th October 2012
- Order #[REDACTED], Monday 1st October 2012
- Order #[REDACTED], Monday 17th September 2012

In each of these orders, I ordered 16 two litre bottles of Pepsi Max. In the September order I received zero of these items, and in each of the two October orders I received just one item each time.

I realise this is a fairly minor issue in the grand scheme of things. I accept there is a valid viewpoint that maybe if my worst problem in life is that I didn't get some soft drink that I ordered then perhaps my life is actually quite pleasant and I should not worry myself by writing complaints about the matter. However, I can't help but feel that something has started going wrong with your service here and that it would be very easy to fix once you get to the bottom of what is happening.

Naturally it is irritating when items we order do not turn up. I'm sure you can appreciate that is particularly the case when the items are quite heavy, when they comprise a reasonably large percentage of the total order cost, and when we have been charged a fee for the delivery to take place. The delivery fee becomes a much larger percentage of the total order cost when a large number of items are missing. It then starts to represent poorer value for money.

Now, let me just say that I completely understand that occasionally the store runs out of the ordered items. I do not believe that this could reasonably have occurred on these three occasions. Every time I am in one of your stores, the shelves are almost always stacked high with soft drinks such as Pepsi Max. I believe it is actually very rare that you would run out.

This view has been reinforced by speaking to your drivers and your customer service staff about this issue. Your drivers are overwhelmingly of the opinion that the people picking the items just did not feel like packing such heavy items at that time, and that this problem is widespread.

After the 1st October order I spoke to your customer services on the phone about this and they expressed disbelief that the pickers would just not bother to pick heavy items. I was assured that the matter would be fed back to management and that I should feel free to continue to order items that your web site allows me to order.

After the 10th October order on the other hand, customer services took a very different stance regarding this issue. The person I was speaking to informed me that if I had been in-store then the store would have been unlikely to sell me more than 6 bottles, that the pickers are at liberty to not pick items that they consider too heavy, and that this was most likely what was happening.

I was told that if I restricted myself to ordering 6 bottles then I would most likely receive what I ordered.

My questions to this response are as follows:

- If there is a known limit per customer of 6 items, why does your web site allow more than this number to be ordered?
- If there is a known limit per customer of 6 items and for some reason your web site does not enforce that limit, why do the pickers not just pick 6 items? My deliveries have contained zero or one bottle each, not six. I would have been considerably less irritated if each delivery had contained six bottles.

If your customer services representative is correct that there is a limit of six items per customer for such heavy items, then I completely understand and sympathise with the reasoning for such a rule.

If you as a company (or the manager of one of your stores) want to make a business decision that it is unfair on your staff and on other customers to allow one customer to order a large quantity of such heavy items, that is absolutely fine with me and I have no complaint with that.

What I would suggest in that case is that you need to *enforce* the limit, preferably in your web application, but at the very least to do so consistently at the stage where items are picked by your staff.

It's just incredibly poor customer service to allow people to order things but then to consistently fail to deliver them, in a manner that suggests a conscious decision has been made to fail.

After the 10th October delivery failed to contain more than one bottle of Pepsi Max, that evening I decided to take a walk down to my local Tesco store at Duke's Green. I of course have no way to know whether this is where my earlier delivery had been sourced from. I did note a few things however:

The shelves were stacked high with Pepsi Max.



There was a sign right there advising me that I could use your grocery delivery service to avoid having to carry heavy items.



I did not observe any signage anywhere saying that there was a limit to the number of bottles I could purchase in-store.

You can download copies of the above two images here:

<http://imgur.com/a/QZyLu#1VXup>

Would you agree that this in-store presentation, the large quantity of Pepsi Max displayed, and the fact that your web site allows me to order 16 bottles of Pepsi Max, would all lead a reasonable person to conclude that such an order is both acceptable to and indeed encouraged by yourselves?

As you can see I have received conflicting answers from your employees as to what is going on here, so not only am I unable to trust their stated reasoning, but I am also unable to trust that any future delivery (of whatever quantity ordered) is actually going to take place. It's preventing me from making use of your otherwise excellent service.

Just today we have placed a large grocery delivery order with another supermarket purely because they have an identical offer to you on Pepsi Max and I now have more faith that they will actually deliver it. We would much rather have placed the order with yourselves since the rest of our shopping would have been better value for money, but we were unable to trust that the order would arrive complete. You must agree that after three failed attempts we could hardly assume otherwise.

I realise that any change to your web application or picking procedures will take some time to be put in place, so in order that I may feel secure in ordering from you in the near future I would appreciate if you could answer in writing some last few questions:

- What exactly is the number of two litre bottles of Pepsi Max that I should expect to be able to order for grocery delivery from your web site?
- If a future order should be missing a large number of items such that I feel that the order has then become poor value for money when the delivery charge is taken into account, can I refuse to accept delivery of the entire order and receive a full refund including delivery charge, without having to call customer services to ask for the refund of the delivery charge?

I understand that you will probably have to speak to the staff at my local store in order to find out the answers to those questions, so I am happy to wait some time for your answers. Although as I say I will be unlikely to use your service as much until I do know exactly where I stand in this regard. I am completely happy to discuss this matter further either by phone or email, but I must ask that I be provided with written answers to my questions above in case I need to show them to your staff in future.

Thank you for reading this far. I really hope that we can get to the bottom of this issue so that I can continue using your service as before.

Yours faithfully,

Andrew Smith