

April 5, 2007

FedEx Customer Relations
3875 Airways, Module H3 Department 4634
Memphis, TN 38116

Dear FedEx Customer Relations,

I am writing to file a formal complaint regarding your service. On 4-Apr-2007, a FedEx delivery arrived at my home. It was supposed to be an 8GB iPod Nano. However, what arrived on my doorstep was an empty envelope that had been slit along the bottom with the contents removed. The facts are as follows:

1. The driver delivered the package to my home at approximately 10:30am on 4-Apr-2007. He rang the doorbell then left.
2. My wife answered the door but by the time she got there the driver was in his truck. She picked up the empty envelope from the doorstep and wondered what was in it. She called me immediately at work to tell me what happened.
3. I went to the FedEx site to track the package (#924970840112) and saw that it had indeed been delivered.
4. I called your customer service department immediately to report the situation. Your representative was very apologetic and opened a case number (#0404720785) for me. He instructed me to contact the sender and inform them of the problem so that they could file a claim.
5. The original sender in this case was American Express. I called them and they agreed to resend the product and handle the claim with FedEx through their drop-shipper in Englewood, CO.
6. About an hour later, I received a call from someone at FedEx who again was very apologetic. She relayed the following information to me.
 - a. The package had passed through many hands so it was difficult to determine what happened.
 - b. People sometimes wait for the driver to drop off packages, inferring that it might have been an unknown person who had stolen the contents. *This is what I think about that. What idiot would bother to slit the envelope open and leave an empty envelope on the doorstep—especially in full view of the driver after the driver had rung the doorbell. Also, how would the prospective thief know what the contents were? Only the driver had access to the tracking information that listed the contents of the package as an 8GB iPod Nano. There was no indication of the contents on the package itself.*
 - c. She had spoken to the driver and he said that he had delivered a package with a bulge in it. *Of course he had to say this, what fool would deliver an empty package? Had the package been empty before it was in his possession, he could have just reported it as damaged before he took possession of the delivery item. Ergo, it must have been in the envelope when he received it and ergo, he had to say that the package was intact when he delivered it to my home. The scheme might have been plausible had my wife not been at home at the time of the delivery.*
 - d. The driver confirmed that he saw “a woman” pick up the package at the door. *My wife (that mystery woman who lives at my home) also confirmed that she saw him drive off when she got to the door.*

Based on the above scenario, I can only conclude that either your driver or my wife is an idiot or a liar. Knowing my wife as I do, I prefer to believe her. She had absolutely no reason to even know what was in the package let alone concoct a scheme to defraud the sender in the few minutes that elapsed before she called me. I had ordered it as a surprise birthday gift for her. She wouldn't even have known what it was had she opened the envelope which, by the way, she never does when the delivery is addressed to me.

The fact that your driver said there was a bulge in the package when he delivered it leads me to believe that he is lying. If you were to apply even the slightest bit of logic to this situation, you would come to the same conclusion. The iPod Nano ships in a box that is approximately 6x2x1 inches. This in turn would have been bubble wrapped. How could anyone possibly mistake a bulge that size for an empty envelope? Personally, I don't handle packages on a daily basis but even I know when I've got something that big in my hands. Certainly my wife would know about bulges that size.

The 20 seconds that elapsed from the time your driver dropped off the envelope to the time my wife answered the door and saw the driver sitting in his truck is insufficient for anyone to have come by, slit open the envelope, steal the contents, then leave the empty envelope on the doorstep.

In speaking with your customer service representative who called me regarding the driver's comments, I can tell she believed your driver or assumed that the item went missing sometime before your driver received it. However, in saying this, the logical conclusion would be that my wife had stolen the contents. To this I say, "humbug"—an archaic yet appropriate term that I am using only to be polite.

As a company, I suppose your take on this is "No harm, no foul." The sender will resend the item, file a claim and your insurance carrier will cover the cost of the item (approximately \$230—a pittance in the grand scheme of things for a company with \$8.59 billion in revenues). The larger issue is this—how long can you afford to allow this type of thing to go on before you start losing customers due to the perception of dishonesty in your chain of custody for the packages you deliver.

In the normal course of events, I would have accepted this as a bit of unfortunate circumstance and you would never have heard from me. However, I am incensed by how casually the situation was treated and the inference that my wife was at fault for this situation—so much so that FedEx will no longer be my first choice of carrier for package delivery. I will be sure to inform my acquaintances about this incident as well.

I hope to hear that there will be some resolution for this other than the re-delivery of the item, but somehow I know that there won't be any further action on this incident. That is truly unfortunate because I have always been a fan of your service—until now.

If you wish to discuss this further, feel free to write me by return post, email me (michael@cornelio.com), or call my cell phone (510-378-3365).

If you've managed to read this far, thank you for your kind attention,

Michael Cornelio (michael@cornelio.com)