

Customer Insight Services

Understanding your customers' perceptions of you, their needs, and their expressed and unexpressed wants can help reinforce corporate strengths, expose areas for improvement and identify new opportunities. Channel Marketing Group offers a number of research strategies to capture customer input. Each approach is designed to address specific issues. At times it is appropriate to combine multiple approaches to gain a broader perspective, enabling qualitative and quantitative views from the applicable audience.

Services

1. Customer Perception Survey

Your customer's have a perception of their needs, your ability to meet their needs and your competitor's ability to meet their needs. This perception is built upon an array of interactions and experiences that they have had with you and distributors in your marketplace. This perception, or intuitive recognition, becomes their reality of your organization. To differentiate yourself it is important to understand, and then influence, your customers' perceptions of you.

Our Customer Perception Survey asks respondents to rate the importance of various attributes to them. It then asks them to rate your performance on these attributes as well as the performance of the distributors in your marketplace whom they purchase from. We've identified almost 75 attributes covering various aspects of the business and recommend that you select no more than 30. Don't have an attribute you want? Not a problem, we can add it. Opportunities for open-ended input are also provided.

The Customer Perception Survey is self-administered. We provide you with a database. You print, mail, data enter the responses and return the database. We then analyze and provide a report.

The Customer Perception Survey can also be launched online, although we ask that you limit the competitors that your customers can rate.

2. Customer Satisfaction Survey

The traditional Customer Satisfaction Survey asks customers how "satisfied" they are with your service. Satisfaction surveys focus on whether the services that you offer are deemed "acceptable" to customers. These relatively simplistic surveys typically ask customers to rate various interaction points that they have with your company, or with a department. Weighting can be utilized to develop a Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) which can then be used to monitor performance and as an internal performance metric.

Many companies solicit customer feedback through a customer satisfaction survey, even though satisfaction is typically driven by more event-oriented encounters rather than an accumulation of experiences.

Customer satisfaction surveys can be conducted via hardcopy or online. CMG has developed satisfaction surveys for a number of clients, hence is able to cost-effectively deploy a "quick" customer satisfaction survey.

3. Customer Satisfaction Initiative

Our unique Customer Satisfaction Initiative combines the ability to ask satisfaction questions for unique encounters, a promotional initiative and the opportunity to capture product input and possibility creating product leads, turning the effort into a revenue and profit generator.

This approach, pioneered by retailers, provides a PIN number to customers through either an invoice or at the point of sale. Customers visit a website, enter their PIN and then complete a survey which is comprised of satisfaction questions tailored to their experience. It asks them if they have purchased products from selected suppliers, inquires about their knowledge of the manufacturers' products, and if they would like to learn more about some of the manufacturer's new products. At the conclusion of the survey, customers are asked if they would like to enter a sweepstakes drawing. Clients have conducted drawings monthly and at the conclusion of the program (typically a quarter).

On a monthly basis, CMG provides the leads to the client and analyzes responses, providing a 20-25 page monthly satisfaction report with analysis.

We've deployed this strategy for an account twice in the past two years, each year generating over 500 product application leads.

4. Customer Panel

Some call these focus groups, others call them panels. Essentially it is pulling together a group of customers and asking them questions about your organization, services, or their needs. Depending upon market segment and topic, we may recommend inviting non-competing companies.

CMG's industry experience, coupled with an information gathering process to fully understand the topics you seek input, enables us to facilitate a productive session. Depending upon the type of session, number of people, location, level of interaction desired, we may record the session to ensure accurate note taking, take notes at the meeting via a colleague or use a focus group research center.

The customer panel concept can also be used for supplier panels and employee or strategic planning sessions.

5. Customer Interviews

Customer interviews can be very effective in gathering additional insights to develop or reaffirm a direction. These one-on-one discussions typically identify latent issues that an experienced interviewer can further question to reach core issues or pose potential alternatives/solutions to elicit a response.

Given our industry experience and a penchant to use industry terminology, a common frame of reference can facilitate gathering information.

Typically we correlate input received through either customer perception surveys or customer satisfaction surveys with some tele-interviewing or personal interviewing, enabling us to validate input. At the conclusion, overviews of the interviews, observations and recommendations are then shared with the client.

Depending upon a client's needs, CMG recommends the appropriate strategy. Fees are based upon audience size and the specific strategy.