

Survey: SA banking clients prefer digital

South Africans prefer to access their banking services with a mobile app, and they are most likely to complain about bad service, a new survey shows.



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The *Customer Experience in Banking Survey*, queried more than 10,000 banking customers in two waves – the first covering the UK, UAE, India and Australia, and the second South Africa, France, Germany, Italy, and Saudi Arabia. Given the choice, the most popular method for South Africa customers to contact their bank was via a mobile app, selected by 30% of respondents, compared with 26% in India, 24% in the UAE, and just 10% in France and 8% in Germany. Online banking was the second-most preferred channel for South Africans, at 26%, with just 18% preferring to visit their branch.

Getting the customer experience right is vital to South African banks as 67% of respondents would lodge a formal complaint with their bank about bad customer service – again the highest out of all nine countries, with just 37% in Saudi Arabia saying they would complain. South Africans are also second only to Indians in complaining about bad customer service to people they know, with 41% saying they would tell friends and acquaintances. More pleasingly for banks, only 28% of South Africans would change banks because of bad service, the lowest out of all countries, while South African respondents reported the second-highest highest satisfaction levels, at 89%, below only India's 93%.

Worst experiences

The biggest frustrations South African respondents experience when calling their bank include being kept waiting for a long time, their call being transferred between customer service agents with the problem not being resolved, and being asked to visit the branch to solve their request. When asked about proactive communication from their bank, only 26% of customers in South Africa want to receive information on a new launch or service by the bank whereas 69% of respondents want to be alerted to possible fraud or problematic transactions and 56% want to be informed when their credit card or banking service is up for renewal.

Regardless of how they choose to contact their bank, 68% of South African customers cited getting the same level of experience and service across all channels as a priority. Following that, customers want their problem to be resolved on the first point of contact, with speaking directly with a customer service agent seen as least important.

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