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Map showing location at the intersection of Hwy 7 and Hwy 10, near Campbellville and Milton.

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A Ted Bit Customer service dies another brutal death

Like many people in this world, I have a smart phone.

The Sidekick also has a smart phone, and she keeps me up to date, if she has to be late coming home, or if she is going for groceries—all the things that a couple do in the course of the day.

In addition, my smart phone plays an integral part of my job, here at the newspaper, as well as running the farm.

In short, I'd find it mighty tough to do what I do without it.

At the same time, I'm not married to it—it's there for my convenience, not someone else's convenience.

I use it to check email at work while out of the office, I send email and a photo to the editor's desk if I'm at a fire or accident scene, and I sometimes use it to record an interview.

So I find it pretty handy. This week, my smart phone decided it didn't like its battery—or the battery didn't like the smart phone.

Either way, it quit working. The battery, which usually runs the device from about 7 a.m. until 11 p.m., suddenly gave up at 4 p.m. on Monday.

I put it on the charger and fired it up Tuesday at 7 a.m. It seemed fine, so I assumed it was a glitch.

However, Tuesday it died at 2 p.m.

I dropped by the store where I bought it, and found four sales reps, leaning against the counter, chatting about the world around them.

I was the only customer. One of the staff asked me what I needed, and I told him about the smart phone battery.

He pulled the battery out of the phone, and looked at it. He asked another colleague if batteries were on warranty. He looked at it again.

I was beginning to wonder if he was a faith healer, and was going to 'will it' well.

"It might be the battery," he said. "I could send it out to a repair person, but they'll charge you \$35-40 to tell you what's wrong with it."

"I know what's the matter with it—it needs a new battery," I said.

"Hmmm, how long have you had it?" he asked.

"I have no idea, I couldn't even guess" I said, tiring of the conversation. "I'm sure if you put my cell number into that computer, it will tell you."

What seemed a Herculean effort, he approached the computer, and fired up the program. I waited, and he waited, and so on, until I said 'Did you want my cell number?'

"Well, it's not working right now. I'll try to refresh the screen..."

He finally loaded the page and input my cell number.

"You got it last year, May 12 to be exact," he said proudly, like he'd discovered a cure for some disease. "Too bad, it's off warranty."

"What does a new battery cost?" I asked.

"Oh, gee, I couldn't even guess," he said, "Not even a ballpark figure."

"Don't you sell them?" I asked, incredulously.

"Nope we don't keep any in stock," he said.

Another sales rep stepped into the conversation.

"They run about \$65 to \$85," he said, "but you might find one cheaper online."

"You don't carry any batteries in stock?" I asked again, to make sure I wasn't totally missing the point.

"Nope, we don't," he said. "But you can see 'so and so' down the street. He might have some."

I asked for a business card to write down the name of the other supplier.

"Oh, we're all out of business cards too," the first sales rep said.

I honestly started to wonder why I was pouring hundreds of dollars into this company every month, with the level of customer service I was experiencing at that precise moment.

"Okay, I'll find one somewhere else," I said, as I turned to leave, totally disillusioned with the lack of customer service.

But the final blow came as I stepped out the door.

"If there's anything else we can help you with, be sure to give us a call..."

—Ted Brown can be reached at tbrown@theifp.ca



TED BROWN

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Offers end June 30, 2013. Visit us at:



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