

Customer Satisfaction Score: How to measure and improve your CSAT

When it comes to evaluating the success of your SMB, SaaS, online service provider, or business venture, measuring your market performance is crucial. How customers rate their experience with products and services, both online and offline, has a powerful effect, especially on small and medium-sized businesses. Feedback can either grow or harm your brand loyalty.

Paying attention to your customer satisfaction score is now more important than ever, as technology and content marketing are creating new means of attracting customers, making the market more competitive and more demanding.

Luckily, this also means that there are now an abundance of resources, softwares, and tools available to jumpstart your customer service success strategy, by both measuring and improving your CSAT score.

What is CSAT and how is it rated?

Customer satisfaction is generally measured according to your CSAT score, the most straightforward customer satisfaction rating methodologies. In [Marketing Metrics: The Definitive Guide to Measuring Marketing Performance](#), Paul Farris defines customer satisfaction as “the number of customers, or percentage of total customers, whose reported experience with a firm, its products, or its services (ratings) exceeds specified satisfaction goals.” Ultimately, CSAT measures how the products and services supplied by your business meet or surpass customer expectation.

CSAT is judged and measured by data collected using a variety of methods and ratings. Whether through surveys, asking questions, tracking customer response rates, the most common customer feedback has always been gathered by sliding scales, whether numerical (eg. rating your experience on a scale of 1 - 5), verbal (eg. rating your impression ranging from “Very Satisfied” to “Not Satisfied”) or emotional (the US government now uses emoji-based rankings at many of its customer feedback stations).

Overall, CSAT is a metric for short-term happiness and the immediate impression your product or service makes on the consumer.

Why does CSAT matter?

A survey by Liveworkstudio showed that [91% of unhappy customers will never buy from your company or brand again](#). Out of 200 senior marketers, 71% responded that they found measuring customer satisfaction with a CSAT metric very useful in managing, monitoring, and improving their business services. It is vitally important to take your customer's feedback into consideration, because at the end of the day, client is king, and fulfilling their expectations is the main goal of your business.

Short term happiness and satisfaction turns into brand loyalty in the long run, and can generate return customers as well as prospective ones. Customers who are pleased with their experience are much more likely to recommend your product to a friend.

The opposite is also true - an unhappy customer in many cases can deter peers from purchasing from you in the future with bad reviews, so the knock-on effect of negative CSAT is important to keep in mind. Customer loyalty therefore remains the most important metric to monitor.

CSAT also matters as an indicator of your customers' purchasing habits and of their consumer behavior. Reviewing these over time can reveal important changes, trends, and insights which can help you gain market advantage, [meet industry benchmarks](#), and improve the way you engage with customers. Changes in CSAT can also be an indicator of how your company's internal changes and management strategies are impacting customer satisfaction.

How to measure CSAT: Tools and Softwares

Before technology and automation software, transactions were handled in person, and customer service was judged and rated on a face-to-face basis. A performance metric could have been as simple as a smile and a nod from a happy customer - and still is today, to a certain extent!

Paper-based ratings are also still a viable option - for example, to monitor customer satisfaction at a hotel, the company could provide a survey upon check-out with an incentive for filling out, such as entry to a prize draw. This paper rating survey could be as simple as ticking a few boxes or rating certain aspects of the experience on a range from 1 to 10.

Making your CSAT gathering process a simple, efficient, quick and easy process for your customers is just as important as providing a good service or product in the first place!

However, studies have shown that [small and medium businesses are struggling to keep up](#) with the latest trends and maintaining a steady stream of loyal customers. Thanks to numerous tools and innovative automation software, SMBs and any organization can now customize how they gather customer feedback, which they can then use to improve their product and customer experience.

These tools track results and turn them into digestible, comprehensible data, which will allow you to make informed decisions. “Automation has allowed smaller businesses to scale up their customer service and keep up with demand, even with lean team setups.” [says Jose Proenca](#), partner manager at Zapier. He explains how the company has seen a rise in popularity of live chat integration, which is the most popular, interactive, and personal way of providing instant and accountable customer service on your company website.

Before choosing the right platform or software to suit your business, you need to focus on a few things. A first useful step would be to do a current customer service feedback/score audit. If you don't have one yet, find some other way of reviewing how your customer service is looking to date.

Second, set a goal, based on this information. What areas do you need to work on? What do you want to improve? Which part of the customer journey, customer lifecycle, and

which particular product, do you want to gather feedback from? Tie these answers back to business goals.

Lastly, the type of business you run will also be important to take into consideration when choosing which platform is right for you. If you are running a hotel, you are going to have different needs and means of reaching people than if you were a SaaS application.

We've researched and gathered the top tools and software you can incorporate into your future or current customer success strategies, which come with all the benefits of data tracking, survey templates, and automation.

[LiveChat](#)

[Demand from customers for live chat](#) grew by 8.9% in 2017. Software and help desk systems like LiveChat allow you to interact with customers directly on your website, in real time. This makes for a very personal and interactive form of customer service. Whether to point users in the right direction or to answer any immediate questions, live chat software allows you to resolve problems on the spot, which means the customer spends less time searching and more time benefiting from your product.

LiveChat offers features which grade each chat, eliminates queues, aids the customer at checkout, and tracks your ticket and response time. It is more efficient than a phone agent and also provides an app option for on-the-go use. You can easily [take a tour](#) and sign up for a 30-day free trial, and see if LiveChat can bring you an extra \$65,000 worth of revenue too!

[Grade.us](#)

Grade.us is a SaaS platform which provides online review management and marketing. The service itself prides itself on helping you "harness the voice of the customer," to improve your customer service, market your business, and boost sales.

Local businesses, large marketers, and agencies can all benefit from Grade.us, and specific features are available for each, ranging from multi-channel review request campaigns, funnels, and integration with social media profiles, to customer engagement with coupons and offers.

[Qualtrics Customer Experience](#)

Used by customers such as Yahoo, Microsoft, Sony, and Allianz, Qualtrics offers a variety of solutions depending on industry and roles. Their Customer Experience products aim to help you forge better relationships with your customers, and predict actions which will affect their final purchase decisions.

This is done with dynamic data collection tools, customer conversations via SMS, web, mobile apps, and even wearables. Their iQ Directory allows you to monitor and optimize each customer's experience over time.

[Podium](#)

Podium is a customer interaction, online review management and customer service software. Ideal for local and SMBs, Podium emphasizes the convenience of text messaging in their solution, and aims to help you convert website visitors through interaction. Website visitors can text your business directly with queries and questions, and leaving a review takes 30 seconds.

Podium also helps you appear on search rankings in Google when your customer service ratings are high, allowing your business to get ahead of the competition, especially in your local area. Podium's website itself offers great resources, blog posts, and ebooks centered around ways in which you can improve your CSAT.

[Yotpo](#)

A commerce marketing cloud, Yotpo allows businesses to tailor their solutions for customer reviews, visual marketing, loyalty, and referrals. The visual element makes Yotpo unique and attractive, as it allows you to combine customer reviews and photos in an aesthetic manner, which can both engage future customers and enhance your brand.

Used by companies such as PuraVida and Brooklinen, Yotpo is contemporary, simple, and attractive, and you can incorporate their features on your website Category pages, Product pages, and Checkout pages.

[Brand24](#)

Brand24 is a social media monitoring tool. This is especially useful if you promote your business heavily through social media platforms such as Instagram. The product comes with analytic features, a "mentions" feed to discover what people are saying about your brand, a discussion volume chart, influencer scores, and alerts.

This is a nifty, convenient package for SMBs, whose main aim is to give you feedback about what your customers are saying about you, which you can then translate into action for your next CSAT plan. Other social media monitoring tools include [Google Alerts](#), [Mention](#), and [Socialmention](#).

[Check Market](#)

Check Market is a survey software. You can create customizable, on-brand surveys, with your own questions and rating scales, and Check Market distributes them to clients and customers. The platform is also accessible on an app where you can view data and insights on your survey results, as well as reports, dashboards, and automatic

notifications. They offer some of the best feedback and support of all survey analysis tools. Other survey tools to consider are [SurveyMonkey](#) and [Google Forms](#).

Other popular marketing tools worth looking into, which in some cases also offer sales and marketing management as well as CSAT analytics and tracking, include Salesforce, Zendesk, Hubspot, Floq, Blue Enterprise Surveys, and Survey Anyplace.

Tips to Improve your CSAT Score

So now that you have all the important data organized and stored in one place, easily accessible to your management team, what next? Improving your CSAT score involves not only tracking and monitoring analytics, but measuring them against business goals and following up with strategic action. Customer feedback follow-up is essential to increasing long-term profitability, and you will need to figure out exactly how CSAT relates to revenue.

- **Translate feedback into action.** Don't track in a vacuum, but make sure to make informed follow up decisions and changes.
- **Identify the reasons why customers take your surveys.** Often, response bias can be a problem, especially with immediate surveys, as unhappy customers could be more likely to leave a review than a happy customer. Take these metrics into account when overiewing your CSAT.
- **Make sure your customer feedback methods are simple, easy to complete, and appropriately designed.** Tech companies are more likely to have higher customer satisfaction, and this is often due to the superior user experience design of their systems. All of the tools and software previously discussed should help you streamline your information gathering process and approach.
- **Always strive to end on a positive note with an unhappy customer,** whether by apologizing, offering incentives and further follow up, and immediate attention.
- **As well as CSAT, consider looking into [NPS \(Net Promoter Score\)](#).** This metric addresses how a customer feels about a company as a whole, and is a reliable

metric which reflects long-term customer satisfaction, by tracking their tenure. Find out whether your customers are Detractors, Passives, or Promoters! Tools such as [Trustfuel NPS](#) and [Promoter.io](#) all provide software to track and analyze your NPS.

Remember, providing excellent customer service and boosting your CSAT score isn't always about *exceeding* customer expectation, but rather about *meeting* their expectation and requirements in a simple, straightforward, efficient manner. In many cases, the experience matters more than the product itself, especially if your product or service is basic and functional by nature.

Always remember, though, that [the client is king!](#)