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Making Customer Satisfaction Surveys Work

By Martin Day

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by: **Martin Day**

Why bother?

Good customer service is the life blood of any business. Although new customers are important good customer service will help generate customer loyalty and repeat business. With each satisfied customer your business is likely to win many more customers through recommendations and remember, if you are not taking care of your customers, your competition will.

A Customer Satisfaction survey will help you not only identify problem areas but will also demonstrate to your customers that you care and are proactive in looking for ways to improve the service that you provide.

Where to start?

Objective – Before you start compiling your survey you should first consider what the objectives of the survey are, in that way you will remain focused and find it easier to decide what questions to ask.

Analysis – In addition to the objective consider also how you will analyse the answers having completed the survey. Keep in mind that `closed' questions (where the respondent is asked to choose from a limited number of responses) are easier to analyse than `open' questions (where the respondent can reply in anyway they want). Much will depend on the volume of respondents, the higher the volume the more important it is to have an easy method of analysing the results.

Opportunity - Keep in mind that as well as obtaining valuable market research data customer surveys are also a good way to publicise aspects of your service that your customers may not be aware of. After you have drafted your survey read through the survey from a market research view point and check that you are asking the right questions in the right way and that with the feedback information you will be able to make informed decisions. Then, read through the survey from a marketing view

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point, check that you have phrased each question so that every opportunity has been taken to promote your business? The ideal question will perform the following three functions:–

Market research-provide valuable feedback to help you improve your customer satisfaction levels and in turn your business

Marketing -promote aspects of your business

Information/Education-advertise a service that you provide that your customers may not have been unaware of

For example:–

Do you find the in–store baby changing facilities useful?

By asking this question not only will the store receive good feedback on the facility they provide but they will also advertise their baby changing facilities and promote themselves as a family friendly store beyond those customers who have a specific need for the facility provided.

Warts and all - to benefit most from a customer survey you need to be prepared to dig deep and accept the worst. A customer satisfaction survey should be designed to highlight problems so that they can be addressed; regular customer satisfaction will prevent complacency and will also give early warning on where your competitors initiatives may be loosing you business.

What to ask?

Although each business is likely to have specific and unique factors that are important in providing good customer services there are common areas that are relevant to all businesses be they a physical store, Internet based or a service industry. The following are some key areas to providing good customer service.

Communication – Do you make it easy for the customer to communicate with you? When a customer telephones is the phone answered promptly; are enquiries about products or services properly handled? A good business will make every effort to ensure that whatever the customers query it is resolved by the right person, quickly, politely and fairly. If a problem is not resolvable immediately do you promise to respond in a given time period and do you deliver on your promise? Use a customer satisfaction survey to confirm that all your staff are perceived by your customers as being helpful, courteous and knowledgeable.

Location - Do your customers find it easy to visit you, if a physical store, is it conveniently located with good access?

Making it pleasant, making it easy – For a virtual business it is important to ensure that your website is aesthetically pleasing and easy to use. Physical store or website, is the store properly laid out, can your customers find what they need and is there sufficient information and help on hand to explain how

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a particular product works?

The right quality products - Not only should you measure the quality of the service that you provide but you should check that the products and services that you market are what the customer wants and closely match their expectations.

Value for money - Cheap or expensive is not always a good measure, value of money is. Do your customers equate your business with value for money, if not, why not?

Speed and attention - No matter what the business, the majority of customers will want to be dealt with quickly but attentively. Are you doing everything you can to avoid delays? Good businesses will try to treat each customer as an individual, does yours? Attention is one thing but this has to be hand-in-hand with a quick and satisfactory resolution of the query.

Demographics and Specific issues - Take the opportunity to profile your customers, for example where do they live and what is their age group? The more you try to understand your customers the better you will be able to target your business. Within the survey allow customers to highlight specific problems and provide contact details.

What next?

Having completed the survey analyse the results.

Trends - Look for common and specific areas where the service is failing. Ask yourself if the criticism is valid and is there anything that can be done to resolve or minimise the problem?

Training - Are the staff properly trained and do they have sufficient knowledge? Where staff training programmes have been implemented have they had a positive impact on the business?

Follow-up -If a customer who has completed a survey has raised a specific issue ensure that they are contacted and their complaint addressed. Don't lose an opportunity to resolve a problem and keep a customer.

Continuously Monitor – Make changes and then measure by issuing further surveys.

The following sample customer satisfaction survey for a store demonstrates some of the areas discussed please visit:–

Martin Day is a Director of Survey Galaxy Ltd a website that allows anyone to create, design and publish online surveys. For more information visit

Paid Surveys – Do They Really Work?

By Joey Merrick

Making Customer Satisfaction Surveys Work

Being paid to take online surveys has become a very sought after internet business. Simply pay a small fee to a paid survey site and they will send you a list of companies that will send the surveys to you.

All you need to do is sign up with these companies and the surveys will show up in your e-mail box and you will get compensated for your time. Depending on the company you can be paid in cash, entered into large cash drawings, or be compensated with discounts and merchandise.

The cash surveys can range from a couple of dollars for a really short survey to \$15–25 for longer surveys that can take around 30 minutes to complete. Not bad wages... One problem that many people have is that they will sign up for some free survey list and then gripe that they get lousy surveys.

We have tried both and when we signed up with reputable survey companies we saw much better paying surveys as opposed to the sweepstakes, prizes, and \$2 surveys we saw when we were being cheapskates.

Whenever you get surveys in your e-mail box they will tell you what kind of survey it is, what the compensation will be, and how long it will take to complete. So you will always be able to see if a particular survey is worth your time and effort.

Paid Surveys are a great way to earn some extra money in your spare time. The surveys show up in your inbox and you decide when and if you are going to fill them out. The key is to sign up with a reputable company that will give you the better paying surveys.

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Joey Merrick is the webmaster of

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comprehensive reviews on several of todays hottest income opportunities and money making ebooks.

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