



August 2016 Client Newsletter

Dear Judi,

Most of you are aware of the importance of regular mystery shopping. But are you maximizing your investment by using the mystery shops and ensuing data in multiple ways?

Judi

Five Ways to Maximize your Mystery Shopping Results

1. Share with all appropriate departments. For example, if you are in marketing but the results could influence decisions in training... or Branch Administration... or Operations... or HR, share. That way the study will have more impact and more bang for the buck.
2. Share the details with those shopped. Those who performed well should receive positive feedback, even if it's only an "atta boy/girl". Those who did poorly should be corrected, in a positive manner of course. And those in between should receive both.
3. Compare the data results to prior periods to ascertain areas of improvement, or lack thereof. For example, if name usage has improved, why and how? And what does your organization need to do to increase name usage even more?
4. Plan training and coaching strategies to address the weaknesses identified during the shop.
5. Measure the customer experience continuously and in as many ways as your time and budget allows.

What are the Key Elements of Successful Mystery Shopping?

1. Identify the service elements that have the biggest impact on customer satisfaction and customer behavior.
2. Devise scenarios that capture the typical customer journey, all the way from simple to complex inquiries.
3. Use the smartest techniques to analyse the findings and deliver actionable insights.
4. Set out strong business-focused recommendations that demonstrate a clear return on investment (ROI).

By Chris White of GfK

Using Mystery Shopping to go beyond Voice of the Customer programs

One of the best approaches to understanding both internal and competitor processes is mystery shopping. Not only does mystery shopping allow companies to understand how their own staff are dealing with customers, but also allows companies to understand how competitors are dealing with new customer enquiries (i.e. switchers) and how they are handling their own customers (particularly those looking to leave).

Complaints and customer service:

Retaining customers through proactivity, collaboration and by putting the customer's best interests first is key to sustaining customer relationships. However, whilst it is critical to maintain strong customer relationships it is also very important that customers are handled correctly when things go wrong, or when a customer complains.

It is difficult to assess complaint handling through traditional 'voice of the customer' studies; however mystery shopping is one approach that clients have taken to understanding internal complaint procedures. Although, care is needed to ensure that fabricated complaints are not escalated beyond the front-line, more straight-forward complaints can be used to assess how staff deal with aggrieved customers; and therefore provide important insights into complaint handling.

Unfortunately, even loyal customers can have cause to complain and how the complaint is handled is key in preventing such customers from switching.

Switching:

The main focus of competitor mystery shopping in relation to switching is two-fold - firstly, an assessment of customer service and, secondly, an assessment of pricing and add-ons such as vouchers and reward schemes.

Add-ons:

Mystery shopping is also ideal for assessing whether customers are delivered add-ons, such as high-street vouchers, reward schemes and entry into monthly draws. In some cases additional incentives, which are not advertised, can be understood and feed into client acquisition and retention strategies.

We know from 'voice of the customer' studies why customers stay and leave providers, and this data can be combined with mystery shopping to ensure that (a) the most important factors are being measured and (b) to understand how competitors perform in these areas.

For complete article, [click here](#).

By Gavin Sugden of GfK

Upcoming Events

The Strategy Institute will hold its Third Annual **Digital Customer Experience Strategies Summit** on Sept. 13-14 in Chicago. Visit [here](#) for more information.

Richmond Events will host the **Market Insight Forum USA** on Sept. 15th at the Harvard Club in NYC. For complete information, [click here](#).

ESOMAR will hold its annual **Congress** on Sept. 18-21 in New Orleans. For complete information, [click here](#).

MRA will host the **Corporate Researchers Conference** on Sept. 26-28 in San Francisco. Visit [here](#) for more information.

Worldwide Business Research's **Mobile Shopping Summit** will be held Oct. 17-19 in Indian Wells, CA. For more information, [click here](#).

IIR's **The Market Research Event 2016** will be held Oct 17-20 in Boca Raton, FL. For more information, [click here](#).

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