

Customer / Stakeholder Satisfaction Research

Do you know how satisfied your customers / stakeholders are with your organisation and with the products and / or services you deliver? Are you concerned about the lack of complaints being received indicating that your customers may just be complacent?

Monitoring and measuring your customers' satisfaction on products and services you supply, is fundamental to client retention. Knowing the level of satisfaction enables effective strategic marketing decisions to be made to ensure products and services remain relevant to the market.

The ability of an organisation to differentiate itself from its competitors or similar service provider organisations has been the driving force of management since the inception of the modern economic era. Organisations have pursued various strategies including price and product / service differentiation and even disruption, but as service industries have grown, service has become an integral part of many product offerings. This quest has led to a need for organisations to be increasingly aware of service levels to pursue competitive advantage tactics by improving service excellence.

The major challenge underlying managing competitive advantage, is based on customer satisfaction. The remark 'What gets measured gets done' is still as pertinent as it ever was.

StratNovation research experts use the state of the art and widely accepted GAPS MODEL and the SERVQUAL measurement instrument of Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry. The true value of the model is the underlying scale construct, which portrays a subjective service evaluation in a distinctly objective manner.

The customer / stakeholder satisfaction measurement scale is based on two central constructs:

- *Perceptions:* These are traditionally measured in service quality measurement programmes. Measures of perception by themselves have underlying subjectivity in measurement. This makes the interpretation of results extremely difficult. Perceptions are the customer's experience with a product or service and are usually expressed in terms of the customer's view, image, impression and observation of the tangible and intangible elements of the product and / or service offering.
- *Expectations:* The inclusion of expectations in customer satisfaction measurement as an allied construct provides more insightful results which are significantly more actionable. In the service quality context, this means that the customers expect to receive a certain level of service quality from the service provider.


A typical Customer Satisfaction research assignment measures the information needed to drive sustainable competitive advantage in a structured and useful manner. This is achieved by measuring clients' perceptions and expectations of the organisation's performance against a range of product and service attributes. This allows the client to embark on a strategy of improving the organisation's image in the market place.

Customer Satisfaction Research is aimed at:


- identifying attributes of the product and service which will be most valued by customers;
- evaluating customer / stakeholder priorities regarding these attributes;

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- assessing customer / stakeholder perceptions and expectations of performance against competing suppliers; and
- identifying areas of opportunity to improve the value of product and /or services offered to customers.

Unlike most customer and stakeholder surveys, the customer, and not the research / survey service provider, determines the list of important criteria to measure. This is determined through preliminary research by conducting exploratory (unstructured) interviews with a select number of customers.


After providing a comprehensive, graphically illustrated research report, a full-day workshop is held to present the research outputs with a view to:

- developing a service delivery improvement plan as a strategic initiative within the strategic plan;
- establishing teams with responsibilities to take specific action on the low scores;
- developing specific customer value improvement objectives for each team to action; and
- setting a timescale for the development and implementation of the value improvement programme.


StratNovation's customer / stakeholder satisfaction research guides clients through the entire customer improvement process. The resultant report and recommendations will enable strategic decisions to be decisively made on, not only how specifically to improve customer / stakeholder satisfaction but also realise improved performance.

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