

The lesson from two lemonade stands

The first stand is run by two kids. They use Countrytime lemonade, paper cups and a bridge table. It's a decent lemonade stand, one in the long tradition of standard lemonade stands. It costs a dollar to buy a cup, which is a pretty good price, considering you get both the lemonade and the satisfaction of knowing you supported two kids.

The other stand is different. The lemonade is free, but there's a big tip jar. When you pull up, the owner of the stand beams as only a proud eleven year old girl can beam. She takes her time and reaches into a pail filled with ice and lemons. She pulls out a lemon. Slices it. Then she squeezes it with a clever little hand juicer.

The whole time that's she's squeezing, she's also talking to you, sharing her insights (and yes, her joy) about the power of lemonade to change your day. It's a beautiful day and she's in no real hurry. Lemonade doesn't hurry, she says. It gets made the right way or not at all. Then she urges you to take a bit less sugar, because it tastes better that way.

While you're talking, a dozen people who might have become customers drive on by because it appears to take too long. You don't mind, though, because you're engaged, almost entranced. A few people pull over and wait in line behind you.

Finally, once she's done, you put \$5 in the jar, because your free lemonade was worth at least twice that. Well, maybe the lemonade itself was worth \$3, but you'd happily pay again for the transaction. It touched you. In fact, it changed you.