



HOW TO DESIGN A CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY



It's easy to go wrong with a customer satisfaction survey. After all, you're asking your customers to take time out of their day to critically appraise your company and your services while being frank in how you can improve.

Survey Monkey studied 100,000 surveys and discovered a typical respondent spends 1 minute 15 seconds on the first question, and an average of five minutes to get through ten questions. Any longer and people tend to race through questions, meaning the quality of the data suffers.

To help you create effective surveys, we've put together ten principles to keep in mind.

Ask for an overall rating first

Rather than pushing customers into the deep end with granular questions, start with a general rating of their overall experience. This ensures the rating isn't influenced by having respondents focus on details they might otherwise have disliked.

Limit your survey

Customer satisfaction surveys need to appeal to a broad audience. If your survey is too long, it'll only appeal to those with time to spare, potentially losing out on interesting insight from those wanting a short survey.

Offer small rating choices

A 1 to 5 scale is the most common scale for a reason: people find it easy to use. If your scale runs up to 10, you're inviting respondents to question the difference between 6 and 7, or 3 and 4... this can result in a rushed survey, sacrificing the accuracy of responses in favour of getting the survey done and dusted quickly.

Use emotive language

'How did you find post-application service?', 'poor', 'good', 'excellent'. What does 'excellent' actually mean? How can customers differentiate between a 'good' and 'excellent' service? Instead, use language such as 'Loved it!' or 'Wonderful!' for your top rating to help customers better define their experience.

Don't be intrusive

Avoid intrusive questions such as religion, income, age or gender. If you're after that data, those questions should be labelled as optional.

Avoid industry jargon

Unless your customers work in the same industry as you do, don't assume they understand jargon. Instead, use plain English as if you were speaking to a friend, rather than a colleague.



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Send surveys early

The best time to send a survey is right after the customer has had an experience with your business or brand. This ensures their emotions are fresh in their mind. The exception is when you're sending customers a survey on the long-term life of a service or product.

Don't hassle

In some circumstances you can remind customers that you recently sent them a satisfaction survey, but any more and you'll likely annoy them, resulting in a negative response.

Include open text fields

Open text fields give respondents the opportunity to express their personal opinions of your service without the confines of a 1 to 5 rating. It also opens the possibility of getting some unique praise that you could feature as a review on your website.

Say thank you

The more personal the better, ideally in person should you ever have a meeting with that customer. An email will be fine too, but make sure it doesn't come across as a standard robotic message.

If you apply these ten principles to your next customer satisfaction survey, you'll be well on your way to delighting your customers and receives great feedback.