questback

Listen to your customers

» *Customer experience and its effects*
» *What makes customer feedback so valuable?*
» *Why a once-yearly customer survey is not enough*





Sustainable growth with Customer Experience Management

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What did you think of us? Are you satisfied with our service and our product? How can we improve? Questions like this have always been part of the tools for marketing, sales and service. In the age of the Social Web, customers', and indeed others', answers to these questions become far more important.

Today it is not just about the dialogue between companies and customers, but increasingly consumers are consciously seeking out public debate on social platforms on the Web. Here they gather information, swap stories and share their enthusiasm or disappointment regarding their experiences. In other words: customers are expressing their opinions and companies that don't listen will experience consequences.

Each contact is an experience

A Customer Experience is **a contact with a company** – no matter at which touchpoint it occurs. This could be an online purchase, a repair, advice at a branch, a service or giving information over the phone. It is not the transaction that matters, but how the customer experiences it. The example of a train journey makes that clear: after almost six hours on the intercity from Munich to Hamburg, a ten minute delay for many passengers does not matter. However, those who miss a connecting train will rate the service as poor and next time will fly or drive.

The subjective customer experience influences future customer behaviour and therefore also the success of the company. It is not just whether the customer returns and buys. The message he takes into the marketplace is just as important. Does he recommend the company's offering or not? Or even advise against it? No matter what the answer is, a key to success for every company is to "know" what the answer is, because measuring customer experience enables a company to deal proactively with customer behaviour.



And it is worth remembering that a well-timed offer of compensation, such as a voucher, can transform a frustrated customer into an enthusiastic brand ambassador.

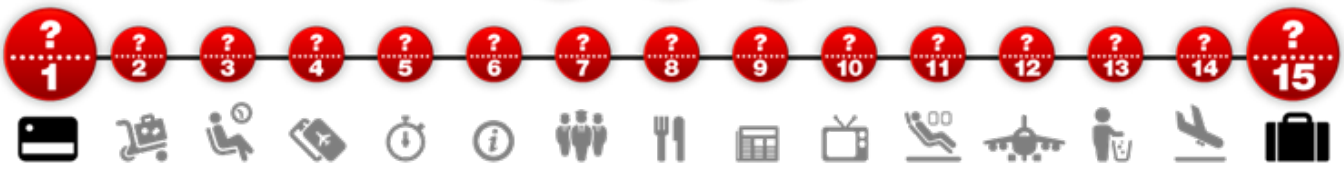
First measure, then steer

Customer experiences are subjective. If you want to understand them, you need to listen carefully. Annual customer satisfaction surveys are not enough. You need permanent real time customer feedback – or at least close to the Moment of Truth. There are five important reasons for this:

1. If a customer can see a good reason to give information, the willingness to provide it dramatically increases. For example, forty percent of Swiss Airlines high status customers participate in their research.
2. The customer feels that their experience is being taken seriously and they can, if necessary, vent their feelings.
3. The quality of the customer feedback is significantly better when it is gathered very shortly after a transaction, because the customer remembers the details more accurately.
4. The company cannot react until it has become aware of the customer's experience. The sooner this happens, the better the chance of a positive effect on the customer.
5. The permanent measurement of customer experience supports the company's quality assurance.

SWISS

40% of high status customers participate in research



What you can learn from your customers

Satisfied customers are the aim of all marketing and sales managers. But with global competition, customer loyalty is threatened even more than ever before and agonizing questions, such as how satisfied are my customers and are they loyal to my brand or are they looking at the competition, are becoming ever more important. Measuring customer experiences with targeted questions brings clarity:

» Would you buy this product again?
» How likely is it that you would use this service again?
» What else can we do to help you?

The answers to questions like this give valuable ideas for the design of special offers, for corporate planning, product innovations and brand communications. This is how to transform satisfied customers into enthusiastic partners and ambassadors for your company.

Dissatisfied customers are an important source of information for everyone who wishes to improve the success of their company. Only those who know the reason for failure can resolve the issues.

The feedback opportunity has a positive effect on the disappointed customer because this reduces the impact of the negative experience. If this is then followed up with an individual offer, such as a free upgrade or an alternative offer, a dissatisfied customer can quickly become a happy customer. And even when it is not so easy to provide a remedy, the simple act of logging the negative feedback helps with:

» the analysis of weaknesses in products and processes
» optimising offerings
» quality assurance within the company and its suppliers

Normally only clients are considered when looking at customer satisfaction. But those who did not become customers can give important insights about what went wrong at the touchpoint and what dissuaded them from becoming clients. In particular in reference to mail order businesses, it is worth asking potential customers about their experiences with the company:

» What expectations did the prospective customer have of the company?
» On what did they base these expectations?
» What exactly disappointed them?

The analysis of the experiences of prospects who have decided not to become customers provides insights into the quality and the potential of individual leads but also into how leads are generated.

Measuring customer experience – but how?

Leading international companies such as Airberlin, Bosch and Continental Germany are already making the most of the business potential hidden within customer experiences. As the experiences are very subjective, it is very important to have the right technique to measure their quality.

There are many touchpoints where customer experience takes place. In particular in firms with a multichannel strategy, there can be over 100 touchpoints. Companies need to define and evaluate the touchpoints in their businesses to ensure that the results are relevant and real value is extracted from the questionnaire. The main point is to view all actions from the perspective of the customer – including and in particular the feedback questionnaire.

Receiving on all channels



There are measurement techniques that are available on all channels (website, Facebook, email) and on all devices (mobile, desktop, touch terminal). A high level of automation, as offered by QuestBack's Enterprise Feedback Suite, ensures that the survey is cost effective and the results are comparable. Furthermore, the fact that the survey solution integrates with the company's IT systems means that it can be conducted at an optimal moment. By doing this, the company gathers reliable data for trend comparisons, benchmarking, alarm functions or performance analysis. Armed with this knowledge, it is possible to kick start measures – even automatically – to improve customer experience.

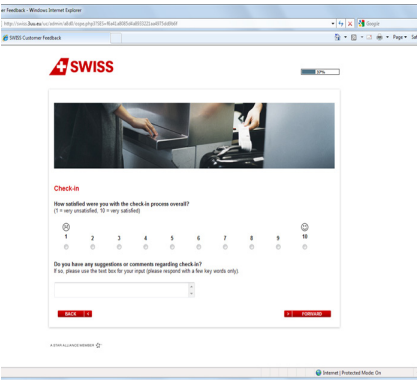


SWISS: Customer feedback flies in

SWISS is the national airline of Switzerland and it aims to give its passengers a perfect experience throughout, from booking, to in-flight, right up until the service at the destination. Customer satisfaction ranks second in terms of importance when evaluating corporate goals.

The airline relies on the survey platform QuestBack EFS to measure the satisfaction of passengers – feedback cards with a web address and a code are handed out to economy customers. When they type in the code, a questionnaire relating to their journey appears. In this way, inappropriate questions (for example about in-flight entertainment on short haul flights) are avoided.

For business and first class passengers, the system is more personalized – as they are high status customers, the airline usually already holds details such as email addresses, flight details and previous bookings. For this reason, it is possible to automatically email an invitation to a questionnaire which is pre-loaded with information that the airline already knows, so this makes it quick and easy to answer. The questionnaire includes pictures so that it is intuitive to complete and reduces the chance of participants making mistakes. The survey is optimized for a wide range of computing devices, including tablets and smartphones. This is particularly important for business travellers who want to give their feedback while on their journey.



Online questionnaires – fast and insightful

“With the introduction of online questionnaires on the QuestBack system, we were able to eliminate all the problems with our old paper surveys in one fell swoop. We could also guarantee the continuous tacking of important KPIs, including the very important experience on arrival,” explains Samuel Rodenhausen, Manager Market Research at SWISS:

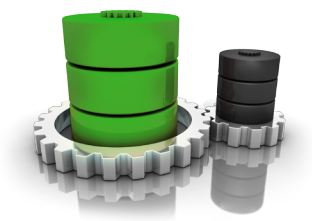
“In addition, I was very surprised by all the positive comments about the online survey, especially from our top customers.”

The fact that the passengers’ responses are also immediately available means the airline has the opportunity to react to feedback immediatly – so, if the customer has asked for SWISS to get in touch, they can do so within a very short time period. In addition, customers now have the option to give comments on every part of the service, which enables SWISS to immediately pinpoint any problems with new products or services early in the product life cycle.

Experience customer surveys

The design of the questionnaire demonstrates how seriously the airline takes its commitment to being customer focused. Customer feedback is constantly being used to improve the questionnaire, for example by offering different response options or altering the wording of questions. “This just would not have been logistically possible with the paper questionnaire,” adds Samuel Rodenhausen.

Since introducing its online questionnaire, SWISS always has up-to-date information on the complete travel experience, from check-in through to baggage reclaim at the final destination. This valuable data is used for continuous tracking of third party suppliers, such as catering and ground staff, as well as the planning of investments in the places where they will have the greatest impact on customer experience.



Hilti: KPIs at the moment of truth

Hilti, manufacturer of technology for the construction industry, shows how to successfully control and manage the quality of customer experiences: “The general satisfaction and loyalty KPIs of the customers are an important measure of success for us. They influence the pay of many employees right up to management level,” explains Steffen Müller, Head of Corporate Market Research at Hilti AG. The data is collected with a regular telephone survey, which puts the relationship with the customers at the centre.

But what is the customer experience like on a daily basis? Hilti currently records around 200,000 customer contacts per day. In 2010 Hilti added an online questionnaire to their telephone research to measure the customer satisfaction at the Moment of Truth, directly after an individual transaction. QuestBack’s Enterprise Feedback Suite (EFS) is at the technological core of this work. “As the QuestBack system has an interface to our SAP system, we can automatically import our customer contact details into the online survey. That saves lots of time. In addition, we can use the purchase history of each customer in the analysis,” adds Steffen Müller.

Customers have the freedom to choose any computing device

QuestBack provides its software as a web-based solution. For this reason, the user interface is accessible via any standard browser without having to install any additional software. Responding to questions is easy across a wide range of digital devices, such as PCs, notebooks, tablets or smartphones. Hilti uses the online survey in 15 market organizations, which represent more than 80 percent of its turnover. The company emails survey invitations to customers who have been in touch with an account manager, a Hilti Center, the hotline, the repair service or who have made an online order. The online questionnaire takes about two minutes and is about the particular experience the customer has had. That means that if the customer has met their account manager, he or she is asked about their experiences with the account manager.

In 2011, the company gathered feedback in this way from more than 18,000 customers, which corresponds to a response rate of between 10 and 15 percent. It is the quality of the individual customer experience, not big numbers that are at the forefront of the survey. Customers who have complained in the survey are contacted by the relevant team within two working days. “Most customers are impressed that they receive a call within two working days of the online survey. We can solve almost 80 per cent of all problems within the first call,” says Steffen Müller.

Positive feedback is also recorded and transferred onto SAP. Weekly cockpit charts show how the customer satisfaction for each of the points of interaction has developed. And the figures speak for themselves. According to Steffen Müller, the figures for the general satisfaction and loyalty of customers versus the strongest competitors have significantly improved. “The online survey on the QuestBack system is a success for us for our whole product range,” adds Steffen Müller.

Bridging the gap between companies and their customers

Examples like SWISS and Hilti show that the business value of customer feedback is enormous. But many companies are still not leveraging this potential. This is a mistake that can be disastrous, especially on Social Media platforms, because it is possible that competitors find out earlier about your customers' negative experiences than you did yourself.

Increasing numbers of decision makers in marketing, sales and service are now investigating the opportunities for professional monitoring of customer feedback. The technology is available. Analysts at Forrester Research have examined the market and rated QuestBack's solutions as market leaders due to the strength of the offering and the strategy – the most important features of future-proof investments in customer experience measurement.

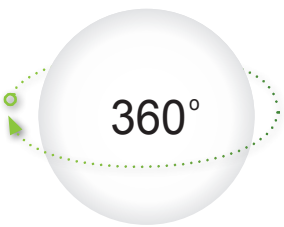
Find out more about the opportunities to bridge the gap between companies and their target groups using online feedback systems.

Use your customers' feedback for:

- » optimizing sales meetings
- » evaluating websites
- » controlling services
- » incentive schemes
- » higher customer and brand loyalty
- » targeted marketing communication
- » evaluating suppliers
- » 360 degree view of customers
- » sustained growth









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QuestBack provides online survey, panel management and social CRM solutions - web-based services for relationship development through the collection, analysis, and follow-up of business critical information.