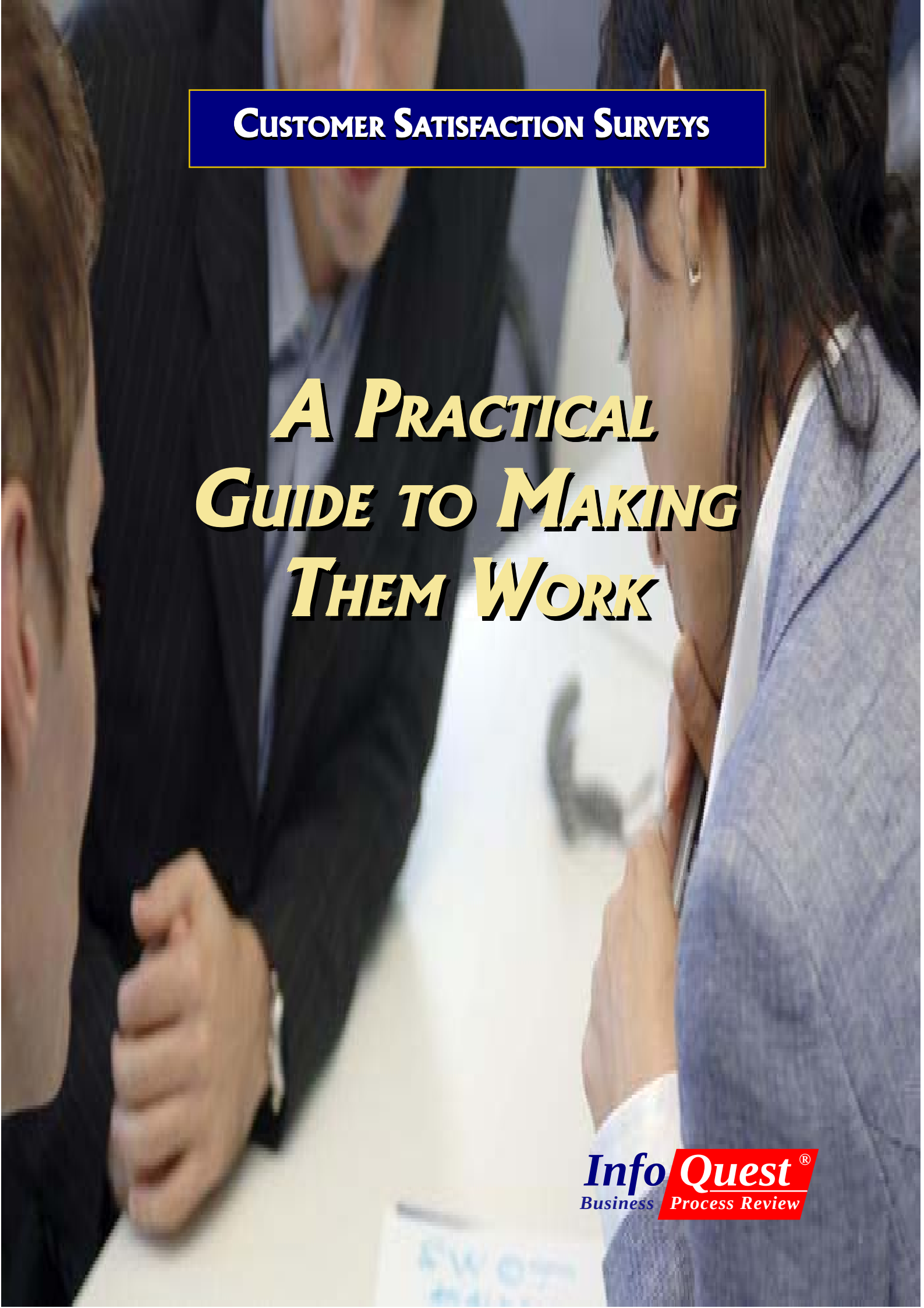
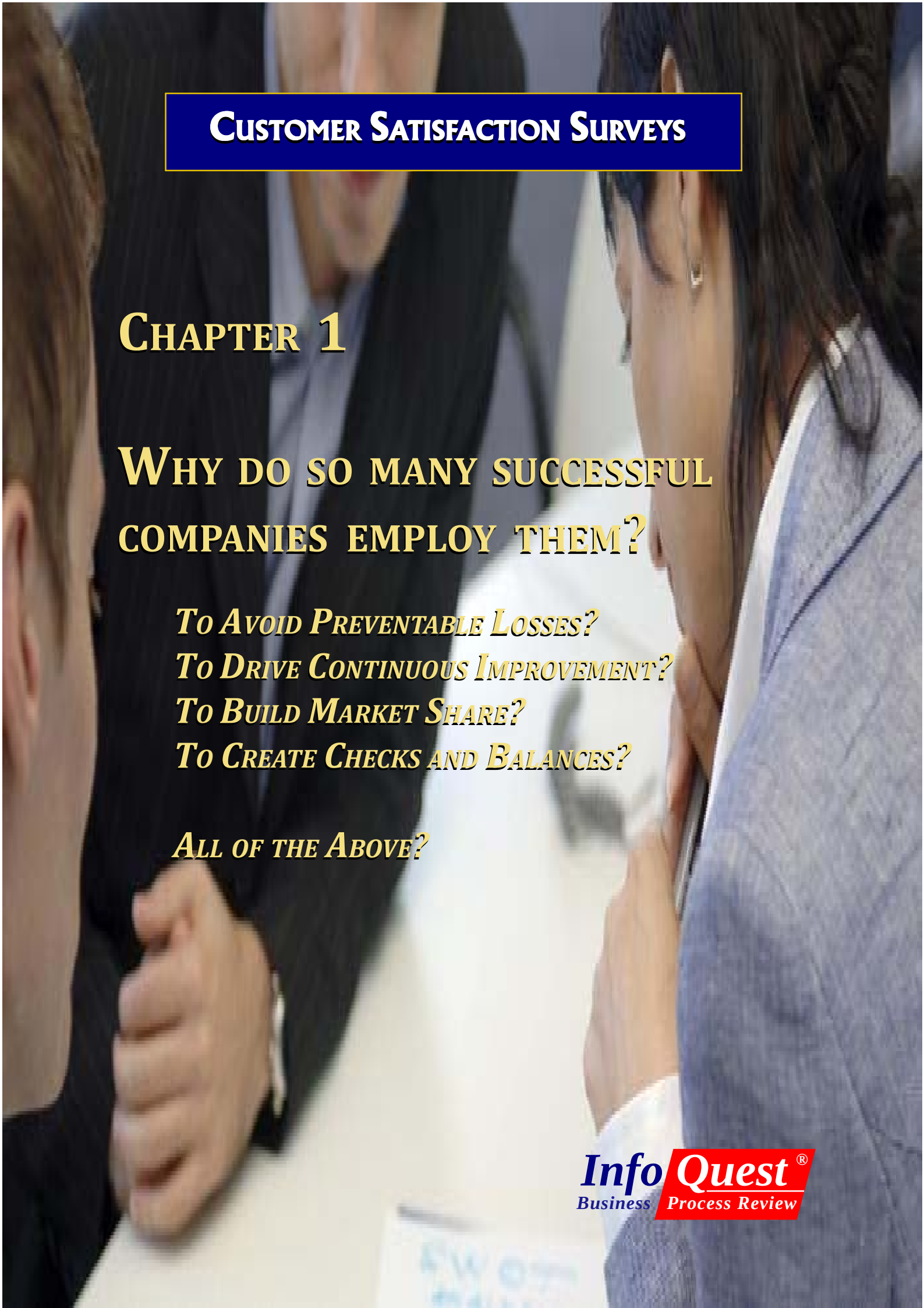


Customer Satisfaction Surveys

A Practical Guide to Making Them Work

Info Quest® Business Process Review



Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Chapter 1

Why do so many successful companies employ them?

To Avoid Preventable Losses?
To Drive Continuous Improvement?
To Build Market Share?
To Create Checks and Balances?

All of the Above?

InfoQuest® Business Process Review

Why do so many successful companies employ customer satisfaction survey programmes?

Among the reasons are:

To Avoid Preventable Losses

There are three operating areas in which most customers will openly express displeasure if you fail to perform to expectations - price, quality and on-time delivery. The problem is, there are dozens, sometimes hundreds of additional touch-points in the average business to business relationship in which customers tend to bottle up displeasure. Sales rep performance, tech support, customer service in its many and varied forms, finance administration, all means and manner of communication, placing orders, processing returns - it can be a long list.

The Forum Corporation of America analyzed the causes of customer migration in 14 major manufacturing and service companies and found that 15 percent migrated because of quality issues, and another 15 percent changed supplier because of price issues. The remainder, 70 percent, moved on because "they didn't like the human side of doing business with the prior provider of the product or service".

Tom Peters, The Pursuit of Wow

And as if that's not bad enough, they don't "just" leave. Additional studies have consistently determined that the typical dissatisfied customer will also end up telling 8-10 people about their problem or experience.

The good news is, seven of ten complaining customers will do business with you again if you resolve the complaint in their favour.

The bad news is, for every customer complaint that you hear, there will be, on average, 27 others that will never be brought to your attention. Stated another way, roughly 96% of customer complaints will never be openly voiced.



Why do so many successful companies employ customer satisfaction survey programmes?

Among the reasons are:

To Drive Continuous Improvement

An old truism says that it's far easier for great service to overcome a second-rate product than it is for a great product to overcome second-rate service. Within that realm is a simple reality that many business operators fail to recognize:

> ***Your customers know your company's strengths and weaknesses, and they usually know them better than you do.***

- ✓ *They know what it's like to buy your products and services, from placing an order to having it delivered.*
- ✓ *They know how well you solve problems.*
- ✓ *They know how responsive you are to questions or special needs.*
- ✓ *They know if you make it easy to conduct business with you, or if it's a painful process that's riddled with red tape.*
- ✓ *They know if your employees are competent and courteous.*
- ✓ *They know if you keep promises or return phone calls.*
- ✓ *They know if you value their business, and show it to them, or if they are just taken for granted.*
- ✓ *They know if your products or services represent value for the money, and they know why or why not.*

And.....if that's not enough.....

- ✓ ***Customers can be the best source of innovative new ideas. Throughout history, in all sectors, it's often customers who come up with new ideas for improving an old product or launching a new one.***



Why do so many successful companies employ customer satisfaction survey programmes?

Among the reasons are:

To Build Market Share

The economics of customer satisfaction speak for themselves.

"Totally Satisfied" customers have a repurchase rate that is 3 to 10 times higher than that of "Somewhat Satisfied" customers. This is documented by research at Xerox and in other industry studies.

"All or nothing: Customers must be 'Totally Satisfied" Steve Lewis, Marketing News. Chicago: Mar 2, 1998. Vol. 32, Iss. 5; pg. 11.

"Its "Totally Satisfied" customers were six times more likely to repurchase Xerox products over the next 18 months than its "satisfied" customers.

Why Satisfied Customers Defect. By: Jones, Thomas O.; Sasser Jr., W., Harvard Business Review, Nov/Dec95, Vol. 73 Issue 6, p88, 14p

"The relationship between satisfaction and actual share-of-wallet in a business-to-business environment is not only a positive relationship but the relationship is nonlinear, with the greatest positive impact occurring at the upper extreme of satisfaction levels."

Timothy L Keiningham, Tiffany Perkins-Munn, Heather Evans, Journal of Service Research : JSR. Thousand Oaks: Aug 2003. Vol. 6, Issue. 1; pg. 37

"By examining contract renewal rates (Johnson Controls) found a one point increase in the overall satisfaction score was worth a $13 million increase in service contract renewals annually."

American Society For Quality, February 2003

"IBM Rochester determined that if customer satisfaction levels increased *one percentage point, an additional $257 million* in additional revenue would be generated over five years. The ratio of revenue growth between *very satisfied* and *satisfied* customers was 3:1."

American Society For Quality, February 2003

And, of course, the old adage that we've all heard and lived by for years. ***It costs six times more to attract a new customer than it does to keep an old one.***



Why do so many successful companies employ customer satisfaction survey programmes?

Among the reasons are:

To Create Checks and Balances

Various studies performed over the years, beginning with one conducted by Xerox in the early 90's, have consistently shown that a Totally Satisfied customer is, on average, 3-10 times more likely to buy from you again than a customer who is merely Somewhat Satisfied.

Later studies conducted by InfoQuest took those findings a step further with development of a statistical model which determined that the financial relationship between customer satisfaction and revenues is both measurable and predictable. It found that, over time -

- **A Totally Satisfied Customer contributes 2.6 times as much revenue to a company as a Somewhat Satisfied Customer.**
- **A Totally Satisfied Customer contributes 14 times as much revenue as a Somewhat Dissatisfied Customer.**
- **A Totally Dissatisfied Customer *decreases* revenue at a rate equal to twice what a Totally Satisfied Customer contributes to a business.**

That last finding is particularly noteworthy in that it highlights that you can have twice as many satisfied customers as dissatisfied customers and still be losing ground.

What it all means in terms of revenue is simple. Maximizing business performance means doing everything possible to:

1. ***Turn Dissatisfied customers into Somewhat Satisfied customers.***
2. ***Turn Somewhat Satisfied customers into Totally Satisfied customers.***
3. ***Avoid undoing anything with customers who are already Totally Satisfied.***

And that's where the checks and balances come into play.

✓ Do key decision-makers in your company know which of your top accounts is dissatisfied, and why?





- ✓ Are priorities and initiatives aimed at improving customer satisfaction systemically known, universally pursued and routinely measured?
- ✓ Is everyone in the company, all departments at all levels, hearing and focusing on the same things?
- ✓ When your team looks at your business, do they see the same things your customers see? Do they *know* what your customers see?
- ✓ Does everyone understand who your top accounts are and what needs to be done to keep them?

Fundamental questions, right? Yet in many companies, purely informal means are employed to try to maintain a sense of customer needs. Using a combination of in-house metrics, anecdotal field tales, passive data collection and an abundance of hindsight, they wage a valiant attempt to keep their fingers on the pulse of customer sentiments, often collecting information with one hand and fighting fires with the other.

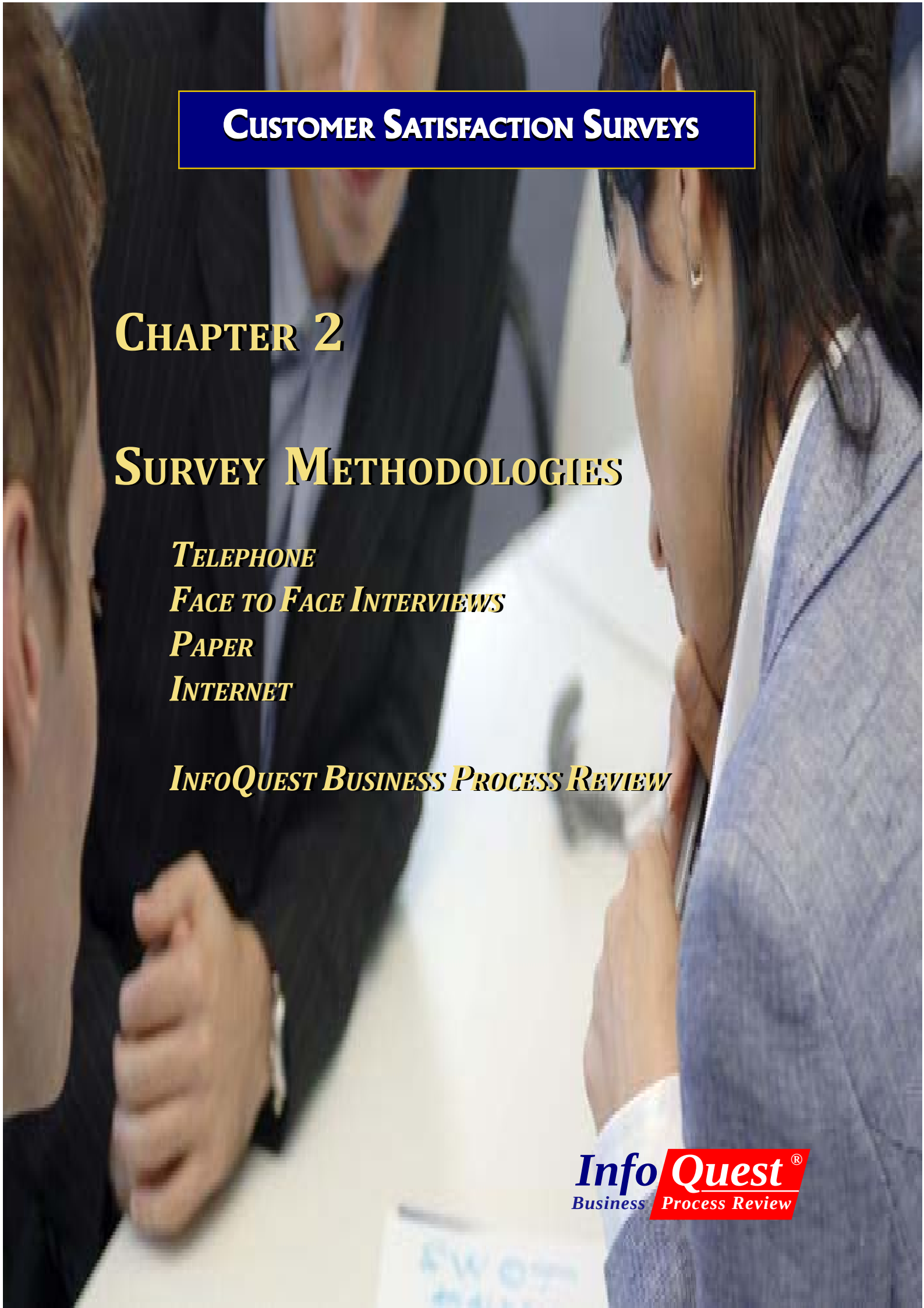
Of course, bad news does not travel up the corporate hierarchy very well, and the vast majority of customer complaints are never openly voiced, which means that informal means are rather like estimating the depth of the ocean by looking at the surface. Add in the effects of preconceived notions, wishful thinking, attitudinal biases and even the occasionally fragile corporate ego and..... .....well, good luck.

So customer satisfaction surveys have been developed and adopted to fill the knowledge void.

Which leads to the next challenge. Not all customer satisfaction surveys are created equal, so how does one go about finding the one that will best meet your needs?



For that discussion, see brochure entitled *Question 2 - How?*



Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Chapter 2

Survey Methodologies

Telephone
Face to Face Interviews
Paper
Internet

InfoQuest Business Process Review

InfoQuest® Business Process Review

In today's competitive marketplace, the pressure on companies to find out, in detail, what their customers think of their products, their services and their people is relentless. Unfortunately, for every customer complaint the typical company receives, there will be, on average, 27 others that are never reported. The inevitable manifestation of that reality is something that every company has seen – the long-standing customer who one day takes their business elsewhere, usually without warning, often without explanation.

Early efforts to break that pattern first came into vogue during the 1980's when customer satisfaction surveys evolved from an occasionally used tool and instead became a fundamental element of the conduct of business. The underlying theory, of course, was sound; if customers can't be counted on to voluntarily express their opinions and frustrations, the thinking went, let's go out and ask them what they think.

In the years that have passed, the conduct of such surveys has spawned an entire industry, yet despite explosive growth in their use, the available means for gathering customer opinions hasn't changed much.





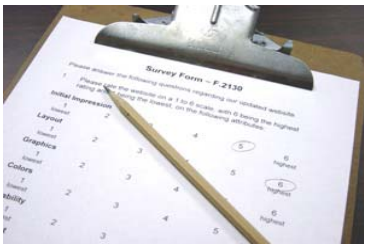
Paper, telephone and face-to-face surveys existed in 1980, and are still in use 30 years later. Over that same time period we also saw the rise and fall of electronic surveys; first the short-lived survey on disk, then the Internet or web survey. Today the former is a relic while the latter clings to life.

Yet even if survey methodologies haven't evolved (well, there is one exception, but we're still coming to it), there can be no question that customer viewpoints on surveys have. It is an unavoidable reality, however, that not all of those viewpoints have changed for the better.



To many people, surveys have become an overused commodity - monotonous, repetitive, intrusive and, with few exceptions, utterly uninspiring. Many people see them as a waste of valuable time; the purpose of many of the questions unclear, the results seldom disclosed, and at the end of the day, scant evidence that any of it is being used to drive change. *What's the point?* is a commonly held view. *Why bother?*

Thirty years later, ***many people now associate telephone surveys with telemarketing, paper surveys with junk mail, and Internet surveys with Spam.***



That, in turn, leads to the dilemma, how can a company obtain vital commercial knowledge in a manner that will enhance, not hurt, the customer relationship?

There is an answer to that question, and it begins on the next page.



To understand if a survey methodology can or does perform, one must understand what it needs to accomplish in the first place.

The fundamental premise of customer relationship management is simple. If you can gain a clear understanding of customer needs, perceptions and desires, and then provide for those needs, you can keep customers longer and sell to them more often.

But how do you gain a candid and accurate view of your business? Of equal importance, how do you make certain that you'll actually be able to put the information you gather to productive use? After all, the real value of any survey lies in its ability to generate a strategic return on investment, which is to say that *unless you can actually do something with the results*, all you gain is a lot of paper.

To avoid that all too common outcome, an effective customer satisfaction survey has to deliver:

On The Front End

- A **high response rate***, enabling you to get an accurate picture of the opinions of your *top accounts*.

  * Response rates below 50% generally cannot be counted on to be accurate.

- **Immunity to biases and influences** that undermine the candour and accuracy of responses.

- At least a **perception of anonymity**, enabling customers to feel free to tell you what's really on their mind.

On The Back End

- **Fully attributable customer responses**, enabling you to pinpoint specific problems in specific accounts.

- **Actionable** (vs. merely interesting) **results**, enabling the development and implementation of effective action plans. If you can't act on the results, you can't change anything.

- **Prioritisation tools** that clearly and accurately show you where to focus your resources for maximum impact on improving customer satisfaction and loyalty.

- Deliverables that are built on **clarity and simplicity**, not arcane jargon and analytical filler.

Without those fundamental building blocks, conducting surveys usually proves to be a waste of valuable time and resources.



The Cassandra Phenomenon sits atop the list of biases and influences that undermine the candoor and accuracy of a customer satisfaction survey. It is defined as -

> ***In a survey environment where the respondent believes their identity is or may be known, a strong positive bias filters into responses.***

The problem is simple. When customers believe that their identity is or may be known, roughly 70% of the population will hesitate to openly voice a strongly negative opinion for fear of the potential consequences. That hesitancy is driven by concern over possible reprisals, the "hassle factor" of potentially being asked to explain or defend such comments, even misgivings about getting a business partner into trouble (however deserving) and thus detrimentally altering whatever relationship is currently in place.

It's ironic when you think about it. In most business settings, success is based on the development of personal relationships. Over time, people become acquainted, familiar with their business to business contact people, perhaps even develop something of a friendship. When they do, they tend to become more careful of hurting someone's feelings or expressing views that may get someone into trouble. In other words, personal relationships tend to suppress the expression of dissatisfaction or unmet need.

The Cassandra Phenomenon does not apply to everyone. Through long observed behavioral patterns we see that ***approximately thirty percent of the general population suffers no misgivings about clearly and openly expressing their views*** – both positive and negative. Those folks will look you in the eye and tell you precisely what is on their mind, regardless of how they think you might react to it.



When customers believe their identity is known, 70% will not openly voice negative comments for fear of producing unwanted consequences.

The problem is that the remaining seventy percent of the population harbours subconscious concerns about the ramifications or consequences of openly speaking their mind. For those people, the only safe approach, assuming they can't find a way to duck the survey in the first place, is to "soft-sell" or "back-peddle" on complaints rather than openly voice them or have them committed to paper, where the possible consequences cannot be measured or predicted.

And, of course, for both the interviewer and the company using the resulting data, there is no possible way to know – before, during or after the survey – which portion of the population any single customer belongs in.

The only possible way to mitigate these influences, and to promote the candid expression of accurate opinions, is to provide survey participants with a vehicle that will provide them a comfort level to openly express their views without fear of consequences.

How many of the available survey methodologies do you think provide for that need?



What Options Are Available?

Telephone Surveys



Telephone is an excellent vehicle for qualitative data collection, gathering detailed input on a very limited focus; a product's market potential or features, for example. Time limits apply, but a skilled interviewer with a very narrow focus can gather valuable information.

As to customer satisfaction, loss of candour and practical limits on number of questions make it poor vehicle for anything more than a cursory overview. May be used for quick transactional surveys, but can only scratch the surface on a full business evaluation.

Response Rate

Under 50% at best. Rapidly declines as number of questions increase.

Accuracy

Little thought given after first few responses. Extremely prone to interviewer induced influences on responses.

Candour

Cassandra Phenomenon undermines honesty of 70% of respondents.

Number of Questions

5 minutes, 10-12 questions, to maintain any sort of response rate.

Perceived Value

Highly intrusive and almost universally disliked. Associated with tele-marketing. Culturally unacceptable in various countries.

Perceived Anonymity

None.

Face to Face Interviews



Send in the reps in and pose questions to the customer face to face; let the reps massage, interpret and then record responses; let the sales manager filter the information; then spend weeks trying to figure out how to turn the data into a report, which inevitably turns out to be of little use.

Between the intrusion factor for everyone involved, the wildly expensive cost of travel, and undermined candour and accuracy, this approach may offer some minor PR value, but has nearly zero worth as a research tool.

Response Rate

Similar to phone for mid-management, far less for senior management.

Accuracy

Note-taking (recorders are frowned upon) is undermined by need to interact and promote discussion. Results heavily influenced by memory and interpretation.

Candour

If anything, Cassandra Phenomenon is magnified.

Number of Questions

Clipboards and forms are frowned upon, so interview must be conversational. Interviewer tends to lose control of discussion.

Perceived Value

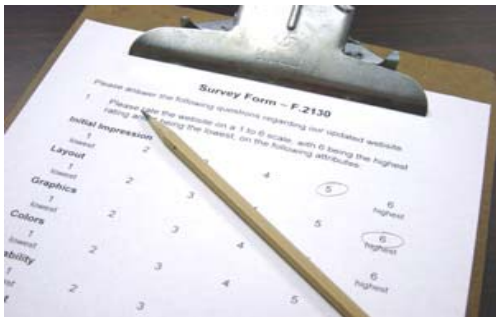
Tend to be lengthy and are highly intrusive on busy executive schedules; participants feel they are absorbing as much cost as interviewer.

Perceived Anonymity

None.

What Options Are Available?

Paper Surveys



Paper is an inexpensive option for a company with a very large customer base and little to no revenue stratification between accounts. The data may be flawed, but even a 5% response rate can at least produce a statistically valid result.

But, when accounts are stratified (the so-called 80/20 or Pareto Rule), a vastly higher response rate is needed. Without it, you disproportionately hear from those at the far ends of the opinion spectrum. Your ability to focus on the accounts that drive your company's revenues is sacrificed.

Response Rate

5-10% Average. The longer the survey, the lower the response.

Accuracy

Low response rate is dominated by "far end of the spectrum" responses - those who would be delighted to endorse your company, and those who are giving you one last chance to get it right.

Candour

Format is prone to patterned responses and compared answers. People become more concerned about the "appearance" of their answers than what their answers are.

Number of Questions

1-2 pages is practical limit.

Perceived Value

Overused. Soulless. Associated with junk mail.

Perceived Anonymity

None due to common use of bar codes or other arcane coding systems.

Internet Surveys



Like paper, a web survey is an option for a company with a very large customer base and little to no revenue stratification between accounts. Like paper, they are also quite inexpensive to conduct.

Their primary obstacle is low response rate, which undermines the ability to focus on your top revenue generators. They are also nearly impossible to conduct without email addresses for all desired participants, which a surprising number of companies do not possess.

Response Rate

5% average. Response rates have been steadily declining in recent years.

Accuracy

Low response rates produce same "far end of spectrum" influences as paper.

Candour

Depends on format. Paper survey on a computer screen suffers same influences as written survey.

Number of Questions

Shorter is better, but 30-50 or more questions feasible. Completion status must be visible or respondents will tire and cancel out.

Perceived Value

Associated with SPAM. Frequently blocked by filters, recognized sender's lists and firewalls.

Perceived Anonymity

Typically assumed to be traceable, undermining honesty.

What Options Are Available?

Well, There Is One More.....

It's called ***InfoQuest***. Here's how it works.



A survey of 36 to 60 questions and statements is reduced to a deck of cards, each about the size of business card, and then placed inside the InfoQuest survey "box". After the survey is delivered by mail, the participant reads each card, then simply drops it into one of the five labeled compartments to record their answers. Each participant is also given the opportunity to provide additional open-ended written comments, which the majority take advantage of. Postage paid return mail material is included with each survey. Average completion time is 10, perhaps 15 minutes.

Customers you select to participate are pre-validated through a multi-step process that raises awareness of and interest in the process. Following our recommendation to offer to share relevant highlights of the survey adds further interest, which contributes to what is the ***highest average response rate on the planet - just a bit over 70%***. And that's a global average. InfoQuest surveys have been ***delivered to customers in 77 countries and in 25 languages***.

Is the survey "box" a gimmick? Sure it is. But there is sound structural thinking behind its design. Among the reasons it works so well:



ACCEPTANCE - Unlike the drudgery of other survey formats, most customers view the ***InfoQuest*** survey as fun - sort of like a game.



DELIVERY - Telephone surveys are easy to avoid. Paper surveys are frequently screened by assistants as "junk mail". Web survey emails fall prey to spam filters. ***InfoQuest***, on the other hand, with its unique appearance, and because the customer always knows in advance that it's coming, almost always makes it to the intended recipient.



VISIBILITY - Conventional surveys, if they are not discarded upon receipt, frequently get lost under mountains of paper. Emails about web surveys, if not responded to within 36 hours, probably won't ever be. The ***InfoQuest*** approach is a visible attention getter that is large enough to avoid getting lost, and viewed as too valuable to throw away.

EASE OF USE - ***InfoQuest*** is not intrusive - surveys are conducted at the convenience and leisure of the customer. Because all return mail material is provided in the package, even sending it back for processing is an easy task.



TRACEABILITY - Each survey is uniquely coded, enabling us to track the identity of each respondent. That, in turn, allows full insight into individual customer responses. However, because most customers will be unaware of the coding system, they will assume the survey is anonymous, thus giving them the freedom to tell you exactly what is on their minds.

ACCURACY - ***InfoQuest*** produces highly accurate results. Score-keeping, patterned responses, comparisons of answers and interviewer-based or -induced biases are eliminated. Most importantly, because customers tend to assume their responses are anonymous, thereby mitigating the effects of the Cassandra Phenomenon, their replies are much more candid than other methods.

InfoQuest



If you have a stratified customer base wherein a large portion of your sales and profits are being generated by a small portion of your customers, your survey needs to generate a high response rate, it needs to gather candid feedback, and the results need to be accurate.

This is the survey that can do all of that.

It is the only one that can.

Response Rate

70% global average since 1989; the highest in the world.

Accuracy

Unique design eliminates "far end of the spectrum" effects, score-keeping, patterned responses, comparisons of answers and interviewer-based or -induced biases.

Candour

Perceived cloak of anonymity eliminates the effects of the Cassandra Phenomenon, so customers feel free to tell you exactly what is on their minds.

Number of Questions

36-60 without loss of response rate.

Perceived Value

Unique, innovative and different. Stands far above the crowd in terms of creating a perception of value.

Perceived Anonymity

The vast majority of respondents assume the survey is being conducted anonymously.

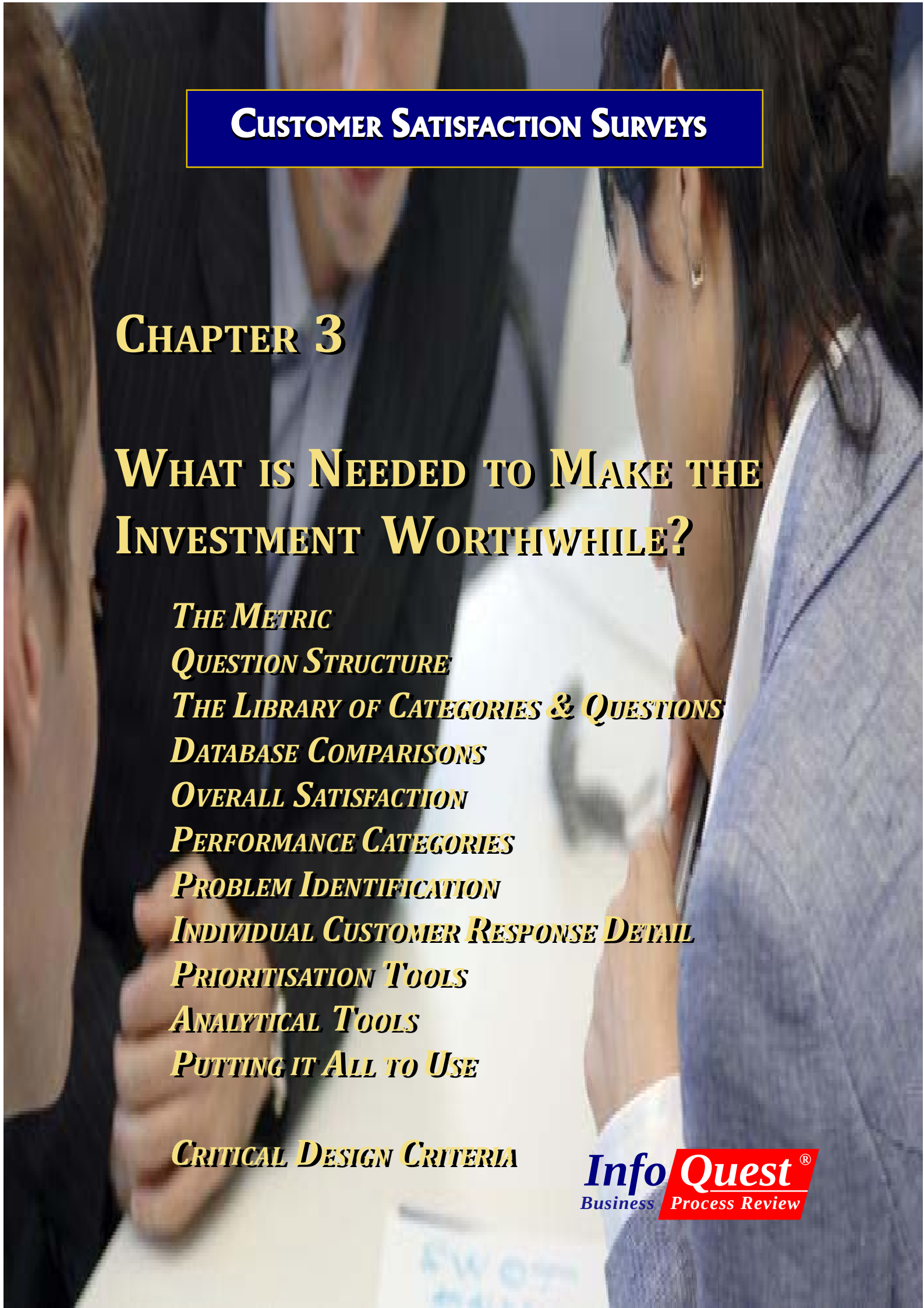
Because InfoQuest can touch on so many performance areas with so many people, there is a little something in it for everyone in the company.



- ✓ For the **sales department**, ***InfoQuest*** identifies problems, issues, unmet needs, and areas of subtle discontent that are costing you sales. It identifies specific customers who are approachable by your competitors, and tells you why. It helps minimize customer defections by isolating and correcting problems that can affect purchase decisions - *before* they become critical.
- ✓ For the **marketing department**, it is an effective way to measure brand equity and to obtain vital insights that will help you to enhance the value of your products and services.
- ✓ For the **quality department**, it is an effective solution to meeting customer communication requirements under QS, ISO and other quality related certification programs.
- ✓ For the **executive team**, it is a way of determining how remote areas of the company are performing. It also gives you the tools needed to get all company personnel involved in eliminating issues that affect the sales force's ability to generate new and repeat business.



It's been called the most cost effective, dynamic actionable customer survey process on the planet. See the brochure entitled *Question 3 - What Do You Do With It?* to understand why.



Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Chapter 3

What is Needed to Make the Investment Worthwhile?

The Metric
Question Structure
The Library of Categories & Questions
Database Comparisons
Overall Satisfaction
Performance Categories
Problem Identification
Individual Customer Response Detail
Prioritisation Tools
Analytical Tools
Putting it All to Use

Critical Design Criteria

Info Quest® Business Process Review

So, you're going to conduct a customer survey.

Having decided what is going to happen on the front end of a survey, far too many people fail to stop and consider what they are going to do on the back end.

What are the results going to look like?

How actionable will they be?

How much time and effort, how many resources, are going to be required to address them?

What kind of return on investment can be expected? When will it be realized?

Will it be realized?



A few years back, a Fortune 100 company commissioned a customer survey. The good news was, the dual volume reports, which were delivered twice a year, offered the company tremendous detail. The bad news was, the reports contained so much material - the filler-laden page count was on par with the New York City phone directory - that when all was said and done, no one in the company even had time to read it all, let alone to try to understand or do anything with it.

Another company was taken in by a vendor who was offering web-based surveys with a twist - in this case, *real-time reporting*. Any authorized person in the company, the pitch went, could go online at any time, pull survey results on all or some customers, then act on whatever results were downloaded. A high-tech firefighting tool, it was called, giving the company the ability to identify and address small problems before they became large problems.

Sounds neat, right?

Except.....the results being downloaded entailed raw data - none of it cleansed, processed, analysed or subjected to anything resembling a prioritisation mechanism. Not surprisingly, people in different parts of the company were soon running around taking disparate actions, whatever they felt was appropriate on behalf of whomever they felt needed assistance. There was no consideration as to whether their actions addressed a systemic or personal need, a high or low priority, or whether there might be an unintended consequence somewhere else. It soon became what was later characterized as a free-for-all, with many of the actions taken being little more than knee-jerk reactions.

And finally, there are the legions of companies that have been seduced by such marketing legerdemain as "The Ultimate Question", where they embraced a simple survey and later found themselves staring at bills for tens and even hundreds of thousands of dollars, pounds and euros in order to find the answers to all of the questions that were never asked.

Three different companies. One facing incomprehensible results and zero return on investment. A second facing random, disorganized results and a total inability to even estimate an ROI. A third where only the tip of the iceberg was visible in terms of both results and cost.

Three circumstances which stand in testimony to the old adage, if you can't dazzle them with brilliance, baffle them with.....



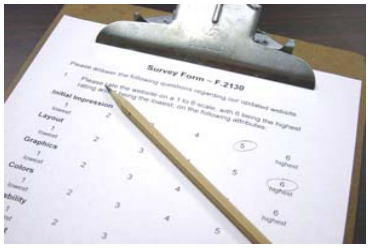
Well, you know how it goes.

On the pages that follow is a discussion of what to look for and what you will need in order to avoid the all-too-common story of wasted time, wasted energy and wasted money.



The Metric

Think back to surveys you have seen over the years and consider the metric, or response options that were employed. Remember seeing surveys with an alpha scale (*Please rank the following from A to F, with A being the best .....*) or a numeric scale (*Please rank from 1-10, with 10 being.....*)? Both are commonly used but flawed approaches in which respondents tend to be subliminally driven, their responses influenced by their experience with school grading systems.



Where an alpha scale is employed, a "C" is usually seen as "average", just like it was in school. On a numeric scale, the yardstick for "average" will usually be based on a percentage; 80% being considered middle of the road, and anything below 60% considered a failing grade. Yet, companies will look at a survey score derived from a 10-point numeric scale and conclude that an average of 5 (or 50%) is "middle of the pack". In reality, they are probably looking at a measurement that indicates abject failure.

Other scales may use various labelled derivatives - Good, Fair, Bad, Poor for example, or Meets Expectations, Does Not Meet Expectations, and so on. The problem there, of course, is that none of those carry a precise definition, so how can they be expected to produce a precise set of responses or lead anyone to a precise set of conclusions?

Sometimes games are openly played. For instance, some companies like to try to help themselves along by front-end loading the metric, perhaps something like - Excellent, Good, Fair and Poor. In that example, there are two "positive responses" and only one "negative response", an approach that someone hopes will psychologically prod respondents toward a more positive answer.

A metric can also be impacted by cultural and language issues. We once saw a global survey where the top box metric was "Very Satisfied", followed by "Satisfied". Looking at reports, the company was troubled to see that responses from Japan lagged behind other areas in Asia. It was only after considerable teeth-gnashing and hand-wringing that someone did some research and found out there was a language problem. In Japan, when you had a modifier to something, you diminish its value. That is to say, "Satisfied" is the best possible response; by adding "Very" to it, a lesser degree of satisfaction was suggested. Apples and guacamole.

All of which illustrates the vital but often overlooked rules for designing response options.

> The metric used in any survey must be *clear, concise*, *unambiguous* and *non-subjective*. Regardless of region or language, you must be confident that all customers, regardless of location or language, are seeing, understanding and responding to the exact same thing.

The InfoQuest metric, shown below, takes care of all of that.

Satisfaction Questions	**Drill-Down Statements**
Totally Satisfied	Fully Agree
Somewhat Satisfied	Partially Agree
Insufficient Information to Evaluate	Insufficient Information to Evaluate
Somewhat Dissatisfied	Partially Disagree
Totally Dissatisfied	Fully Disagree

The anchor point, Totally Satisfied, is a "clear line in the sand" metric. There is no subjectivity, no interpretation, no ambiguity. It's been proven to be multi-cultural, having been used successfully in 77 countries and 25 languages. It does not stack the deck in one direction or the other, nor does it provide a "neutral" response along the lines of "no answer" or "don't know". Those kinds of options give people a cop-out response, an easy way to duck difficult or uncomfortable questions. Insufficient Information to Evaluate, on the other hand, recognizes a lack of experience response without providing an open bail-out option.



Question Structure

Next up is the question set. There are two critical elements that need to be provided here.

First, you need benchmark performance scores. Survey questions must work to clearly tell you where you are so that you can assess precisely where you need to go.

Second, they need to provide direction on how to get there.

Our approach to meeting those objectives is to use the structure shown below. Pictured is what we refer to as a "Category", which as you can see is comprised of a satisfaction question that will give you a benchmark score in (in this example) Sales Performance. Then, following the satisfaction question are three statements which collectively serve to operate as drill-downs, helping you to understand why customers are satisfied or dissatisfied with the accessibility of your sales reps.

Sales Performance	
	A. How satisfied are you with the overall performance of our sales representatives?
	B. I have open and easy communication with people from your company.
	C. Your sales representative treats our account as a valued partner in business.
	D. I know who my sales representative is.

The average survey gathers feedback on anywhere from 8 to 15 such categories, any or all of which may entail a greater or lesser number of drill-downs.

The Library of Categories and Questions

Originally introduced in 1995 and updated several times since, the InfoQuest Question Library contains 63 different proven and tested Categories touching on all of the business to business basics, including such things as Sales, Product Quality, Delivery, Customer Service, Tech Support, Billing & Invoicing, Credits & Returns, Management Interactions, and so on.

The Library is made available to all clients in an electronic format that enables distribution and review throughout your company. Want to modify or customise some or all of the Categories? No problem.

Want to design new Categories, perhaps touching on a proprietary product or service? Again, no problem. Or charge.

The development and use of the Library was initially motivated by the desire to reduce costs. In the early days we spent time and money with company after company designing the content of surveys that inevitably ended up bearing a striking resemblance to each other. There are market research companies out there that continue to take the same resource draining approach.

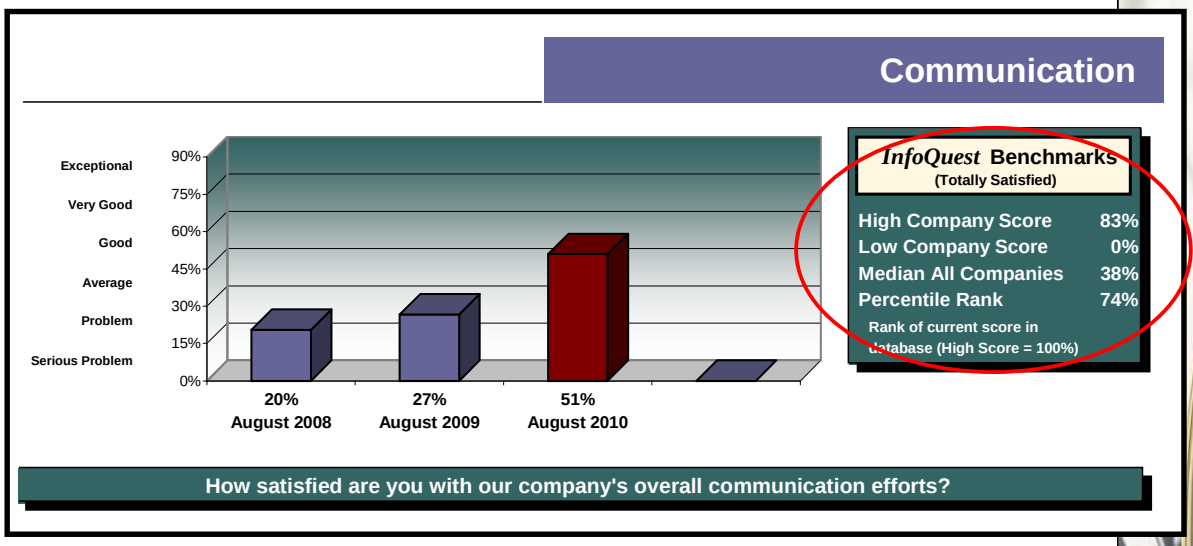
Today, that time and money can be put to far better uses. While every survey is fully customised, the vast majority of our clients find everything they need right here.

SALES & MARKETING CATEGORIES

16. Literature	
	A. How satisfied are you with the literature we provide to describe our products and services?
	B. Your literature is very easy to read and understand.
	C. I get enough literature to keep me well informed about the products you offer.
	D. Your literature is kept current and up to date.
17. Sales Performance	
	A. How satisfied are you with the overall performance of our sales representatives?
	B. Your sales representatives thoroughly know and understand your products and services.
	C. Your sales representatives understand my business needs.
	D. Your sales representatives suggest solutions to improve our business.
18. Sales Performance	
	A. How satisfied are you with the overall performance of our sales representatives?
	B. I have open and easy communication with people from your company.
	C. Your sales representative treats our account as a valued partner in business.
	D. I know who my sales representative is.
19. Sales Performance	
	A. How satisfied are you with the accessibility of our sales representatives?
	B. My sales representative is never difficult to track down.
	C. My sales representative responds to my inquiries promptly.
	D. My sales representative is always on time for meetings.
23. Sales Performance	
	A. How satisfied are you with our sales representative's overall level of responsiveness?
	B. My sales representative is always attentive and responsive to my needs.
	C. I have met the sales account manager assigned to my company.
	D. I get the feeling my sales representative views my business as a priority.
20. Sales Performance	
	A. How satisfied are you with the personal commitment of our sales representatives?
	B. Your sales representatives are pleasant, accommodating and treat me with respect.
	C. The frequency of meetings I have with your sales representatives is adequate to meet my needs.
	D. Your sales representatives keep their appointments and are prepared to discuss my needs.
52. Marketing Support	
	A. How satisfied are you with our marketing support programs?
	B. Your marketing support programs are a major component of our overall business strategy.
	C. I have a clear understanding of the benefits we receive from your marketing support programs.
	D. I have seen a marked improvement in company sponsored marketing support efforts.

Database Comparisons

Want to know how your customer's perceptions stack up to those of customers in other companies? A major advantage of the Library of Categories and Questions is that we have been tracking and cataloguing results to consistently worded questions for years. As a result, we can show you how your results compare to those that have been accumulated in our international database going back to 1989.



With this feature, you can see the range of scores that other companies have generated, the median score for all other companies, and the Percentile Rank of your current results versus those that have been generated over the past two decades. In a growing number of instances we can even provide industry specific comarisons.

Two thoughts on this feature. One, the InfoQuest Database Comparison is unique, it is automatic and it doesn't cost anything extra. Two, this information is a feature, not an objective. We provide it because it is interesting, because it offers clients a sense of perspective, and because we can. That said, at the end of the day - and notwithstanding the alternative opinions of many marketing folks and most ISO compliance auditors - how one company compares to another, or even to hundreds of others, has nothing to do with the satisfaction or loyalty or revenue generation of your customers.

If anyone tries to tell you otherwise, we'd advise you to take your money and run. We say that because.....

Overall Satisfaction

Nearly every survey, regardless of methodology, will ask a question designed to measure respondent's Overall Satisfaction with the company or product being assessed. In our application, the specific question used is -

On an overall basis, how satisfied are you with our company?

It's a pretty straightforward question, and building it into a survey would seem to be a pretty straightforward objective. But amazingly, both companies and market researchers often manage to get that simple task wrong, sometimes in more ways than one.

Big Mistake Number 1 - Putting the question in the wrong place.
It is most advantageous to place the overall satisfaction question at the end of the survey, thus assuring that before respondents consider the "big" question, they will have been exposed to all the other questions on all the other topics that comprise the business or product relationship. In other words, to make sure that the response provided is an informed and well-considered one.

And yet, some of the same folks who think it's a good idea to front-end load the metric also tend to think it's a good idea to front end load the survey itself. How? By putting the overall satisfaction question at the front of the survey. The professed logic is that doing so will stimulate a more top-of-mind, instinctive response.

Flying in the face of that thinking, test studies have shown that placing the Overall Satisfaction question at the beginning of the survey will produce a score 20-25 percentage points higher than placing it at the end. In other words, simple placement has a substantial impact on the outcome.

Does it matter? Well, consider this. .

Studies going back almost 20 years have consistently shown that over time, Totally Satisfied customers spend over two and a half times what Somewhat Satisfied customers spend, and roughly fourteen times what Somewhat Dissatisfied customers spend.

So yes, it matters. It matters a lot. The bottom line is, while placing the question at the top of the survey will produce a result that will look better to the board or the shareholders, placing it at the end will give you a much more reality based outcome.

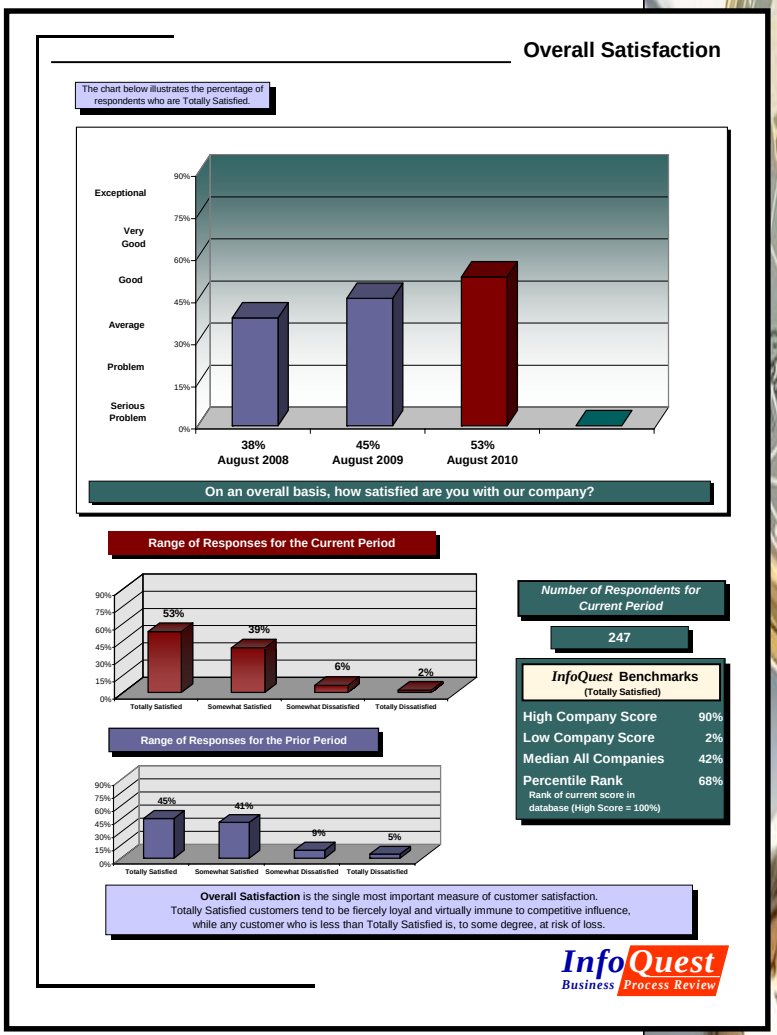
Big Mistake Number 2 - Composite Scores

There are companies that like to take all of their "positive" responses, add them together and proclaim that (using the example to the right) "92% of our customers are satisfied".

While that provides a nice foundation for a bit of public relations bluster, let us say again what we have already said.

Over time, Totally Satisfied customers spend over two and a half times what Somewhat Satisfied customers spend, and roughly fourteen times what Somewhat Dissatisfied customers spend.

What that means, once again, is that adding the scores together is utterly delusional. Sure, it will produce a result that will look better to the board or the shareholders, but it will very clearly NOT give you a view that is based on anything which resembles reality.



Big Mistake Number 3 - Omission

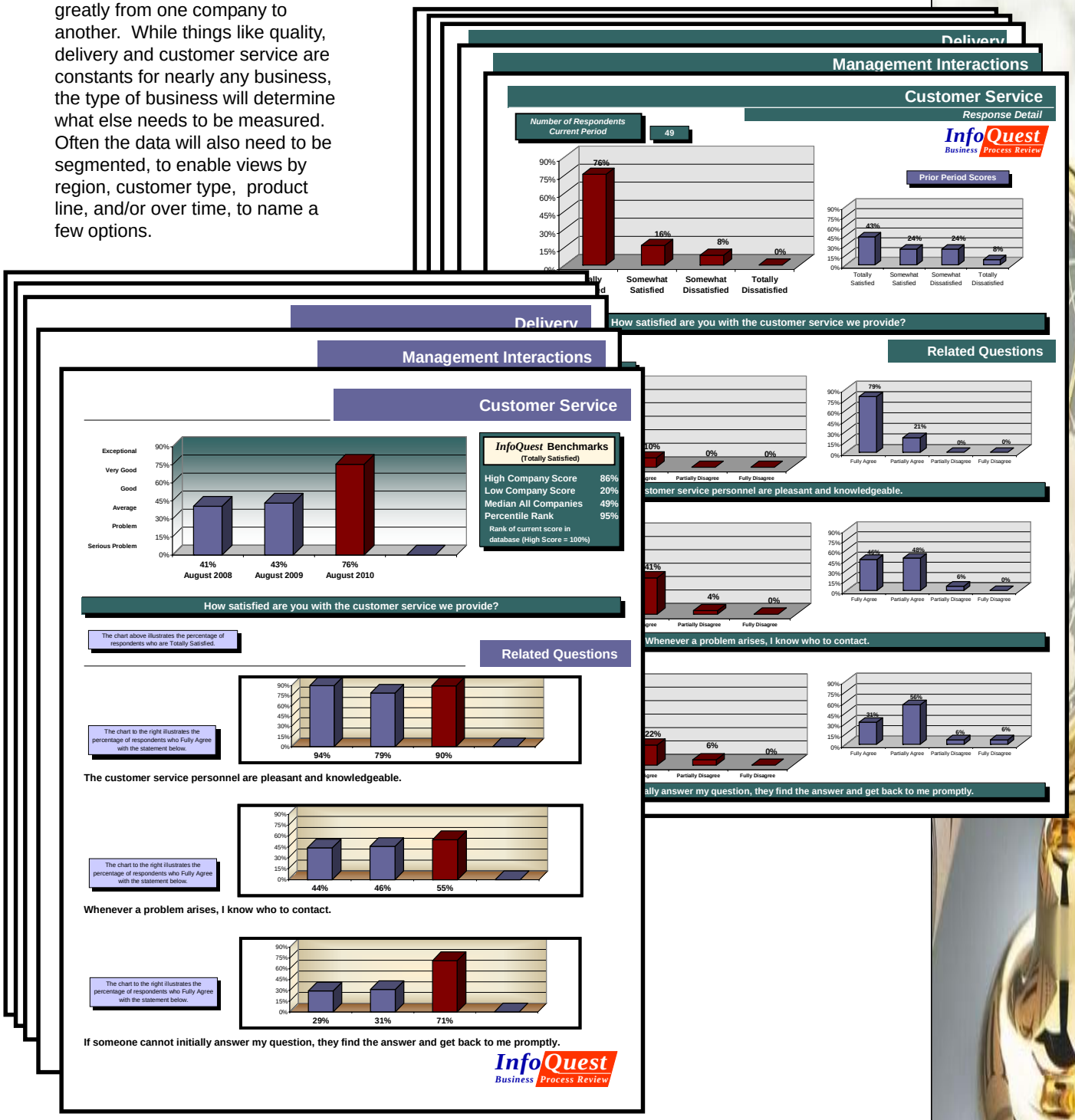
The only thing worse than misusing the overall satisfaction question is to not use it at all. There are firms out there that try to hang their hats on other "proprietary" (albeit arcane) mathematical formulas. Just remember that there is nothing to support such tactics as sound, appropriate or - worst of all - accurate.

Totally Satisfied customers spend more money with you than your other customers. To grow your revenues, you need to know who falls into the ranks of Totally Satisfied, who does not, and what needs to be done to move everyone else up.

Performance Categories

Overall Satisfaction is the single most important measure of customer satisfaction, but it is how a company performs in critical customer touch points that drives the big picture view. Until you know how you are doing in those performance areas, you can't impact overall satisfaction, which means you can't impact your revenues.

Performance categories vary greatly from one company to another. While things like quality, delivery and customer service are constants for nearly any business, the type of business will determine what else needs to be measured. Often the data will also need to be segmented, to enable views by region, customer type, product line, and/or over time, to name a few options.



With rare exceptions, between 8 and 15 categories - or 32 to 60 questions - is adequate to assess the performance of a company. Fewer questions will provide inadequate data to work with. One can always think of more things to add to a survey, but it's vital to remember that if you cross the line from survey to endurance test, the response rate will begin to fall. But, if you control your appetite, maintain the proper range of questions, and be certain you have the ability to segment the results, you will have powerful tools with which to strengthen and grow your business.

Problem Identification

Knowing what is happening with your customer base as a whole is a vital first step, but that's all it is - a first step. To be able to truly generate meaningful and enduring change, you need to be able to understand - and respond to - what is happening at the individual and account levels.

The sample charts on this page show you a few examples of what can be done to provide a more detailed view of the aggregate response data. The "Dot Charts" are each designed to help point you in the direction of what are often referred to as "ticking time bombs", enabling you to fine tune and personalize your customer satisfaction initiatives.

By Account Revenue

Legend
Totally Dissatisfied ●
Somewhat Dissatisfied ⊙

InfoQuest Business Process Review

Name	Company	Account Revenue	Overall Satisfaction	Ease of Doing Business	Billing and Invoicing	Pricing	Communication	Customer Impressions	Sales Performance	Delivery	Management Interactions	Ordering	Customer Service
Day, Neil	Crest Lifts Ltd	£3,200,000											
Evans, Nathan	Metro Lifts	£2,300,000						●	●				
Thomas, Doug	Dewcroft Engineering	£1,700,000											
Graham, Peter	Abbey Lifts Ltd	£1,200,000											
Austin, Fran	Fujitec (UK) Ltd	£1,115,000											
Oxley, Frank	Saxon Lifts Ltd	£1,107,000											
McNair, Brian	Schindler Ltd	£950,000						⊙					
Bryant, Stephen	Abbey Langham Lifts Ltd	£815,000		⊙									
Edwards, Frank	Associated Lift Services Ltd	£550,000	⊙	⊙	●					⊙	●		
Amor, Ben	Elite Elevators Ltd	£540,000											
James, Milton	Bardeck Lift Engineers Ltd	£510,000											
Martin, Fenton	D J Lifts Services	£490,000					⊙	●	⊙				
Davies, Paul	UK Lifts Company (Watford)	£485,000											
Fry, Michael	Leonard Lifts Ltd	£260,000		⊙									
Hunter, Alan	Apex Lift & Escalator	£174,000	⊙	●	⊙				⊙	⊙	⊙		
Stephenson, Michael	Premier Lifts Ltd (Rainham)	£165,000									⊙		
Young, Morris	Premier Lifts Service	£150,000											
Kane, Timothy	Accord Li												
Brown, Thomas	Gregson												
Gray, George	Thyssen												
Lee, Lawton	Cable Lift												
Nevill, Charles	Axis Elev												
Quaterman, Arthur	City Lifts												
Cox, Oliver	G M C												
Riley, Keith	Pickering												
Zwilling, Henry	Design S												
Williams, Loretta	Lift Servi												
Peters, Joan	Express												
Ross, Richard	Lutz Sou												
Booth, Andrew	L E S (Ly												
Johnston, Janet	County L												
Hall, Samuel	Rubax Lif												
Cole, Robert	Kone Lift												
Ives, Samuel	Monarch												
Quinn, Kenneth	Industrial												

By Customer

Legend
Totally Dissatisfied ●
Somewhat Dissatisfied ⊙

InfoQuest Business Process Review

Name	Company	Overall Satisfaction	Ease of Doing Business	Billing and Invoicing	Pricing	Communication	Customer Impressions	Sales Performance	Delivery	Management Interactions	Ordering	Customer Service
Amor, Ben	Elite Elevators Ltd											
Austin, Fran	Fujitec (UK) Ltd											
Booth, Andrew	L E S (Lye)	⊙				⊙						
Brown, Thomas	Gregson & Bell											
Bryant, Stephen	Abbey Langham Lifts Ltd		⊙									
Cole, Robert	Kone Lifts Ltd					⊙						
Cox, Oliver	G M C								⊙			
Davidson, Liam	Britton Price Ltd											
Davies, Paul	UK Lifts Company (Watford)											
Day, Neil	Crest Lifts Ltd											
Edwards, Frank	Associated Lift Services Ltd	⊙	⊙	●					⊙	●		
Evans, Nathan	Metro Lifts						●	●				
Felstead, Doug	Key Elevators Ltd										⊙	
Fox, Graham	Morris Vermaport						⊙	⊙				
Fry, Michael	Leonard Lifts Ltd		⊙									
Graham, Peter	Abbey Lifts Ltd											
Gray, George	Thyssen Lifts & Escalators Ltd		⊙									
Hall, Samuel	Rubax Lifts Ltd					⊙						
Hunter, Alan	Apex Lift & Escalator	⊙	●	⊙				⊙	⊙	⊙		
Ives, Samuel	Monarch Lifts Ltd					⊙						
James, Milton	Bardeck Lift Engineers Ltd											
Johnston, Janet	County Lift Services											
Kane, Timothy	Accord Lift Services	●	●			⊙						
King, Jason	Temple Lifts Ltd											
Lawson, Maurice	Amalgamated Lifts Ltd										⊙	⊙
Lee, Lawton	Cable Lifts											
Martin, Fenton	D J Lifts Services					⊙	●	⊙				
McNair, Brian	Schindler Ltd						⊙					
Nevill, Charles	Axis Elevators Ltd				⊙		⊙	⊙		⊙		⊙
Norton, Bruce	Independent Lift Services Ltd											
Osbourne, Philip	Hammond & Champness Ltd											
Oxley, Frank	Saxon Lifts Ltd											
Patterson, Steve	Liftwise Ltd					⊙						
Peters, Joan	Express Evans Ltd											
Quaterman, Arthur	City Lifts Ltd											
Quinn, Kenneth	Industrial Lift Services Ltd											

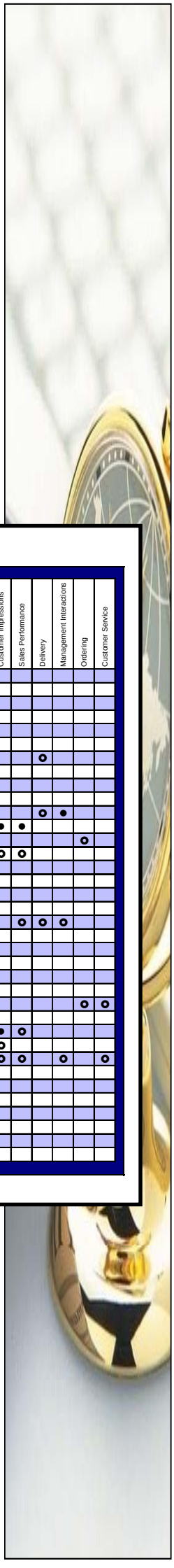
By Potential Revenue

Legend
Totally Dissatisfied ●
Somewhat Dissatisfied ⊙

InfoQuest Business Process Review

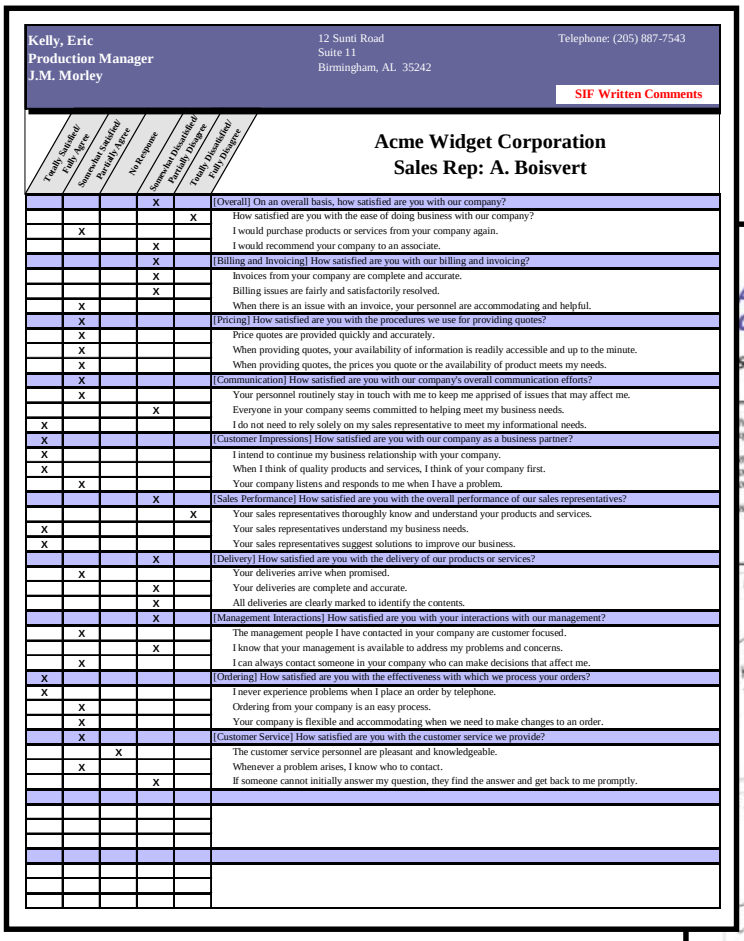
Company	Revenue	Pene-tration	Account Potential	Overall Satisfaction	Ease of Doing Business	Billing and Invoicing	Pricing	Communication	Customer Impressions	Sales Performance	Delivery	Management Interactions	Ordering	Customer Service
Dewcroft Engineering	£1,700,000	30%	£5,666,667											
Crest Lifts Ltd	£3,200,000	80%	£4,000,000											
Associated Lift Services Ltd	£550,000	20%	£2,750,000	⊙	⊙	●								
Abbey Langham Lifts Ltd	£815,000	30%	£2,716,667		⊙									
Metro Lifts	£2,300,000	100%	£2,300,000											
Bardeck Lift Engineers Ltd	£510,000	25%	£2,040,000											
Apex Lift & Escalator	£174,000	10%	£1,740,000	⊙	●	⊙								
Schindler Ltd	£950,000	60%	£1,583,333											
Abbey Lifts Ltd	£1,200,000	80%	£1,500,000											
Fujitec (UK) Ltd	£1,115,000	80%	£1,393,750											
Saxon Lifts Ltd	£1,107,000	80%	£1,383,750											
UK Lifts Company (Watford)	£485,000	40%	£1,212,500											
Elite Elevators Ltd	£540,000	66%	£818,182											
Industrial Lift Services Ltd	£63,500	10%	£635,000											
Leonard Lifts Ltd	£260,000	50%	£520,000		⊙									
Premier Lifts Ltd (Rainham)	£165,000	33%	£500,000											
D J Lifts Services	£490,000	100%	£490,000					⊙						
Independent Lift Services Ltd	£52,000	15%	£346,667											
Lift Services Brighton	£86,500	25%	£346,000						⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙	
Accord Lift Services	£132,000	40%	£330,000	●	●			⊙						
Premier Lifts Service	£150,000	50%	£300,000											
Thyssen Lifts & Escalators Ltd	£119,000	50%	£238,000		⊙									
Cable Lifts	£106,000	50%	£212,000											
Gregson & Bell	£131,000	80%	£163,750											
G M C	£91,000	80%	£113,750							⊙				
Design Services Ltd	£89,000	80%	£111,250											
Axis Elevators Ltd	£97,000	90%	£107,778				⊙		⊙	⊙		⊙		⊙
Yorkshire Lift Services Ltd	£53,000	50%	£106,000											
City Lifts Ltd	£93,000	100%	£93,000											
Kone Lifts Ltd	£73,000	80%	£91,250					⊙						
Pickerings Lifts	£89,000	100%	£89,000											
Express Evans Ltd	£86,000	100%	£86,000											
Lutz Southern E&E	£82,000	100%	£82,000											

Additional sorts by region, sales rep, service organisation, factory or anything else you may need are available for the asking.



Individual Customer Response Detail

While the Problem Identification Dot Charts point you in the direction of issues within specific accounts, the forms shown on this page take insight to the next level by providing the full array of response detail for each individual customer. One Individual Response Sheet (below, left) is produced for every survey respondent. On average, 60% of those persons will provide additional, open-ended written comments (below right). The array of insights can be alternately enlightening, amusing and sometimes downright frightening.



Kelly, Eric
Production Manager
J.M. Morley

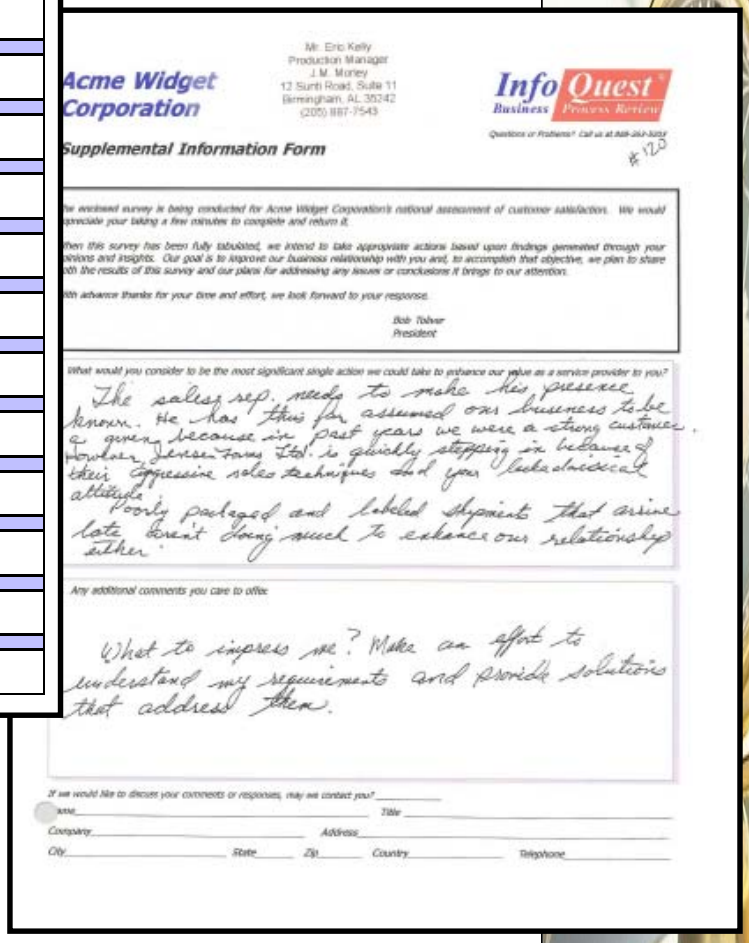
12 Sunti Road
Suite 11
Birmingham, AL 35242

Telephone: (205) 887-7543

SIF Written Comments

Acme Widget Corporation
Sales Rep: A. Boisvert

Totally Satisfied/ Fully Agree	Somewhat Satisfied/ Partially Agree	No Response	Somewhat Dissatisfied/ Partially Disagree	Totally Dissatisfied/ Fully Disagree	
		X			[Overall] On an overall basis, how satisfied are you with our company?
			X		How satisfied are you with the ease of doing business with our company?
X					I would purchase products or services from your company again.
		X			I would recommend your company to an associate.
		X			[Billing and Invoicing] How satisfied are you with our billing and invoicing?
		X			Invoices from your company are complete and accurate.
		X			Billing issues are fairly and satisfactorily resolved.
X					When there is an issue with an invoice, your personnel are accommodating and helpful.
X					[Pricing] How satisfied are you with the procedures we use for providing quotes?
X					Price quotes are provided quickly and accurately.
X					When providing quotes, your availability of information is readily accessible and up to the minute.
X					When providing quotes, the prices you quote or the availability of product meets my needs.
X					[Communication] How satisfied are you with our company's overall communication efforts?
X					Your personnel routinely stay in touch with me to keep me apprised of issues that may affect me.
		X			Everyone in your company seems committed to helping meet my business needs.
X					I do not need to rely solely on my sales representative to meet my informational needs.
X					[Customer Impressions] How satisfied are you with our company as a business partner?
X					I intend to continue my business relationship with your company.
X					When I think of quality products and services, I think of your company first.
X					Your company listens and responds to me when I have a problem.
		X			[Sales Performance] How satisfied are you with the overall performance of our sales representatives?
				X	Your sales representatives thoroughly know and understand your products and services.
X					Your sales representatives understand my business needs.
X					Your sales representatives suggest solutions to improve our business.
		X			[Delivery] How satisfied are you with the delivery of our products or services?
X					Your deliveries arrive when promised.
		X			Your deliveries are complete and accurate.
		X			All deliveries are clearly marked to identify the contents.
		X			[Management Interactions] How satisfied are you with your interactions with our management?
X					The management people I have contacted in your company are customer focused.
		X			I know that your management is available to address my problems and concerns.
X					I can always contact someone in your company who can make decisions that affect me.
X					[Ordering] How satisfied are you with the effectiveness with which we process your orders?
X					I never experience problems when I place an order by telephone.
X					Ordering from your company is an easy process.
X					Your company is flexible and accommodating when we need to make changes to an order.
X					[Customer Service] How satisfied are you with the customer service we provide?
	X				The customer service personnel are pleasant and knowledgeable.
X					Whenever a problem arises, I know who to contact.
		X			If someone cannot initially answer my question, they find the answer and get back to me promptly.



Mr. Eric Kelly
Production Manager
J.M. Morley
12 Sunti Road, Suite 11
Birmingham, AL 35242
(205) 887-7543

Acme Widget Corporation

InfoQuest Business Process Review

Supplemental Information Form

#120

The enclosed survey is being conducted for Acme Widget Corporation's national assessment of customer satisfaction. We would appreciate your taking a few minutes to complete and return it.

When this survey has been fully tabulated, we intend to take appropriate actions based upon findings generated through your opinions and insights. Our goal is to improve our business relationship with you and, to accomplish that objective, we plan to share both the results of this survey and our plans for addressing any issues or conclusions it brings to our attention.

With advance thanks for your time and effort, we look forward to your response.

Bob Tolver
President

What would you consider to be the most significant single action we could take to enhance our value as a service provider to you?

The sales rep. needs to make his presence known. He has thus far assumed our business to be a given because in past years we were a strong customer. However, Jensen Tools Ltd. is quickly stepping in because of their aggressive sales techniques and your lackadaisical attitude. Poorly packaged and labeled shipments that arrive late don't bring much to enhance our relationship either.

Any additional comments you care to offer:

What to impress me? Make an effort to understand my requirements and provide solutions that address them.

If we would like to discuss your comments or responses, may we contact you? _____

Name _____ Title _____

Company _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Country _____ Telephone _____

When it comes time for you to launch a survey, whatever kind it may be, make sure this level of detail is available. There are researchers out there who fail to provide this sort of basic information, sometimes due to self-imposed limitations, but more often than not due to their own inability to consistently provide it, or to be able to show you what to do with it. Those companies will usually provide a lot of rationalistic tofu to try to convince you that it's not needed. If they do, our advice would be to hang onto your wallets and run, don't walk, as far as you can, as fast as you can.

Bear in mind that with the right survey, producing a high response rate, the only opinions you'll have to be tabulated are those of your top accounts. Take a look at the samples above and consider how you'd feel if those were the responses of one of your top customers.

Then consider how you'd feel if you were denied access to those opinions.

Any questions?

Prioritisation Tools

Fact 1 - The average company will spend anywhere from 2 to 10 times the cost of the survey, and sometimes even more, addressing issues and needs identified by responding customers.

Fact 2 - The average survey will reveal far more opportunities for improvement than the average company is going to have the time or resources to even attempt to deal with. In determining what is going to be established as a priority, there will need to be a selection process

Fact 3 - The selection process better be right.

Fact 4 - So we developed the ***ProfitMax Strategic Profile***.

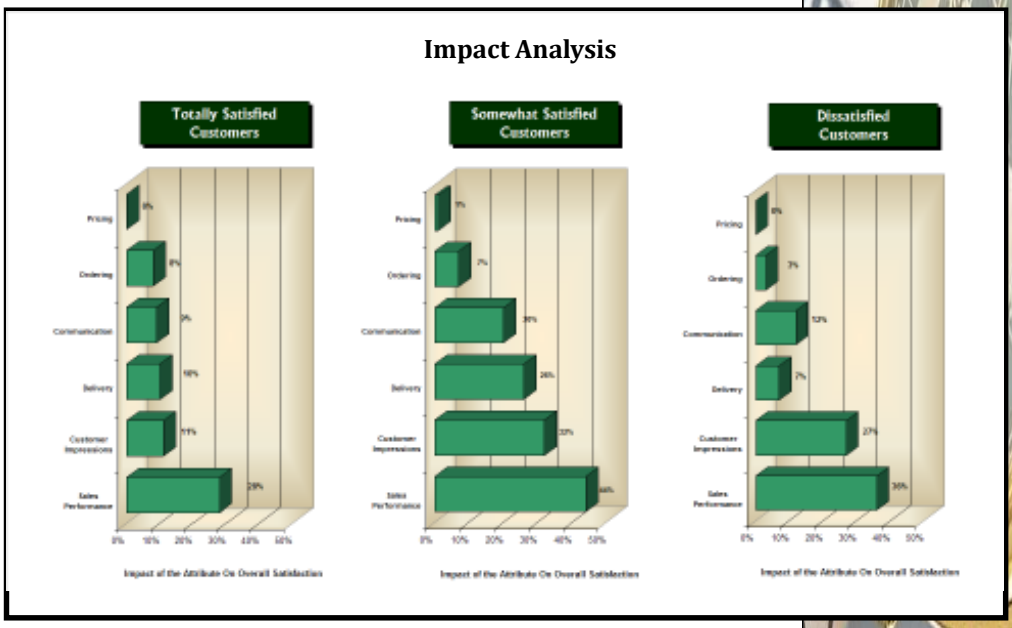
ProfitMax uses Neural Networks, a branch of the artificial intelligence technologies, to identify and quantity those performance areas which, if improved, will produce the greatest positive impact on overall satisfaction. It tells you where to place your time, energy and resources to gain the best possible return on invested resources. Where and how to get the biggest bang for the buck (or pound, euro, peso or yen).

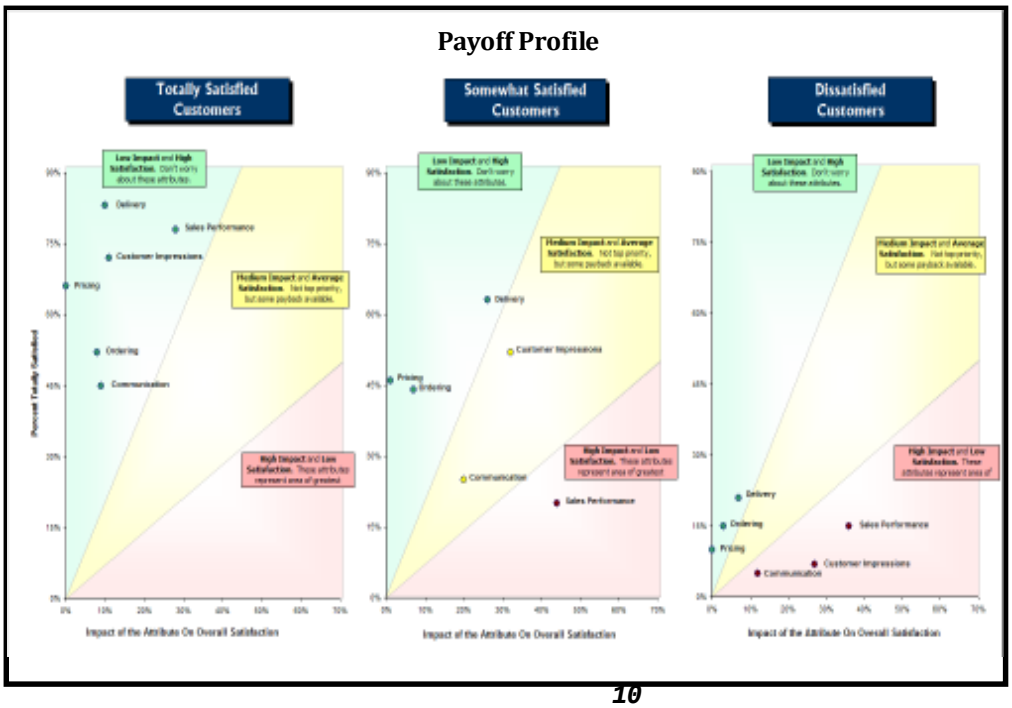
We can't explain how it all works in this short little space, but we can tell you that it represents the most advanced analytic survey tool on the planet, and we can tell you that no one else we know of offers it.

It's cutting edge.

It's one of a kind.

And, it has saved hundreds of companies the initial and ongoing costs of false starts, misdirected priorities and wrong guesses.



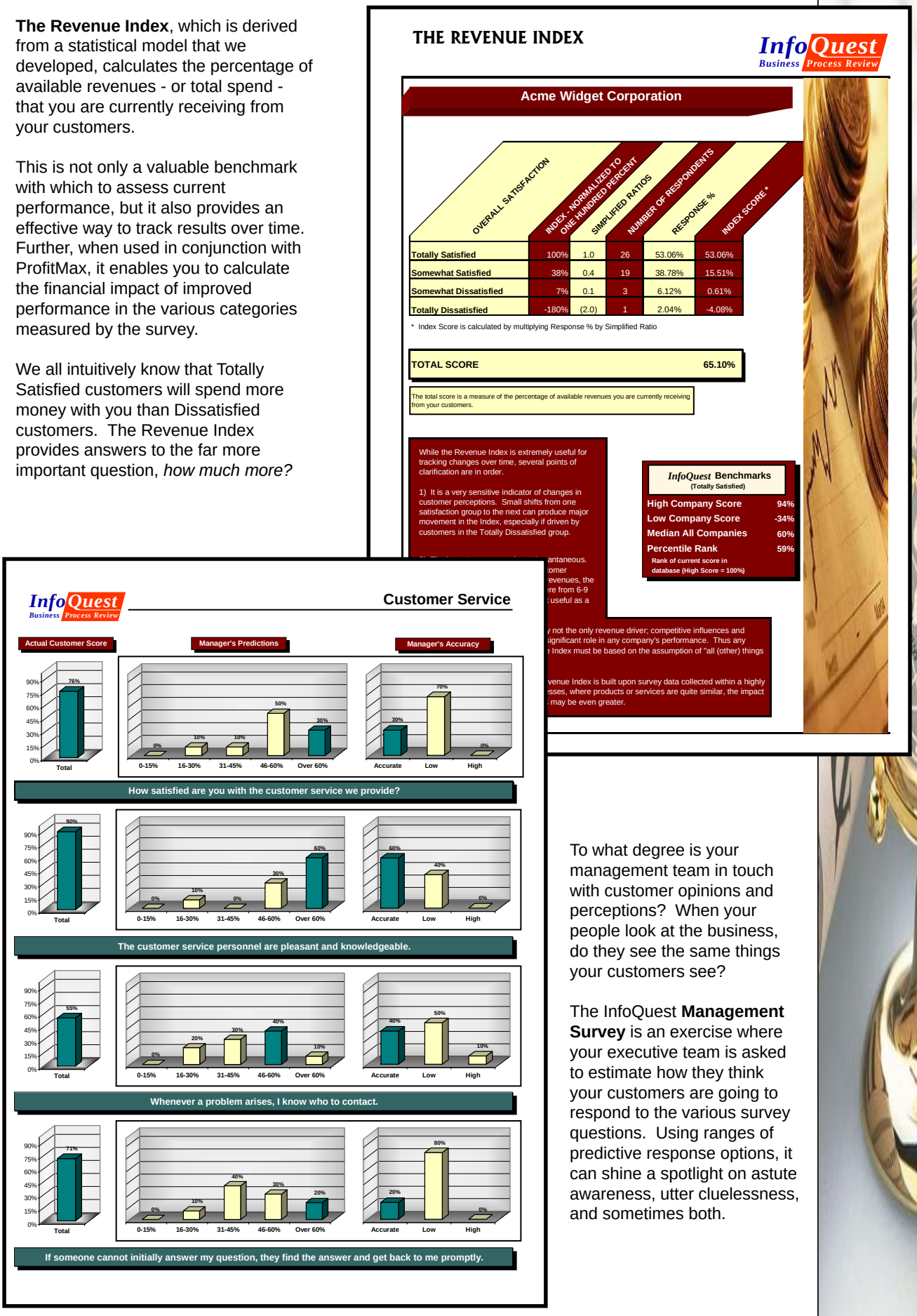


Analytical Tools

The Revenue Index, which is derived from a statistical model that we developed, calculates the percentage of available revenues - or total spend - that you are currently receiving from your customers.

This is not only a valuable benchmark with which to assess current performance, but it also provides an effective way to track results over time. Further, when used in conjunction with ProfitMax, it enables you to calculate the financial impact of improved performance in the various categories measured by the survey.

We all intuitively know that Totally Satisfied customers will spend more money with you than Dissatisfied customers. The Revenue Index provides answers to the far more important question, *how much more?*



THE REVENUE INDEX

InfoQuest Business Process Review

Acme Widget Corporation

OVERALL SATISFACTION	INDEX - NORMALIZED TO ONE HUNDRED PERCENT	SIMPLIFIED RATIOS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	RESPONSE %	INDEX SCORE *
Totally Satisfied	100%	1.0	26	53.06%	53.06%
Somewhat Satisfied	38%	0.4	19	38.78%	15.51%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	7%	0.1	3	6.12%	0.61%
Totally Dissatisfied	-180%	(2.0)	1	2.04%	-4.08%

* Index Score is calculated by multiplying Response % by Simplified Ratio

TOTAL SCORE 65.10%

The total score is a measure of the percentage of available revenues you are currently receiving from your customers.

While the Revenue Index is extremely useful for tracking changes over time, several points of clarification are in order.

1) It is a very sensitive indicator of changes in customer perceptions. Small shifts from one satisfaction group to the next can produce major movement in the Index, especially if driven by customers in the Totally Dissatisfied group.

InfoQuest Benchmarks (Totally Satisfied)

High Company Score	94%
Low Company Score	-34%
Median All Companies	60%
Percentile Rank	59%

Rank of current score in database (High Score = 100%)

InfoQuest Business Process Review

Customer Service

Actual Customer Score | Manager's Predictions | Manager's Accuracy

How satisfied are you with the customer service we provide?

The customer service personnel are pleasant and knowledgeable.

Whenever a problem arises, I know who to contact.

If someone cannot initially answer my question, they find the answer and get back to me promptly.

To what degree is your management team in touch with customer opinions and perceptions? When your people look at the business, do they see the same things your customers see?

The InfoQuest **Management Survey** is an exercise where your executive team is asked to estimate how they think your customers are going to respond to the various survey questions. Using ranges of predictive response options, it can shine a spotlight on astute awareness, utter cluelessness, and sometimes both.

Putting it All to Use

While ***InfoQuest*** has been described as the most cost effective, dynamic and actionable survey process in the world, the fact of the matter is, high response rates, candid data, attributable results and powerful analytical tools, by themselves, will not accomplish anything. For any survey, including ours, to successfully generate a return on investment, ***the results must be put to productive use***. To help assure that outcome, we developed the ***InfoQuest*** Brainstorming Workshop.

The Workshop provides our clients with a systematic, internalised approach to the development of a detailed and prioritised action plan. What clients find attractive is that the Workshop is not a forum for us to give you our opinions on what we think you should do. Rather, by acting as facilitators, we help your management team come up with the entire plan. In other words, the people who will be responsible for its implementation take charge of its design. This creates a bottom-up approach to the response plan, even though the survey itself is typically a top-down initiative.

The workshop normally runs 6-8 hours. Though the size of the company will dictate how many people should participate, best results are achieved by having between nine and eighteen people in attendance. The group should represent all operating areas of the business that impact and/or directly and routinely interact with your customers.

After a detailed review of the survey report, the team is broken into three groups, each of which is tasked with identifying 20 action items that, if successfully implemented, could be expected to improve customer satisfaction. Though some overlap or duplication is to be expected, most companies emerge with 40-50 unique action items.

After group review and discussion of each item, the lists are then subjected to a scoring mechanism that is later used to prioritise the larger overall game plan. The scoring is based on your analysis of the following criteria:



Action items being reviewed and scored at a workshop held for Manitowoc Crane Group, Singapore in September 2005.

1) **Speed of Change** (Time required to implement it. The more time required, the lower the score.)

2) **Cost of Change** (Considering the investment that will be required, the lower the cost, the higher the score.)

3) **Benefit of Change** (To what degree can additional revenues be generated and/or existing costs lowered, thereby producing a direct return on investment?)

4) **Level of Approval Required** (This is customised for every client to reflect the relevant hierarchy, but the presumption is that where autonomy is indicated, the action item will proceed more quickly, less expensively and with a higher degree of "ownership".)

5) **Probability of Succeeding** (All things considered, what is the likelihood of the action actually succeeding? For example, an idea may score high on the previous four scales, but if the idea is contrary to the prevailing corporate culture, it may be unlikely to succeed, at least in the short run.)

Many of the ideas will be able to be put in place within days. Others may take weeks, even months to implement, but regardless of the time required, two certainties will emerge.

One, **the resulting action plan will have been designed and developed by your own management team, increasing their level of commitment and buy-in.**

Two, **each action item adopted will be in direct response to the voice of your customers.** The result is a program that elevates customer satisfaction from a general corporate objective to a specific and measurable action plan.



Critical Design Criteria

To get maximum utility and benefit from a customer satisfaction survey, the following elements, features and considerations need to be part of your design criteria.

A High Response Rate
Enabling you to get an accurate picture of the opinions of your top revenue accounts. As response rates fall below 50%, results tend to become increasingly dominated by “far end of the spectrum” responses - those who love you and those who are giving you one last chance to get it right. The silent majority, which no doubt represents the bulk of your business, remains silent.

Perceived Anonymity
When respondents believe, even suspect, that their identity is or may be known, seven out of ten respondents will not openly express negative opinions out of concern over possible ramifications.

Attributable Results
Not being able to determine who said what is like buying an automobile with no wheels. Yes, you have something, but it’s just not going to take you anywhere.

Influences on Accuracy Must be Eliminated
The effects of patterned responses, comparison of prior to current answers, interviewer-induced biases, low response rates, and the Cassandra Phenomenon all need to be mitigated or removed.

Unambiguous and non-Subjective Metric
Avoid numeric and alpha scales, as well as anything that may be open to interpretation. Focus on the one metric that has proven ties to economic performance - Totally Satisfied.

No Composite Scores
Avoid adding different responses together to create a “satisfaction index” or “composite” or anything else that dilutes or distracts actual responses. Totally Satisfied customers spend two and half times what a Somewhat Satisfied customer spends, and fourteen times what a Somewhat Dissatisfied customer spends. Looking at results in any other way is simply delusional.

Use a Categorical Question Structure
A combination of satisfaction questions and related questions or statements give you the benefit of performance benchmarks and the insight of drill-downs. In order to improve you need to know where you are and what needs to be done to change customer opinions.

Overall Satisfaction Question
Make sure you include one, and always place it at the end of the survey to ensure a well-considered and accurate response.

Keep it Actionable....
.....versus merely interesting. If you can’t actually do something with the responses you get, don’t waste time and money asking the question.

Prioritisation Tools
Understanding what customers think is only half the battle. Why they think it and what is most important to them is the other half. You’ll spend anywhere from 2-10 times the cost of the survey addressing the issues it identifies. Make sure you are addressing the right issues.

Understand the Results
Watch out for small amounts of information being wrapped around large amounts of fluff and filler. When the results are delivered, require guarantees that someone will be there to ensure that you understand what’s being delivered, and what to do with it.

Customers Only
Do not dilute your efforts and skew the results by including lost accounts and prospects in the survey. The latter have no basis on which to even answer the questions, and the damage has already been done with the former. Focus on current customers only.





The InfoQuest Group

InfoQuest North America
Baltimore, MD
Jacksonville, FL

Business Synergetics International
Nashville, TN
Tulsa, OK

InfoQuest CRM, Ltd.
Huddersfield, UK

Rehmann
Saginaw, MI

InfoQuest Surveys, Ltd.
Chesham, UK

InfoQuest Affiliated Offices
Aalen, Germany
Olgiate Molgora, Italy
Shenzhen, China

Strategic Partners
Orange Translations, Manila

World Headquarters
InfoQuest International
Woodbury, CT

For a detailed view and full explanation of our deliverables, a list of our clients and the industries we've worked in, or to simply learn a little more about us, please visit our web site at:

www.infoquestcrm.co.uk

InfoQuest® Business Process Review