

Ask Afrika Orange Index: Feeling customer service

By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

13 Nov 2017

Only emotionally satisfied customers have high levels of brand affinity, and exhibit different spending patterns from customers who are only cognitively satisfied. Marketers need to understand the dynamics of emotions in marketing and how they relate to other factors such as attitudes, persuasion and brand loyalty.



Image credit: [Ask Africa Facebook](#)

Understanding of emotional responses provides a more holistic picture of customer satisfaction, says Sarina de Beer, MD at Ask Afrika. "While emotions help to organise human behaviour, and are important in decision-making, problem solving, attention and memory, to mention a few, they are critical to understanding how consumers make decisions and behave."

She adds that by measuring emotion we capture a more accurate response, undiluted by rationalisation, and this helps us to fully comprehend why people think and act the way they do.

"Many organisations impact on customer emotions without realising the full effect this has on their customers experience, which highlights the emotional connections that consumers have with brands."

Measure emotional responses to service

Therefore, it is important to measure emotional responses to service experiences. "By measuring emotion, it not only provides a deeper and more holistic understanding of consumer behaviour, it also allows marketers to focus on creating positive emotional experiences for customers."

This does not mean that typical services should be ignored. “While typical service measures are as relevant and important as ever, too often these are more a reflection of the service strategy and performance against service strategies,” she says.

“Rather than that, they need to be about how relevant service strategies are, and how they need to evolve and adapt to measure and meet service requirements in a way that will enable companies to produce quick wins and maintain a tight focus on what matters most to customers today,” she explains.

Over the past five years, service expectations have changed significantly as consumers continue to be more sophisticated, leading to great expectations as well as an ever-expanding list of expectations and less or no credit for hygiene factors, she explains.

“This, in conjunction with more choice, less “loyal” consumers, more service channels and an elevated access to information, not only shapes what consumers know and expect from brands but also how they engage with brands.”

Longest running service excellence benchmark

This year marks the 16th year of the Ask Afrika Orange Index, making it the longest running service excellence benchmark in the country. To date it has collected nearly 500,000 consumer opinions on customer experience, measured more than 200 brands, asked almost 5,000 questions, with 1,280 hours of statistics and nearly 3,000 hours of ensuring perfectly clean and organised data sets, calculated about 160 benchmarks. An additional 39 new companies were measured, with 16,000 interviews with over 32 different industries and 165 brands were conducted this year.

The Index not only measures service within industries, but across industries and measures customer satisfaction, emotional satisfaction and loyalty. It includes 10 of the most relevant service benchmarks.

“If you are obsessing about customer service, then you should find yourself in the top three in the Orange Index,” adds De Beer.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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