



Tiina Nuum

9 WAYS TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER SERVICE WITH DATA



They seemed to be an ill-matched pair.

A soft and warm approach about how to make a customer happy. Something that can only be measured qualitatively.

And its counterpart - consisting of cold, hard numbers. Easily convertible into quantitative measures.

Today, customer service is more than smiling and being friendly, the practice has far evolved. Getting meaningful insights from data analytics has become an important priority in pursuits of improving customer service. But data-driven decision-making is still something more talked about than practiced.

According to a [report by Forbes Insights and SAS \(2016\)](#), the benefits of brands using the customer service data analysis are wide-ranging. For nearly three in 10 enterprises, data-driven customer experiences are delivering a significant shift in elevating customer experiences.

The survey identified three categories of organizations:

52%

Leaders

“a welldeveloped and designed enterprise data analytics effort enables us to deliver a superior customer experience”

34%

Explorers

“We are rapidly and systematically developing data analytics capabilities to improve our customer experience”

14%

Laggards

“We have data analytics capabilities in many parts of the organization, and are beginning to apply these analytics to improve the customer experience”;

or

“are still developing data analytics, and have difficulty providing consistent customer experience”;

or

“are not using analytics for customer experience at this time”

Additionally, 42% of respondents not as advanced with data-driven customer experience expect to catch up within the next two years.

Those numbers indicate a fast moving pace. Advancements in technology and smart employers are encouraging managers to trust data.

Are you one of the Leaders? Don't get left behind.

Why should you take service levels seriously?

According to studies, customers don't leave over price.

The reason customer leave you is You.

CLICK TO TWEET 

[eMarketers Research from 2016](#) states that 54% of millennials said they stopped doing business because of poor customer service. Additionally, 50% of Gen Xers and 52% of baby boomers felt the same way.

[The 2017 Microsoft State of Global Customer Service](#) report says that customer service impacts brand choice and loyalty for 96% of consumers around the globe.

So make sure your customer care is your priority.

How data can improve customer service?

Let's get busy with 8 ways in which data puts you in control of your service success.

I

DATA- BASED PERSONAL AND CUSTOMIZED SERVICE



1

DATA = A KEY FOR COMMUNICATION DESIGN

Data helps your customer service executives adjust their mindset so that they give **100 percent of their focus to that client**, and to the current situation. They would not need to ask as many questions, because they already have a lot of answers. Gathering and dashboarding data also makes it easy to improve the service with each interaction.

If your staff has the right data in front of them, they can communicate successfully, even with passive customers.

2

OFFER PERSONAL & CUSTOMIZED SERVICE

Consumers and stakeholders today are expecting that companies and institutions provide a **highly personalized and optimal experience** uniquely relevant to them.

Data helps to think about all your customers not only the majority. Knowing your customer's profile, individual history and touch points allow you to serve them accordingly. Once you have the data, you will know if the customer is there for problem solving or ready to take that next step in your customer journey.

Knowing the reason of the visit, you can also segment your customers and direct them to the employees who are especially good with VIP customers or new accounts.

3

CREATE THE "WOW" EXPERIENCE

Don't think of your customer service in terms of need or problem solving. For the people who take the time to personally come to your location, come out with some value-adding activities. Make them want to bring their children or surprise them with a cup of fresh coffee, gifts or vouchers.

Data not only gives you an opportunity to manage customer expectations, but also exceed them. It is actually easy to **go the extra mile with customer service** if you and your team leverage your creativity. Here is one example.

[A Pizza Hut customer who ordered on a regular basis had suddenly gone missing in action.](#) The Pizza Hut branch was concerned about its loyal client and called him, asking if he was okay, as he had not ordered from them for over two weeks. To his surprise, they also offered him a complimentary “welcome back” pizza. He did not hesitate to share the story on Facebook.



Be the reason someone smiles today.

CLICK TO TWEET 

Data category to track for these actions – VISITOR INSIGHTS

- Reasons of visit
 - Visitor data (name, email, sex, payment method)
- Visitor profile – new account, support, VIP support, campaign.
 - Personal history
- In case of B2B it may be size of your customer, the industry they are in, location, key personnel contacts (decision maker, user, etc.)

II A HIGH-PERFORMING FRONT-LINE

4

INCREASE EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION & ENHANCE PRODUCTIVITY

No matter the industry, we all operate in an environment that depends on the ability to manage people and relationships. In some ways, technology is decreasing customer interactions. Many services are now cloud-based and customers are able to do more themselves. While basic issues are being handled by technology, the service employees start to encounter more complicated

challenges. This means that they need to be excellent problem solvers and have a broader range of skills.

Great customer experience starts with great support to your front-line team. Success is impossible to pull off and sustain in a leaderless vacuum.

Do you know, which teammate has provided the most satisfied customer service during the week?

Even if you are super happy with your team's performance, do not ignore them - even the best require regular maintenance, attention, and recognition. Doing so keeps the team fresh and moving forward.

For excellent service you need to be tracking efficiency, feedback and reward your people. Data enables you to set measurable KPIs for staff performance reviews.

5

EMPOWER YOUR CUSTOMER-FACING STAFF

How can data help make employees accountable for the delivery?

By learning who the visitors are and why they came in, your service team has the freedom to easily manage their workflow, plan follow-ups, and essentially make the most out of each visit.

**You do not need
permission from a boss
to make a customer
feel great.**

BILLQUISENG
 .com

The weekly and monthly overviews give your staff a broader picture and teamwork goals. Make your employees feel valued. With their feedback and input to your data, they can generate new **ideas for creating better customer service**, how to improve efficiency and standards and create a better work environment. Provide them with information and your workforce may put forward significant innovation.

6

OFFER AN APPROPRIATE POST-SERVICE

In the same manner, make your customers feel valued by giving them an opportunity for feedback and input. When an activity is concluded, visitors should have an **opportunity to leave feedback**. Based on feedback data you can provide post-service, address complaints and resolve short and long-term issues with customers. And also, improve your service and offerings based on their input.

Data category to track for these actions – EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

- Individual performance
 - Time allocation
- Workload distribution

III DELIVER CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE CONSISTENTLY

7

FORECAST DEMAND MORE ACCURATELY

Data combined with technology provides you **service intelligence**, which helps to optimize daily operations in different levels.

With changing lifestyles, customers seem increasingly less tolerant of having to wait. According to [academic studies](#), “when customers perceive the wait duration to be too long, it influences their evaluation of the overall service quality thus influencing their satisfaction with the service and further damaging their loyalty.

Some customers have pre-booked appointment, some just walk-in. For excellent face-to-face experiences, you must have the right staff in the right place at the right time. **Real-time, actionable data** gives you an opportunity to reorganize waiting list and distribute work between staff.

You will gain a more efficient throughput of customers. Data reports also give you automatic numbers for staff planning for every weekday or season and help to plan service trainings.

8

FIND THE BEST LAYOUT PLAN

Understanding customer flow and the common patterns that emerge when customers interact with your business based on its **layout and design** is also very important to your customer service management strategy. Just like there is technology to track the digital customer flow and online shopping behavior, there are solutions that provide you with data to help you craft your customer experience by testing out and tracking different approaches and floor plans.

Do you know where your bottlenecks are?

Data gives you insight how to consolidate services, remove physical barriers and create a clear and easy to use environment. Sometimes it is easy to make near real-time improvements to service delivery and create cost savings.

9

COMPARE & OPTIMIZE LOCATIONS

Within a multi-branch enterprise, you have to deal with **brand equity, global trends and offer great services in high quantity**. It is impossible to manage branches effectively without having an overall understanding of their performance.

As a professional, you know the trends of your industry but each season, campaign, and visitor is unique.

With hard data it is easy to compare performance reviews, service management, daily operations, and optimize budgets. Based on data, you may also want to iterate the offering of a single branch to anticipate visitors' needs.

Data category to track for these actions – SERVICE METRICS

- Foot traffic
- Wait time
- Real-time “People in queue”
 - Service time
 - Hourly visitors
- Number of walk-outs

Why do customer service decisions need to be backed by numbers?

It is not about data, but service intelligence - about having useful information that allows you to deliver excellent services, make ongoing improvements and cut costs.

What’s the direct result of implementing this data in your customer service strategy?



Efficiency + quicker service + easier work = satisfaction

According to the old wisdom, acquiring a new customer is seven times more expensive than additional sales to the current customer. [As per Forbes](#), a 5% increase in customer retention can increase a company's profitability by 75%. Taking into account the entire life cycle of a customer relationship, keeping the current customer becomes even more profitable.

The managers know, that [engaged customers generate 22- 46% more revenue \(Gallup Poll 2015\)](#), depending on the industry.

Conclusion

Customer service data has become a quality barometer. Companies who equip their employees with tools that provide in-depth customer data stand apart.

Data helps to enhance the productivity and profitability of both employees and customers, improve the interactions and drive innovation.

If it's your task to manage the balance between efficiency and the personal touch that keeps the customers engaged, let data help you with this.

Start developing your **data-driven customer service strategy** with asking:

What is your most important data to effect change?

To avoid getting overwhelmed, you need do some planning upfront and define the data that will most impact your business. That will guide what you track and what tools you're going to use to measure and improve that number.

What else do you need to get started?

- A right mindset. Your organization needs to be (re-)oriented towards the needs of the customer at every level.
- Technology, that means a **customer service analytics'** tool to gather, process, analyze, and present data.

It's actually a no-brainer to set it up.

Why don't you start gathering information with **Qminder** today and in a couple of weeks time you will see how data transforms into insights and you have your trends visually in front of you for you to make **intelligent business decisions**.