



The Power of Instant Customer Feedback

A publication by:

LRS Long Range Systems, LLC

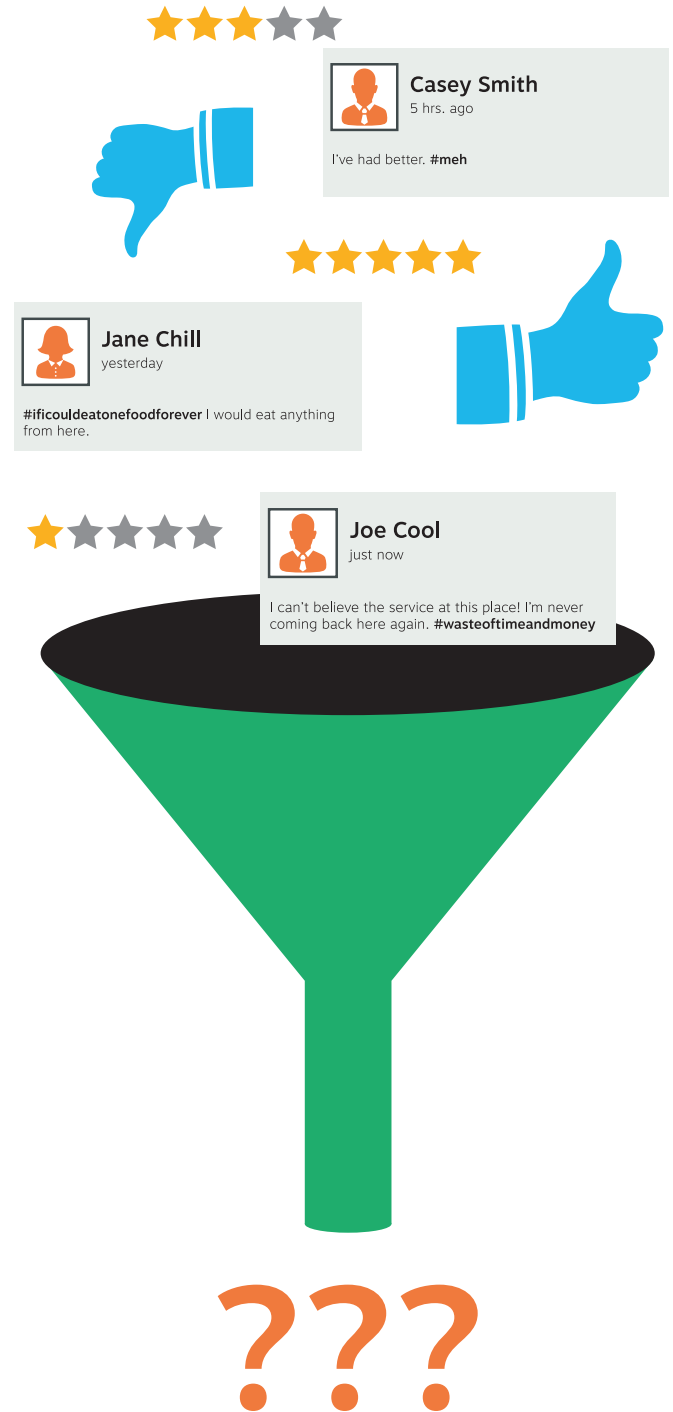
Downloaded from Long Range Systems UK Offices | WWW.LRSPAGERS.CO.UK

Introduction

If there's one unavoidable reality in any customer-oriented business, it's this: No matter how good you are, you won't make everyone happy all the time.

There's simply no getting around it. For example, restaurant customers are going to be unhappy, whether because the kitchen was slow, the server was rude, the wait was long, the restroom was dirty or someone put mayonnaise on their hamburger. In the hotel business, some customers will be unhappy about maid service, or a lack of towels at the pool.

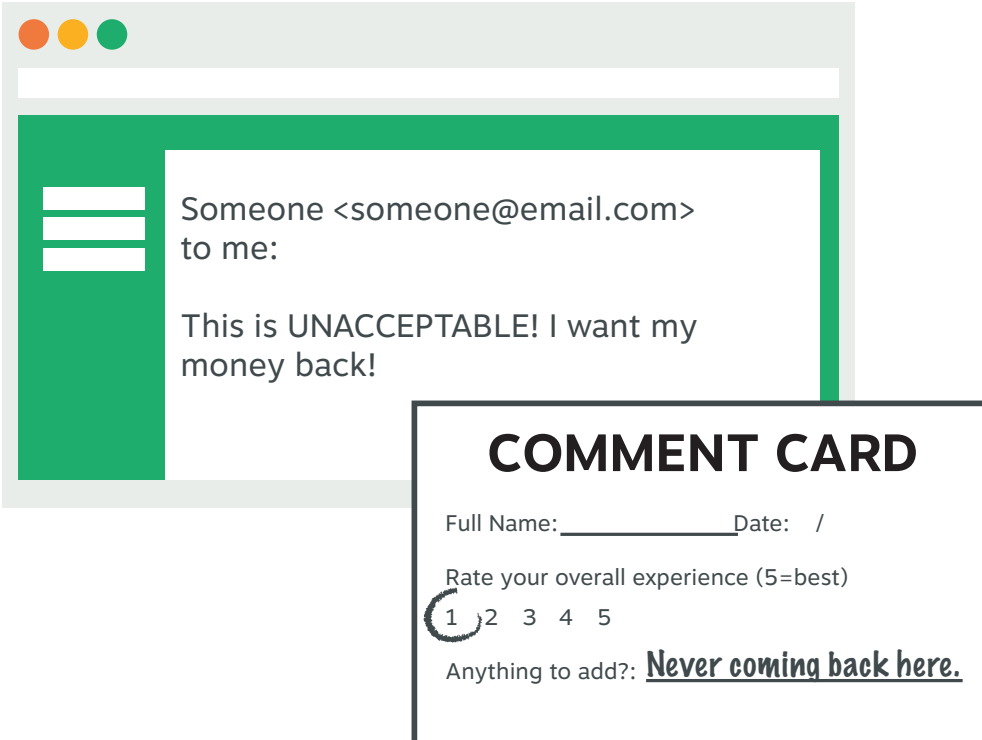
The question for you, as a business owner or manager in charge of the customer experience, is when – and from whom – do you want to hear about the negative experience?



Introduction (cont.)

Do you want to find out about it a few weeks later, after someone fishes a half-completed comment card out of the wooden box near your cash register? What about hearing about it in a flaming email to company headquarters, long after the angry customer has left your business, probably for the last time?

Would you rather wait to hear from the telemarketing firm you hired to survey a random sample of customers? Or, maybe you'll wait until a negative review pops up and gets circulated to thousands of people on social media?



The image shows a screenshot of an email and a comment card. The email, on the left, has a green header and a white body. The text of the email reads: "Someone <someone@email.com> to me: This is UNACCEPTABLE! I want my money back!". To the right of the email is a comment card with a black border. The card is titled "COMMENT CARD" in bold. Below the title, it has fields for "Full Name: _____ Date: /" and "Rate your overall experience (5=best)". The rating scale is "1 2 3 4 5", with the number "1" circled in black. Below the rating, it says "Anything to add?: Never coming back here.".

Introduction (cont.)

Of course, all the above are lousy options that leave you, the business owner or manager, with too little information about what made the customer unhappy and little to no ability to win that customer back.

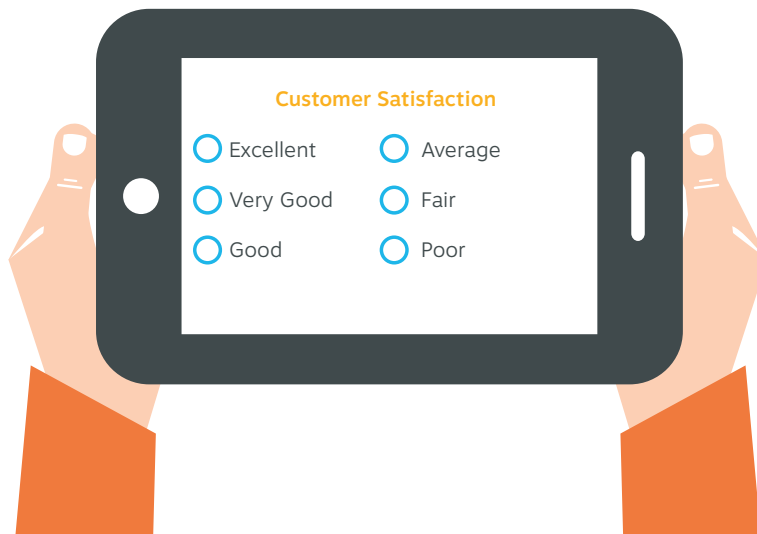
And, perhaps worst of all, none of those methods can help you fix whatever broke in your customer service process in order to prevent others from having the same negative experience.



Survey Tablets Provide Real-Time Answers

That's why businesses are increasingly turning to advanced technology that enables a real-time gauge of the customer experience.

Fully programmable and easy-to-use survey tablets are handed to customers at the time of engagement, whether that's during checkout or at the table with a check. Businesses have reported a response rate of 75 percent and up – far higher than the 3-5 percent return rate in other methods.



With any negative response, a manager can immediately view the result, giving him or her the opportunity to remedy the situation before the customer leaves.

More than that, survey tablets provide businesses with analytics and visibility into a broader landscape beyond the individual guest experience. Businesses can now see the bigger picture – patterns that might be hurting revenue or preventing growth.

In the following pages, we'll explore the many shortcomings of traditional survey methods and talk more about how today's technology helps businesses grow by getting more in sync with what customers want.

The Importance of Knowing What Customers Think About You

Think about the best dining experience you've ever had. What did it involve? Great food, obviously, but what else? Did the hostess greet you promptly? Did your waiter go out of his way to answer your questions? How fast was the service?

Now, think about a recent experience in a retail or hospitality environment. Were employees courteous? Did they answer all your questions? Was the staff attentive?

If not, you probably felt your experience was lacking – even if the product itself was outstanding.

That's because service is the most important element in any customer arena.



The Importance of Knowing What Customers Think About You (cont.)

Don't believe it? Check out these stats from a study conducted by Customer1.com:

- 89 percent of consumers will do business with a competitor following a negative customer service experience.
- 13 percent of unhappy customers will tell at least 20 people about their bad experience.
- 86 percent of consumers will abandon a business after a negative experience – a nearly 30-percent increase since 2007.
- And, now, consider that it's five times more expensive to secure a new customer than to keep an existing one.



People Love to Share Their Experiences – Especially Negative Ones

Humans are social creatures, and we like to share our experiences with others. This is especially true if the experience is bad. In fact, consumers are twice as likely to share a negative experience than a positive one, according to a 2012 customer service study by American Express. Another study, conducted by Accenture, found that it takes 12 positive experiences to make up for a single bad one.

Because in a world where a scathing social media review can go viral in a matter of hours, businesses that live and die by the customer's experience simply can't afford to risk bad reviews. Competitors are out there, just waiting to take the place of a business that falls out of favor.

It's certainly worth your while to keep a finger on the pulse of customer opinion, something business owners have long known. The trouble has been in gathering that critical information fast enough to do something with it.



The Trouble with Older Methods of Gathering Customer Opinion

For years, customer satisfaction measurement tools such as comment cards and online surveys were thrown into the mix as a way to gauge the guest experience and later adjust operations accordingly.

Those older, traditional methods – telephone surveys, online survey links and paper comment cards – historically have had major weaknesses that frequently run counter to your best interest.

ONLINE SURVEY LINKS: These are printed on receipts, but are often overlooked or seen as spam. Often, they're thrown away prior to the guest's departure from the establishment; therefore, participation rates are so low it's difficult to get the response rate needed to make statistically sound conclusions. Lastly, by the time the customer gets home and logs into your survey webpage, you've lost the chance to address any concerns immediately.

PARTICIPATE IN OUR ONLINE SURVEY AND GET A FREE APPETIZER!

FULL NAME*

EMAIL ADDRESS*

ZIP CODE

* REQUIRED

TAKE ME TO THE SURVEY!

The Trouble with Older Methods of Gathering Customer Opinion (cont.)

TELEPHONE SURVEYS: These have low response rates because, really, who has the time? And, the few responses you get will come too long after the customer's visit, greatly minimizing data quality.

PAPER COMMENT CARDS: The response rate is in the single digits, if you're lucky. Customers see paper comment cards as old-fashioned and tedious. Then you, the business owner, are left with manually inputting data if you want to create a database. Forget about it. One common problem posed by those methods is that, because the response rates are low, you usually hear only from outliers – those who are either giddy about their experience or extremely unhappy. It's not a representative sample.

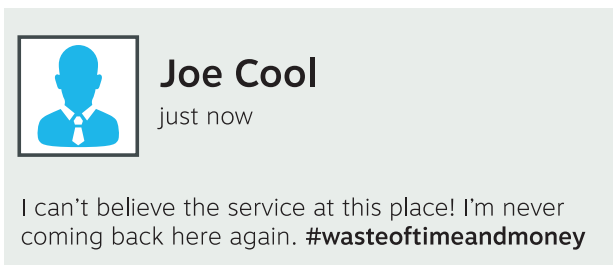



Secret Shoppers, Social Media Also Fail to Satisfy

That same issue plagues the use of secret shoppers to gather feedback. Managers who've used that method say the results are more critical than constructive. The shoppers are being paid for their work, so they don't necessarily approach the job with an open mind. Rather, they're hunting for things to criticize.

Yet another feedback option that has popped up in recent years is to dial into social media and find out what customers think. Keeping an eye on platforms like Yelp – and responding to reviews that get posted – is certainly advisable.

Increasingly, social media conversations are occurring in front of enormous audiences. Yelp alone has surpassed 100 million web users per month. And what about Facebook? As of this year, it has more than 1.3 billion active users, some number of whom are your customers and each with an audience of hundreds.



 **Joe Cool**
just now

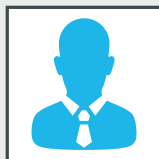
I can't believe the service at this place! I'm never coming back here again. **#wasteoftimeandmoney**



Secret Shoppers, Social Media Also Fail to Satisfy (cont.)

So, staying aware of what's said about you on social media is a good idea. Relying on it for feedback, however, is a really bad idea. Once a negative review is posted, there's almost nothing you can do to keep it from spreading. You're simply left in damage-control mode.

A wiser path would be to keep the damage from occurring in the first place.



Carl Complainer

just now

Should've went with the reviews. This place is horrible and I'm never coming back either.
#wasteoftimeandmoney



Tablet Surveys: A Proactive Approach to Customer Opinion

The best time to gauge customers' experience is right now – as the meal, hotel stay, spa session or retail visit is wrapping up – and the best way is with a customizable device that people already love to use.

Customer-oriented businesses of all types have found survey tablets a superior method for providing actionable data on the customer experience. Among the reasons:

INTRIGUING DESIGN:

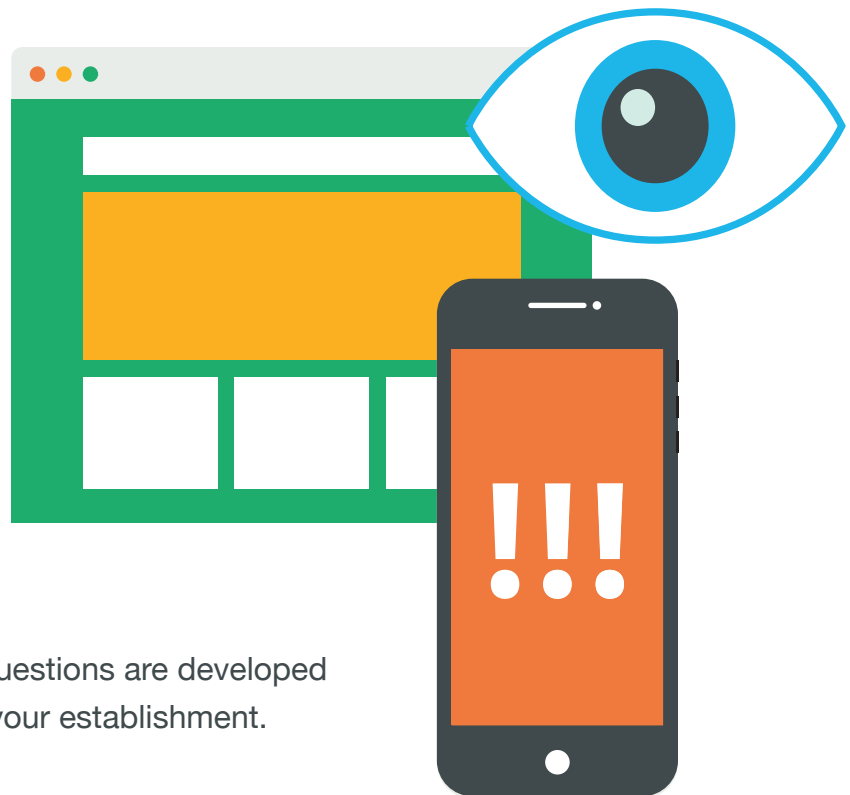
Customers are more likely to engage with a visually appealing digital survey and provide honest, anonymous feedback. That has been shown to produce a higher return rate of responses – 75 percent or more – that are truer to the consumer experience.

PROFESSIONALLY DESIGNED TEMPLATES AND QUESTIONS:

The targeted survey design and questions are developed specifically to meet the needs of your establishment.

INSTANT CUSTOMER FEEDBACK:

Answers are automatically uploaded, enabling you to look over responses immediately and make needed operational or staff changes.



Tablet Surveys: A Proactive Approach to Customer Opinion (cont.)

BONUS PROMOTIONAL FEATURES:

Tablets allow businesses to offer special discounts or advertise new menu items at the end of a survey to ensure repeat business and high guest satisfaction.



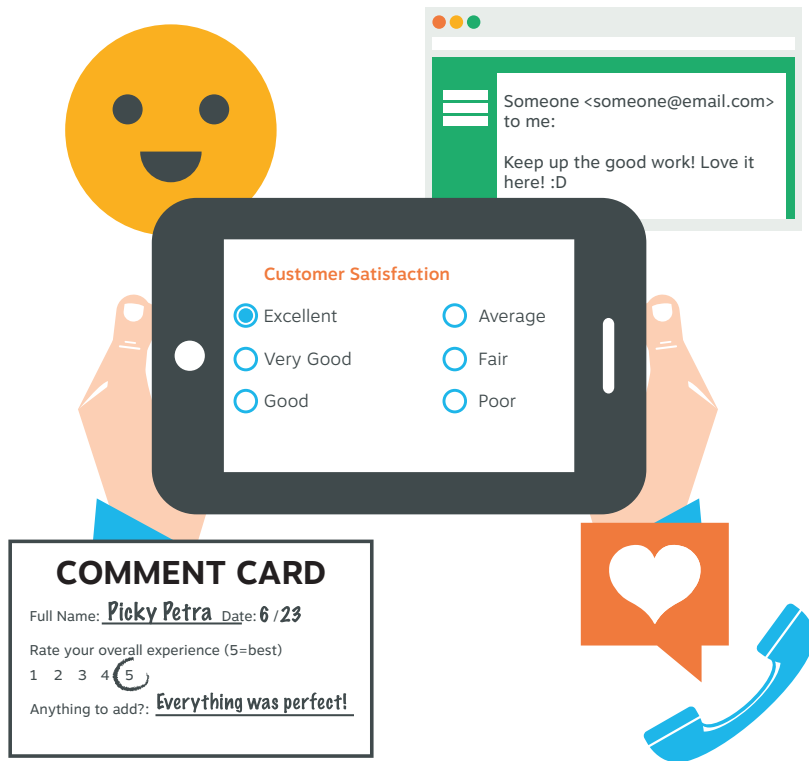
EASILY UPDATED: Survey tablets can be customized in any number of ways. Restaurant managers can even run multiple surveys, by shift or time of day, to measure different aspects of service (i.e. bar versus dining room), or questions to gauge interest in new menu items. Custom surveys create nearly limitless possibilities for feedback and insight.

MANAGER CONTROL: Managers have the power to view reports as often as they want. There's no more waiting for a third-party to process the information and send it over. With a survey tablet system, the manager is in complete control and the data is real-time.



The Best Way to Show Customers You Care

Perhaps most of all, tablet surveys are an easy way to ensure that every customer knows you care about the experience your business has provided. If they need to vent, you'll know it immediately – before you get “Yelped!” – and you'll have the actionable data you need to fix whatever angered them. The end result is a business better equipped to serve up a great customer experience – and a customer who truly appreciates it.



TO REQUEST MORE INFORMATION ABOUT GUEST MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENT, CONTACT AN LRS EXPERT.

LRS UK | +44(0)1782 537000