

Synergistic CX

The Customer Experience Magazine

ELEVATING EXCELLENCE IN
ELECTRONICS RETAIL WITH

ANDY FIRTH

1

Interpreting Signals

**Data-Driven Insights to
Enhance the Electronics Journey**

2

Expert Vision

**Crafting Unforgettable
Tech Experience**

3

Powering Up the Experience

**Creating Lasting
Connections Beyond the Sale**

June 2025

The Power of Service

High-End Customer Experience in Electronics Retail





MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

With the world's relentless advance of technology, electronics retail has evolved beyond shelves of gadgets – it has become a stage where innovation can intersect with human connection.

This month, Synergistic CX explores the Customer Experience in Electronics Retail, powered by our analysis of over 13,000 customer reviews.

From the thrill of testing the latest OLED screens to discovering smart home ecosystems, customers are often seeking more than just products – they crave personalized guidance, seamless omnichannel journeys, and confidence that their purchases will be supported after the sale. Retailers are rising to meet these demands through AI-powered recommendations, immersive in-store demos, and services that blend digital speed and human expertise.

There is a crucial insight at the heart of it all: when a customer can easily buy online but chooses to visit a store instead, it is because they are searching for that expert professional advice and authentic human connection – something no website can fully replicate.

In this edition we are thrilled to feature insights from Andy Firth, Head of Advisory and Analytics at Ipsos UK and President of MSPA Europe/Africa. His perspectives bring clarity to an increasingly complex retail landscape as he explains how Ipsos uses Product Recommendation analysis to boost sales for its clients.

A lot has happened since our previous issue. Our podcast recording with Andy took place at the MSPA Europe/Africa conference in Estonia, where our client Jill Spencer showcased the value of the Synergistic CX methodology. We shipped our tenth episode and issue of Synergistic CX. And our Research Metrics team conducted the annual Research Metrics conference.

As you read on, I hope that you will find inspirational, practical insights applicable to the fast-moving world of shopping behaviour. Let's continue to transform customer experiences from transactional moments into lifelong connections!

Erik Brooks
Issue Editor
Synergistic CX Magazine
Together with the CX Channel Team

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Our May issue uncovered the art of bookstore experiences, tracing the reader's path from discovery to post-purchase advocacy, and showing how thoughtful layouts, curated titles, and engaging staff drive loyalty. Lina Schölin, CEO of Better Business Sweden, explained how appointing an Insight Manager turns CX data into action. Lina also introduced CX @ Destination, a city-scale framework for mapping every guest or tourist touchpoint. You can read the city of Linköping's inspiring story of success and how the city's tourism experience was reinvented. Lina also outlined a 10-step omnichannel model for seamless web, mobile, and in-store journeys, as well as how important it is to blend Voice-of-Customer surveys with mystery shopping to align subjective sentiment with objective measures.



KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM LINA SCHÖLIN

DATA TO DECISIONS: HOW TO TRANSLATE CX DATA INTO REAL IMPROVEMENTS

Data must drive action, not just reporting. Appointing an Insight Manager who defines clear objectives, connects survey scores with mystery-shop findings and open feedback - and holds teams accountable - bridges the gap from raw metrics to real, sustained CX improvements.

JOURNEY BEYOND BORDERS: INTEGRATING CX ACROSS DESTINATIONS

Destinations need a unified customer narrative, not siloed checks. The CX @ Destination framework maps 18 touchpoints - from site visits through transport, activities, and departure, revealing delights and friction for targeted enhancements.

10 STEPS TO OMNICHANNEL EXCELLENCE: DESIGNING SEAMLESS JOURNEYS

Omnichannel excellence starts with a ten-step playbook. By defining core problems, co-creating service blueprints with frontline teams, and blending objective audits with subjective feedback, brands ensure seamless journeys across web, mobile, and in-store.



Better Business

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PODCAST REACTIONS FROM THE CX TEAM

The May episode of the Synergistic CX podcast and magazine featured Lina Schölin, CEO of Better Business, who brought an insightful and structured perspective to customer experience in the bookstore industry and beyond. Sharing her expertise in retail and CX strategy, Lina introduced her 10-step omnichannel framework designed to help retailers identify customer needs and implement continuous improvements that drive seamless, data-driven decisions. With a clear message to leaders, Lina emphasized that true omnichannel success comes from turning insights into consistent, actionable change across every customer touchpoint.



EMIL TSANKOV

“Lina makes a powerful case for structured benchmarking as the backbone of continuous improvement. Her approach shows that objective data isn’t just about scores – it’s about detailing where experiences shine or fall short. I fully agree that standardized metrics help stakeholders focus their efforts and build customer journeys that truly deliver on the brand promise.”

CEO & Co-founder
Research Metrics



CRISTIANI OLIVEIRA

“Lina’s insights highlight how critical it is to bridge strategy with operational reality. I’m particularly struck by her emphasis on connecting fragmented data and assigning clear ownership for follow-through. It’s a reminder that great CX isn’t just about collecting insights – it’s about building systems and roles that ensure those insights translate into consistent action and measurable impact.”

CX Strategy Ambassador
Research Metrics

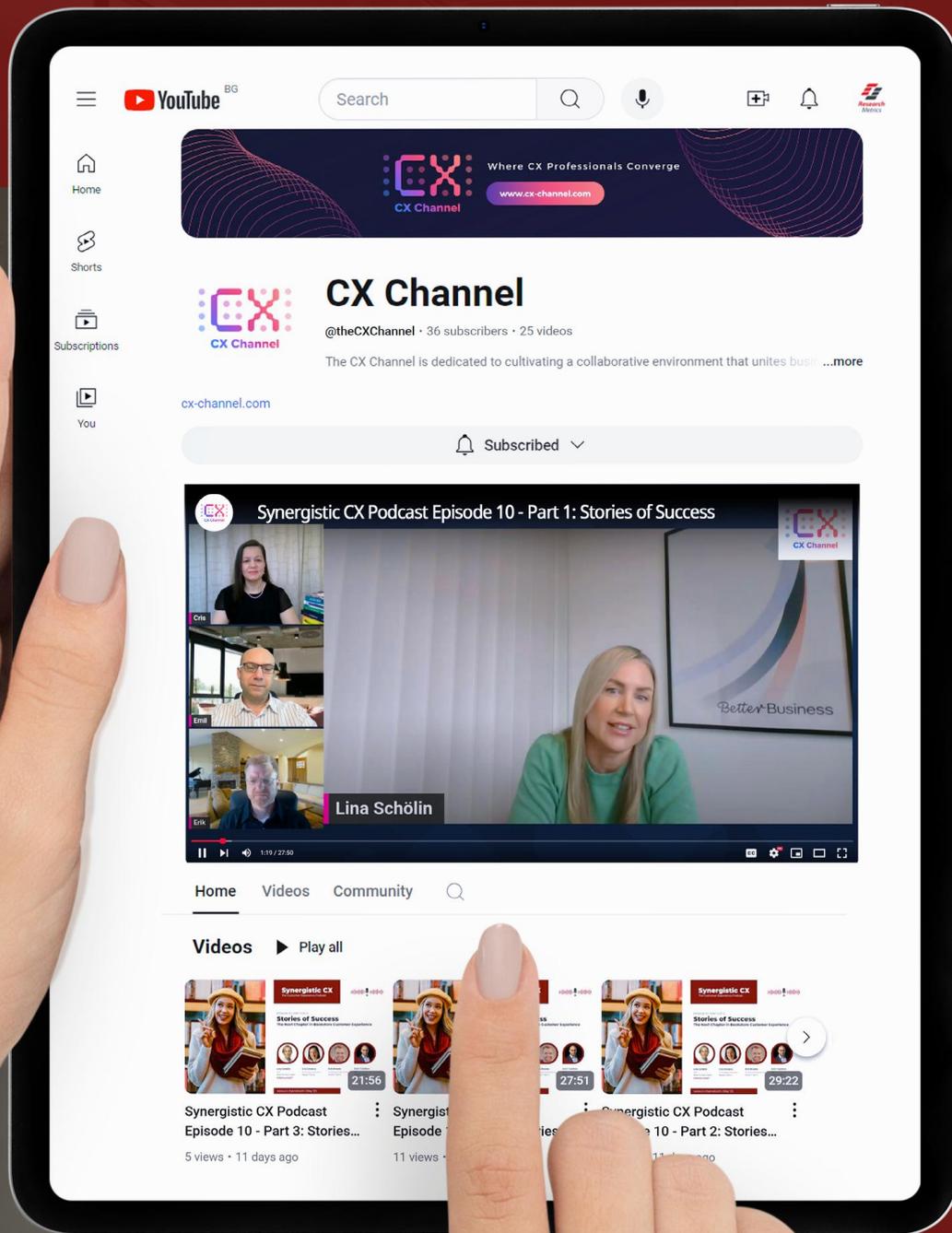


ERIK BROOKS

“Lina’s message is a reminder that CX success isn’t about collecting data for data’s sake – it is about clarity of purpose and accountability and making insights truly usable for those who serve customers daily. It is about empowering frontline teams to be able to interpret data and act – this is what transforms metrics into meaningful change. This connection between strategy and everyday action delivers CX excellence.”

Vice President
Research Metrics

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INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT:

The Power of Service High-End Customer Experience in Electronics Retail

INTRODUCTION

In today's electronics landscape, stores have become much more than points of sale – they're **immersive innovation hubs** where consumers interact directly with **the latest gadgets and smart-technology solutions**. Every visit – from testing high-resolution TVs and noise-cancelling headphones to exploring IoT devices and kitchen robotics – offers customers hands-on discovery, expert guidance, and a glimpse into tomorrow's technology.

To meet the rising demand for seamless, personalized experiences, leading retailers are deploying AI-driven recommendation engines, augmented reality demo zones, and omni-channel integration: real-time stock alerts, mobile checkout, remote video support, and in-store “click-and-collect” lockers. These initiatives blend digital convenience with human expertise, ensuring shoppers find the perfect device at the right price and enjoy effortless service from demo to delivery.

Yet the industry faces challenges – accelerating product lifecycles, complex return processes, and high customer expectations for post-sale support – alongside opportunities in trade-in programs, eco-recycling partnerships, and subscription-based access plans. By forging strategic alliances with manufacturers, and streamlining warranty and repair workflows, electronics retailers can turn these hurdles into competitive advantages.

By putting customer experience at the core, electronics stores are evolving into dynamic tech playgrounds. Data-driven personalization such as leveraging purchase histories, live feedback, and targeted promotions, can help to produce frictionless checkouts, proactive maintenance alerts, and loyalty-building subscription offerings. Each interaction becomes a memorable journey. The result is a deeper engagement, stronger advocacy, and long-term loyalty in an ever-more competitive market.

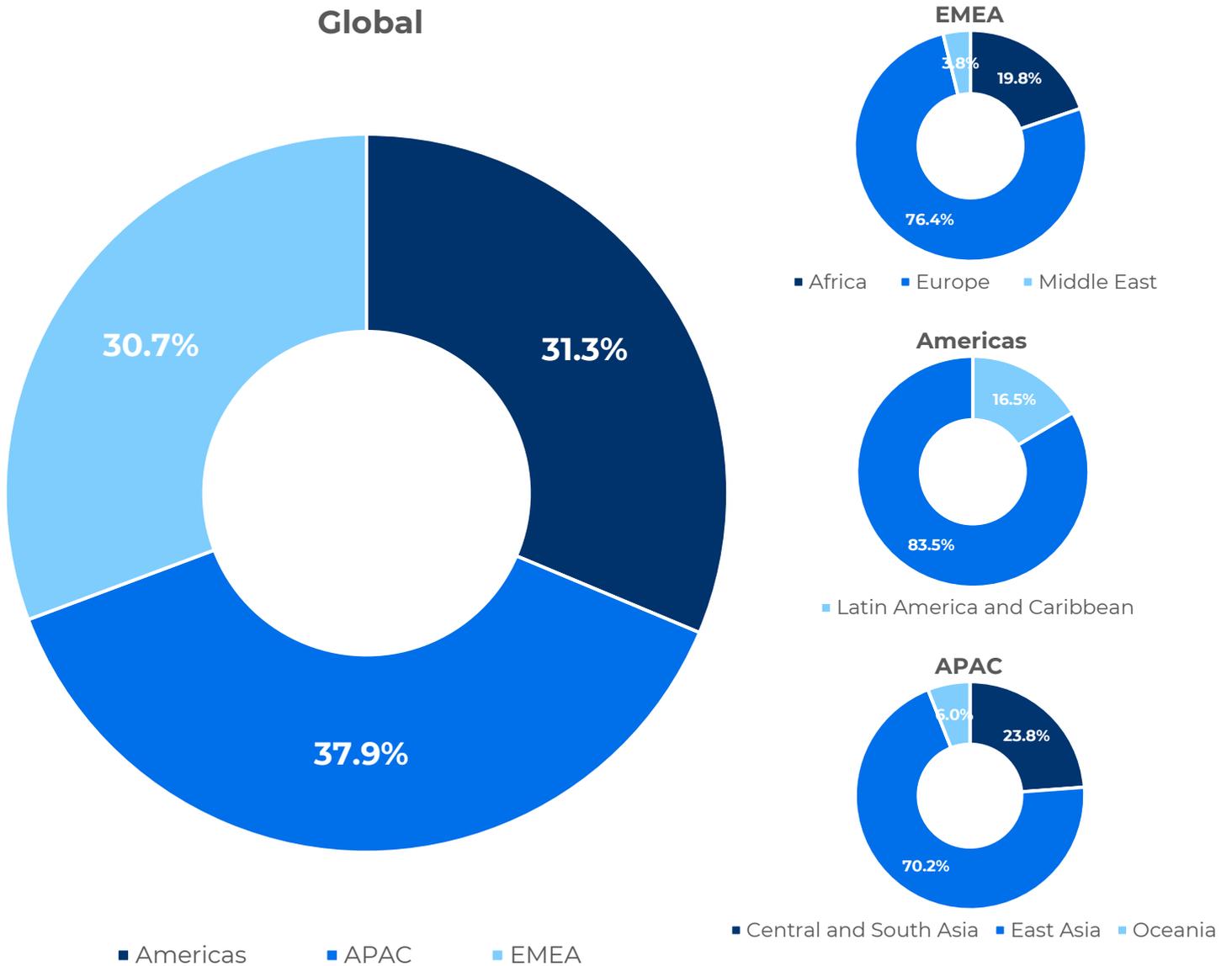
This edition's **objectives**, below, are designed to uncover actionable insights and drive transformative improvements in electronics retail. We aim to illuminate the strategies, tools, and best practices that elevate every aspect of the customer experience – from initial discovery through long-term advocacy, ensuring retailers can delight tech shoppers at every turn:

- **Understand Digital Influence:** Assess how online reviews, social media conversations, and in-app ratings shape shopper perceptions, drive foot traffic, and build purchase confidence.
- **Evaluate Engagement Strategies:** Identify the most impactful touchpoints – immersive demos, expert consultations, and post-sale follow-ups – that convert interest into informed buys.
- **Optimize the Marketing Mix:** Dissect each of the 7Ps to fine-tune device assortments, dynamic pricing and bundles, strategic store and online placements, targeted promotions, expert staffing, streamlined processes, and immersive physical evidence.
- **Enhance the Customer Journey:** Map every stage – from need identification and product evaluation through checkout, warranty support, and advocacy – to eliminate friction and foster seamless, end-to-end experiences.
- **Discover Growth Opportunities:** Explore emerging trends in device subscriptions, sustainable e-waste programs, smart-home ecosystems, and integrated omni-channel engagement to fuel future-ready customer loyalty.

INDUSTRY STUDY SAMPLE

The sample is the set of places chosen for the study. The **sample parameters** are:

- Number of Places **2734**
- Confidence Level **99.50%**
- Margin of Error **2.50%**
- Number of Reviews **13,079**



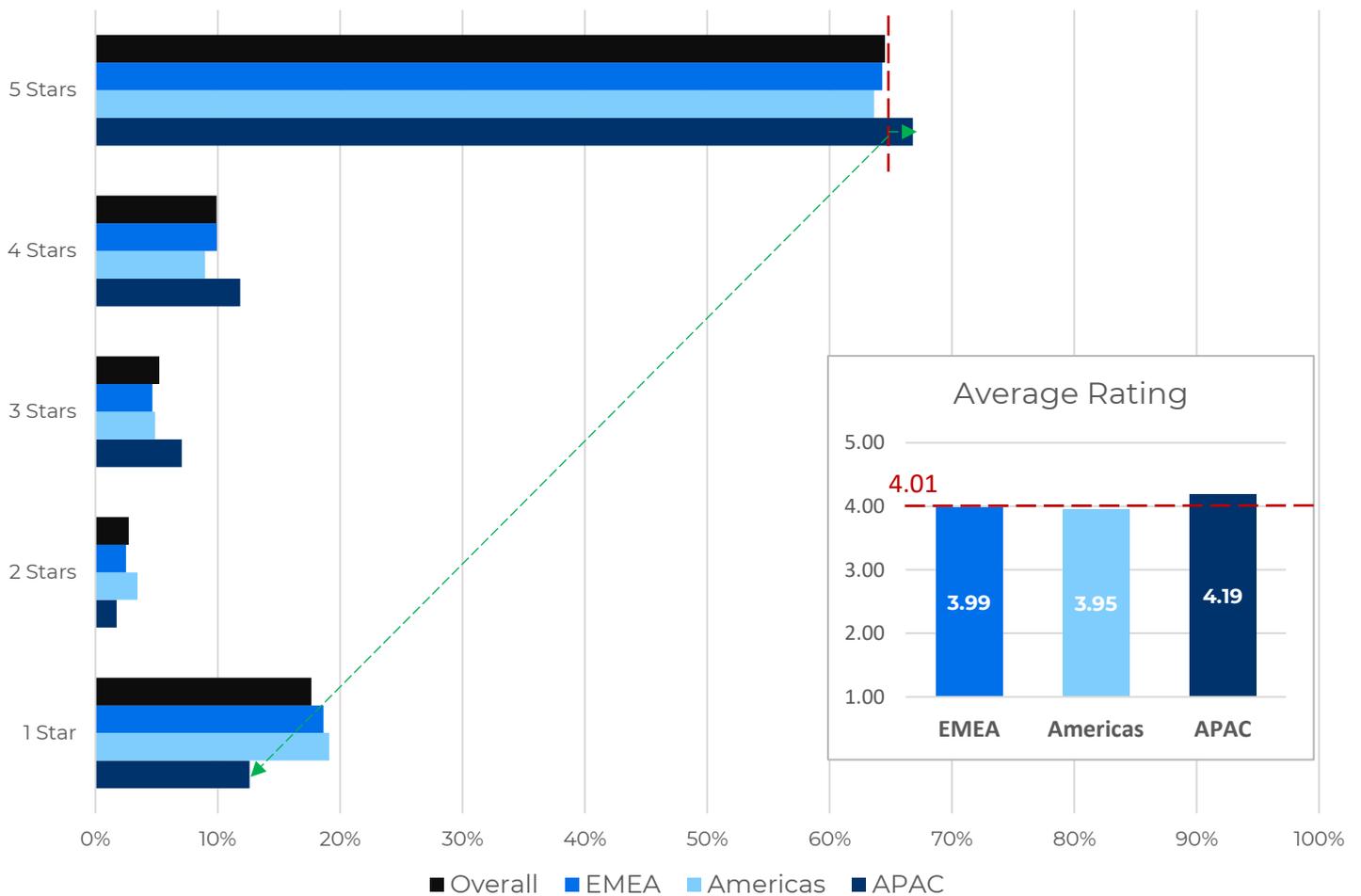
Our sample’s worldwide geographic structure is separated into three primary zones: the Americas, APAC (Asia-Pacific), and EMEA (Europe, the Middle East, and Africa). Each zone is further broken down into specific regions, as visualized here.

The sample is evenly distributed across all regions – EMEA, the Americas and APAC each account for a similar share of store presence, with APAC holding a slight edge.

STAR RATINGS

The distribution of electronic stores ratings is **relatively consistent** across regions, with **five-star reviews making up more than 60%**. Mid-range two-star to four-star feedback fluctuation remains similarly modest.

Star Rating Distribution

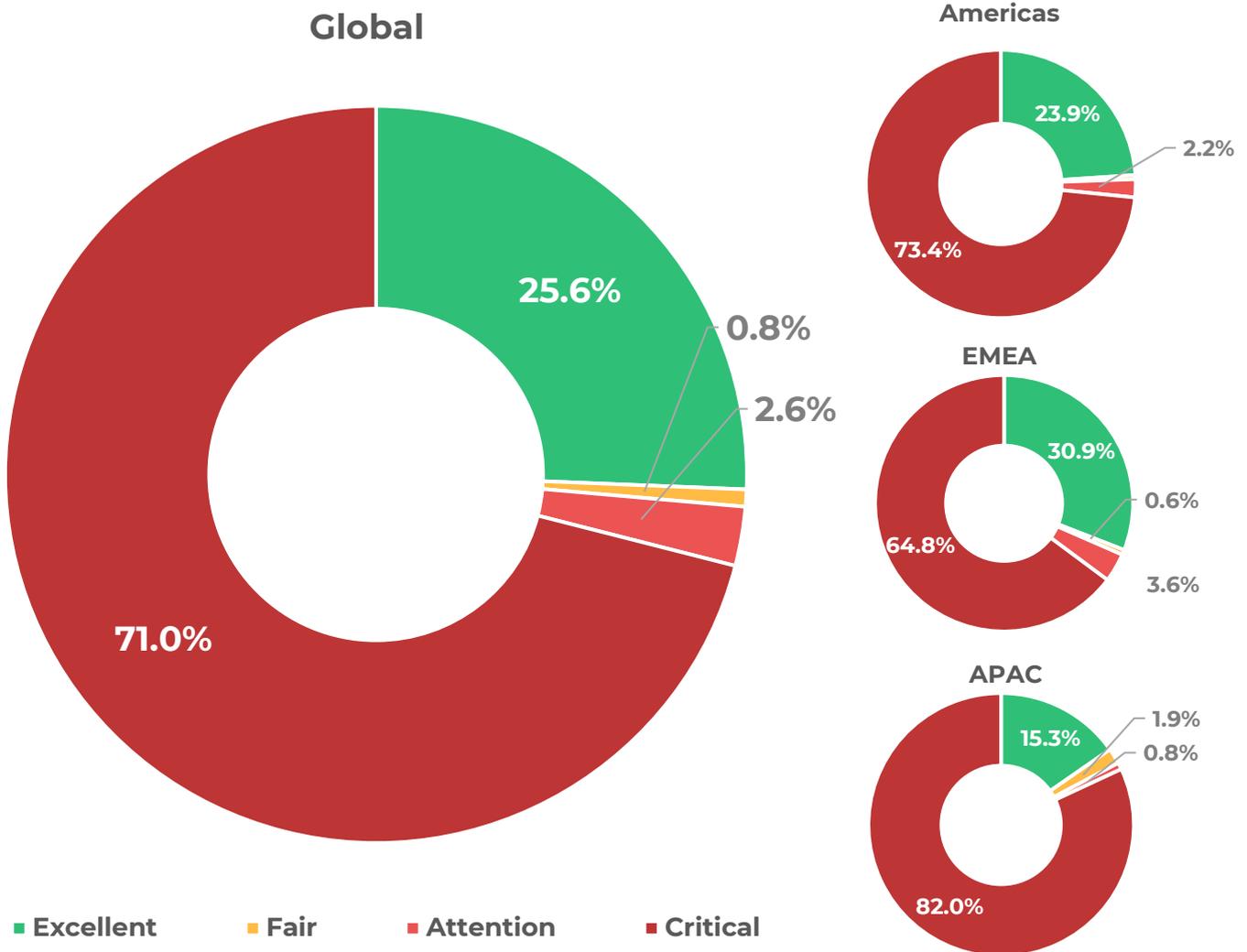


APAC edges ahead with a **marginally higher** share of **five-star feedback** and **the strongest average rating (4.19)** compared to **EMEA** with **3.99** and the **Americas** with **3.95**. Nonetheless, these variations are minimal, confirming that overall satisfaction levels across all three regions are consistently high.

"Star ratings" in online reviews and ratings are a system that allows customers to evaluate a product, service, or business on a scale, typically from one to five stars. Each star represents a level of satisfaction, with one star being the lowest (very dissatisfied) and five stars being the highest (very satisfied).

CRITICAL REVIEW RESPONSE TIME (CRRT)

Timely **follow-up on negative feedback is essential** for restoring trust and driving loyalty. Yet our analysis shows that **over 70% of customer complaints receive no acknowledgment**, highlighting a major gap in service recovery efforts.



The **Critical Review Response Time (CRRT)** KPI measures how quickly a business responds to critical reviews – those with a rating of **1 or 2 stars**. This KPI is key in customer relationship management, as it reflects the business's dedication to addressing customer complaints and issues promptly.

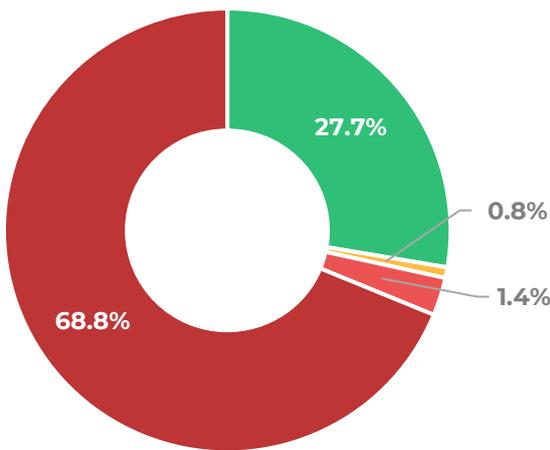
CRRT KPI bands:

- **Excellent:** within 24 hours
- **Fair:** within 72 hours
- **Attention:** more than 72 hours
- **Critical: Not Responded**

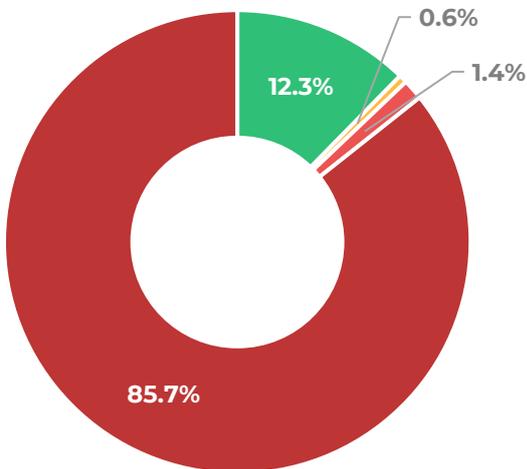
CRRT: REVIEWS WITH COMMENTS VS RATING-ONLY

Reviews that include **comments** are **more likely to get a response** – companies address nearly **28%** of comment-backed complaints but reply to just 12% of rating-only reviews. Despite richer feedback, roughly **70% of commented reviews still receive no response**.

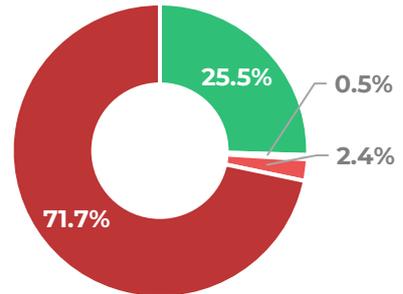
CRRT: Reviews with Comments



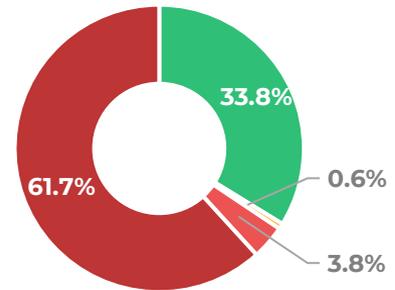
CRRT: Reviews with Rating-Only



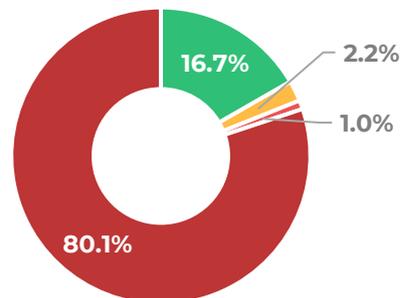
Americas



EMEA



APAC



Reviews with Comments: These are the reviews where customers provide written feedback along with their rating. These provide context and a chance to address specific concerns.

Rating-only Reviews: These are reviews where the customer only leaves a star rating without any additional comments or details.

CRRT KPI bands:

- **Excellent:** within 24 hours
- **Fair:** within 72 hours
- **Attention:** more than 72 hours
- **Critical: Not Responded**

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Electronics Stores: Marketing Mix

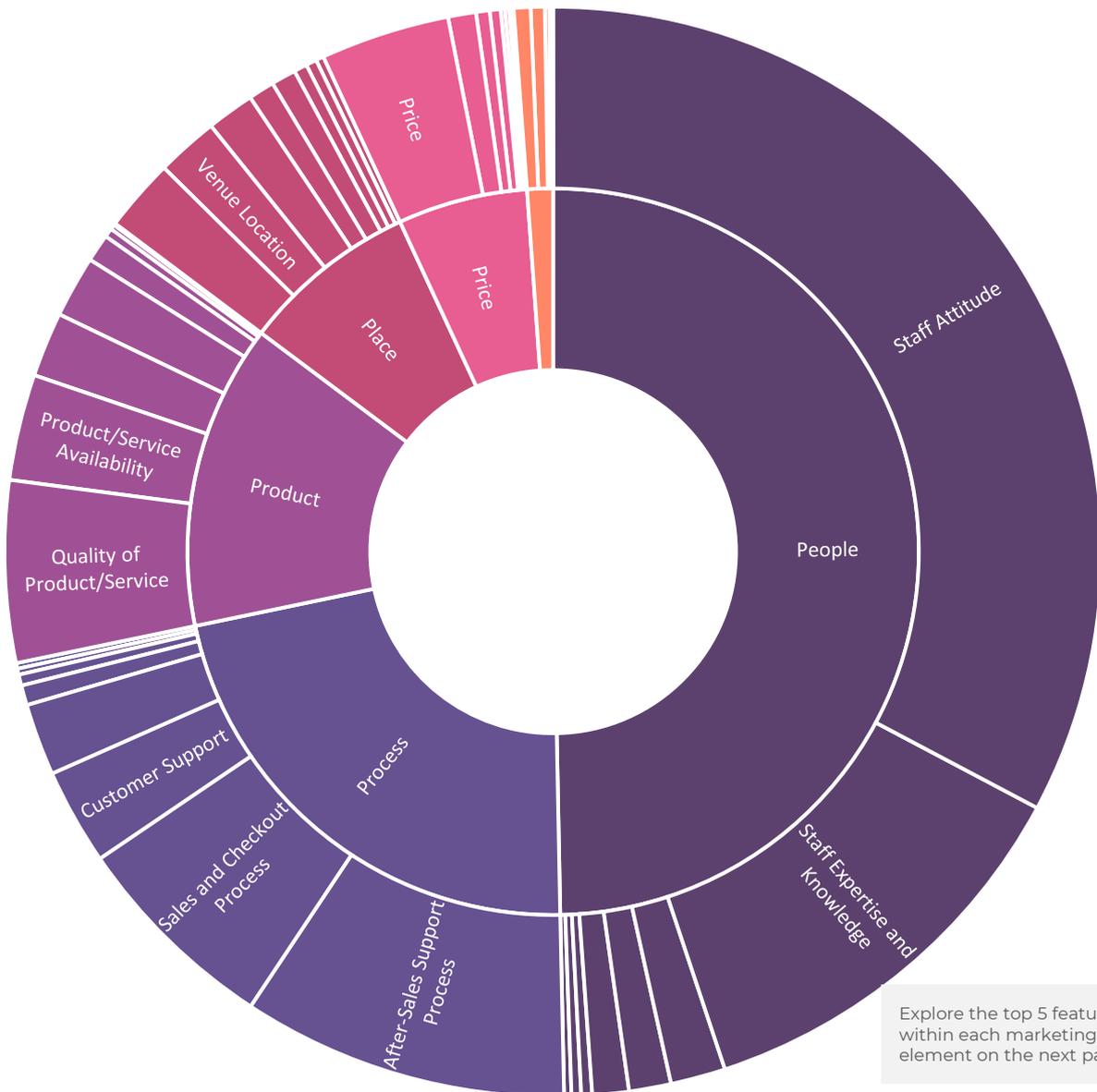
In electronics retail, the 7Ps – Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence – provide a comprehensive framework for optimizing customer experiences across a rapidly evolving technology landscape.

This section shows how each element of the Marketing Mix powers success: by curating cutting-edge devices, crafting tiered pricing and bundle offers, and choosing the right channels. Furthermore, factors such as providing targeted promotions, warm welcomes, and expert consultations, as well as smooth checkout and post-purchase support, boost customer satisfaction and drive loyalty.

MARKETING MIX ELEMENTS

What Do Customers Talk [Care] About?

Customer feedback analysis highlights **People** which accounts for **50%** of all mentions, and shows that **People, Process, and Product together comprise over 85%** of customer priorities. These factors are pivotal for customers taking their journey in electronic stores.



Explore the top 5 features within each marketing mix element on the next page

The 7P Marketing Mix is an extended version of the traditional 4P concept. It includes the following seven elements: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence. This model provides a more comprehensive framework for businesses to evaluate and improve their marketing strategies.

In electronics retail, **knowledgeable and friendly staff** are the most influential factors, alongside a robust **lineup of high-quality, readily available devices** and an **efficient after-sales support process**. Together, these pillars ensure a seamless, satisfying tech-shopping journey.

MARKETING MIX ELEMENTS AND FEATURES

Which Details Do Customers Prioritize?

In electronics retail, the **staff's friendly attitude and expertise** form the backbone of customer value. Coupled with **high-quality, in-stock device selections** and **efficient after-sales support processes**, these elements dominate the marketing mix, shaping what tech shoppers prize most.

Marketing Mix Element	Marketing Mix Element Feature	% of the Marketing Mix	
People	Staff Attitude	➔ 32.79%	96.2% of People
	Staff Expertise and Knowledge	➔ 12.14%	
	Sales Staff Availability	1.61%	
	Technical Support Team Expertise	1.24%	
	Other	1.90%	
Process	After-Sales Support Process	➔ 9.61%	94.2% of Process
	Sales and Checkout Process	6.19%	
	Customer Support	2.84%	
	Warranty and Repair Services	2.13%	
	Other	1.27%	
Product	Quality of Product/Service	➔ 5.38%	90.5% of Product
	Product/Service Availability	➔ 3.14%	
	Diversity/Variety of Products/Services	1.92%	
	Consumer Electronics Range	1.83%	
	Other	1.28%	
Place	Environment and Ambiance	2.16%	78.7% of Place
	Venue Location	1.83%	
	Service and Repair Center	1.41%	
	Venue Layout	0.77%	
	Other	1.67%	
Price	Price	3.81%	93.2% of Price
	Value for Money	0.82%	
	Clear Pricing	0.40%	
	Competitive Pricing	0.32%	
	Other	0.39%	
Promotion	Discounts and Offers	0.49%	99.2% of Promotion
	Loyalty Programs	0.41%	
	Community Engagement	0.12%	
	In-Store Promotions	0.11%	
	Other	0.01%	

At the heart of the electronics shopping journey are the **staff interactions: warm welcomes and expert advice** set the tone as associates tailor demos, compare features, and empower shoppers to make confident choices. Staff's proactive assistance – from recommendations to technical deep dives - turns browsing into an engaging, trust-building experience.

Meanwhile, **a diverse lineup of cutting-edge gadgets and guaranteed product availability** make it easy for customers to find exactly what they need. Immersive demo stations and clear, transparent pricing – backed by efficient sales processes and seamless digital browsing – remove friction, delivering a truly satisfying shopping journey.

MARKETING MIX EXPERIENCES

Understanding Customer Sentiments, Thoughts, and Feelings

Performance across the core 7Ps shows clear pain points: **People, Product, Place, and Price** each attract **roughly 30% negative feedback**, but **Process** stands out with nearly **half of all reviews expressing dissatisfaction**, highlighting an urgent need to streamline operations and strengthen every customer touchpoint.



Customers cite **underwhelming staff interactions, gaps in device quality and availability, uninspiring store environments, and confusing pricing** as key drivers of frustration. This underscores the necessity of elevating team knowledge, ensuring wider product assortments, and delivering transparent value.

To turn these weaknesses into strengths, electronics retailers should invest in **staff training** and empower teams with **product insights, optimize inventory, enhance store layouts** with interactive demo zones, clarify pricing tiers, and elevate checkout and post-purchase workflows for fast, transparent service. Addressing these areas will reduce friction, rebuild trust, and convert dissatisfied shoppers into loyal brand advocates.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Analyzing feedback from electronics-store customers uncovers real drivers of loyalty, and the critical gaps across review response times and the marketing mix. By rapidly addressing negative reviews and sharpening focus on staff interactions, support processes, product availability, pricing clarity, and promotions, retailers can transform friction into fanfare.

- **Close the Response Gap:** 71% of critical reviews get no reply (82% in APAC). Commit to a 24-hour acknowledgment policy and automated alerts to turn complaints into recovery opportunities.
- **Empower Front-Line Staff:** “People” make up 50% of mentions - 32.8% for attitude and 12.1% for expertise. Deliver targeted training, real-time knowledge tools, and coaching so every staff interaction feels personal and confident.
- **Streamline Processes and Support:** Within the Process category, nearly half of customer feedback is negative. Focus on improving after-sales support, frictionless checkout, and clear warranty/repair workflows to reduce effort and frustration.
- **Guarantee Quality and Availability:** Within the Product category, quality and availability top the list. Enforce rigorous quality checks, dynamic inventory management, and engaging demos to meet customer expectations.

By improving each of these five levers, retailers can rebuild customer confidence, reduce friction at every touchpoint, and convert one-time buyers into lifelong enthusiasts.

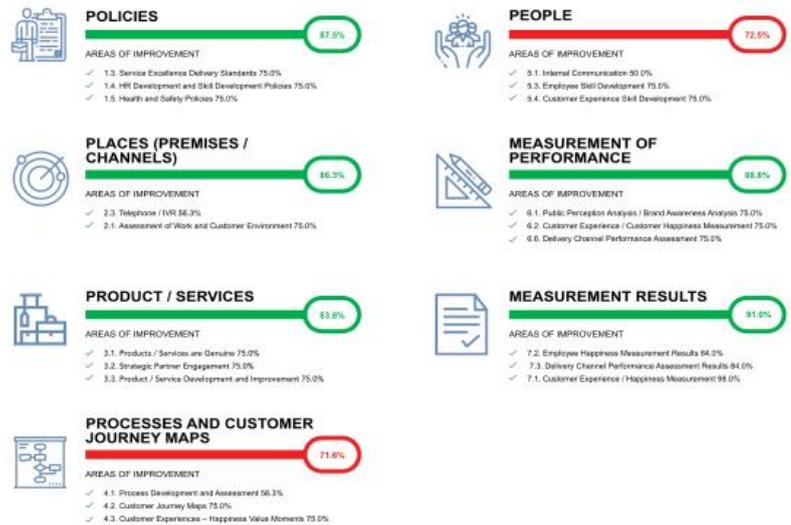


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Electronics Stores: Customer Journey

The electronics retail journey starts well before an in-store device powers on, spanning needs identification, online and in-store research, welcoming demos, expert consultations, smooth checkout, and reliable post-purchase support. Each touchpoint – from updates to upgrades can deepen customer loyalty.

This section outlines the 5 key customer journey stages from Awareness and Consideration, through Conversion to Retention and Advocacy. The customer usually goes through 11 general steps, each representing a critical touchpoint where retailers can enhance satisfaction and foster long-term loyalty.



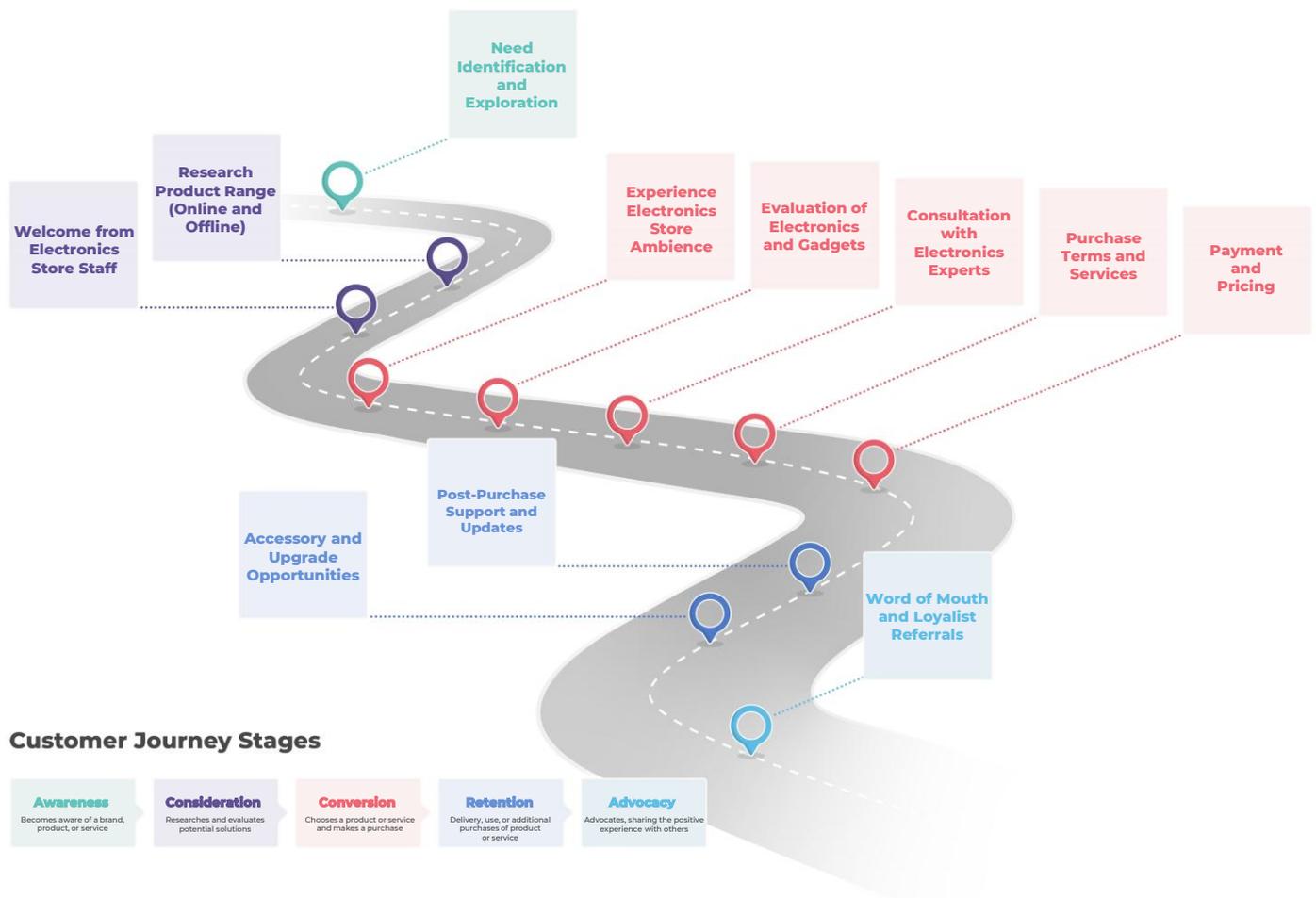
Crafting a standout electronics-store journey begins before customers step inside. It ignites the moment someone spots a sleek display ad, reads a glowing online review, or sees a demo video on social media. From that initial spark to the “thank you” at checkout, every touchpoint - online research, live chat, and in-store greeting - fuels excitement. By aligning digital inspiration with hands-on discovery, retailers invite shoppers to explore curated tech ranges and set the stage for a seamless purchase.

A tech seeker’s path flows through Awareness, Consideration, Conversion, Retention, and Advocacy. First, customers learn about new devices via social posts, review sites, or search results. Next, knowledgeable staff and interactive demos help them compare features in person or virtually. As they move into conversion, visitors immerse themselves in the store’s carefully arranged demo zones - testing gadgets, comparing specs labels, and consulting experts - before exploring financing options and completing a seamless payment at the counter. Each step, from hands-on trial to transparent pricing, should reinforce trust and make decision-making feel effortless.

The journey extends past purchase with dedicated support, from in-store help desks and email tutorials to rapid-response call centers. Targeted accessory offers and trade-in promotions in-store and online keep customers engaged. Finally, advocacy emerges as satisfied shoppers post reviews, share unboxing videos, and refer friends with loyalty rewards. By weaving every stage into one coherent narrative, electronics retailers turn transactions into long-term loyalty and passionate brand ambassadorship.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP: ELECTRONICS STORES

In this analysis, we examine a typical **5-stage** Customer Journey Map that includes **11 distinct steps** reflecting the evolution of the customer experience.



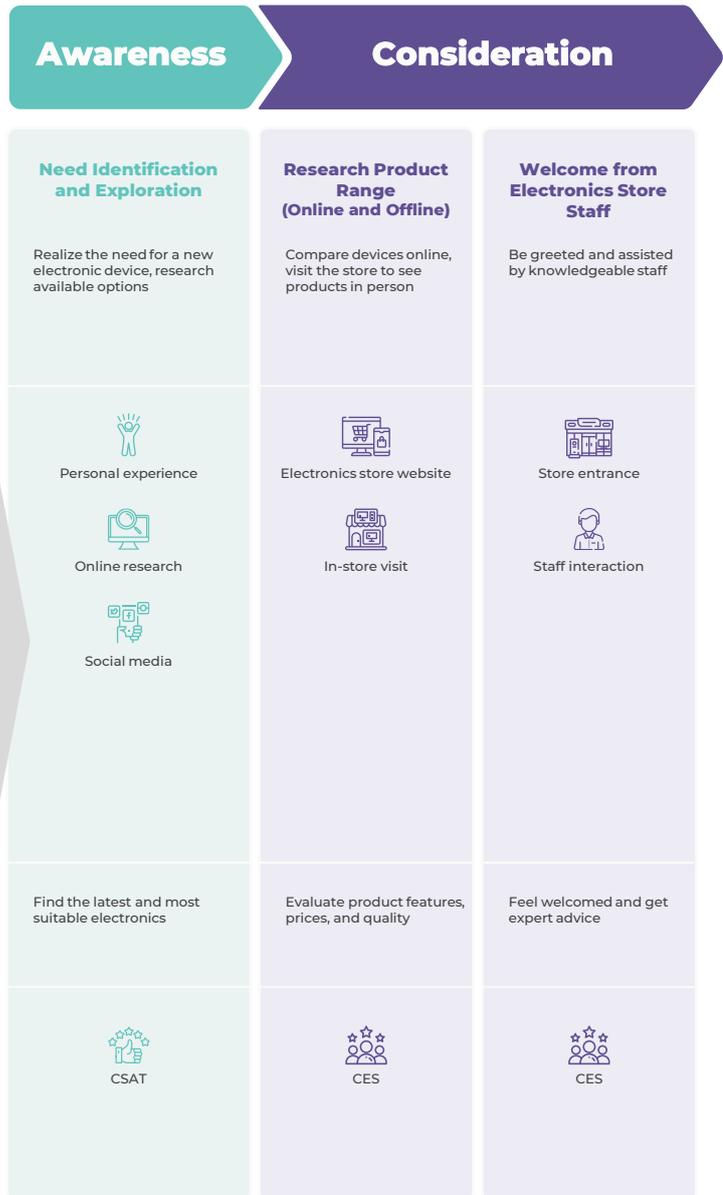
The Customer Journey refers to the various stages a customer goes through while interacting with a company or brand - from the initial contact to the eventual purchase, and beyond.

The Customer Journey Map is a visual diagram that shows the Customer Journey. The Customer Journey Map helps businesses understand and analyze their customers' experiences, identify pain points, uncover opportunities for improvement and ultimately enhance the overall customer experience.

AWARENESS AND CONSIDERATION

Awareness and **Consideration** are pivotal phases in the electronics-store journey, establishing the shopper's first contact and guiding them toward the retail store. These stages ignite curiosity and help tech enthusiasts compare features that match their lifestyle and needs.

We chart the distinctive path of the shopper's journey, divided into five key stages of: Awareness, Consideration, Conversion, Retention, and Advocacy. Each phase signifies a step in a customer's relationship with the electronics store – from first noticing the need for upgraded tech to becoming a vocal champion who tells friends about standout devices.

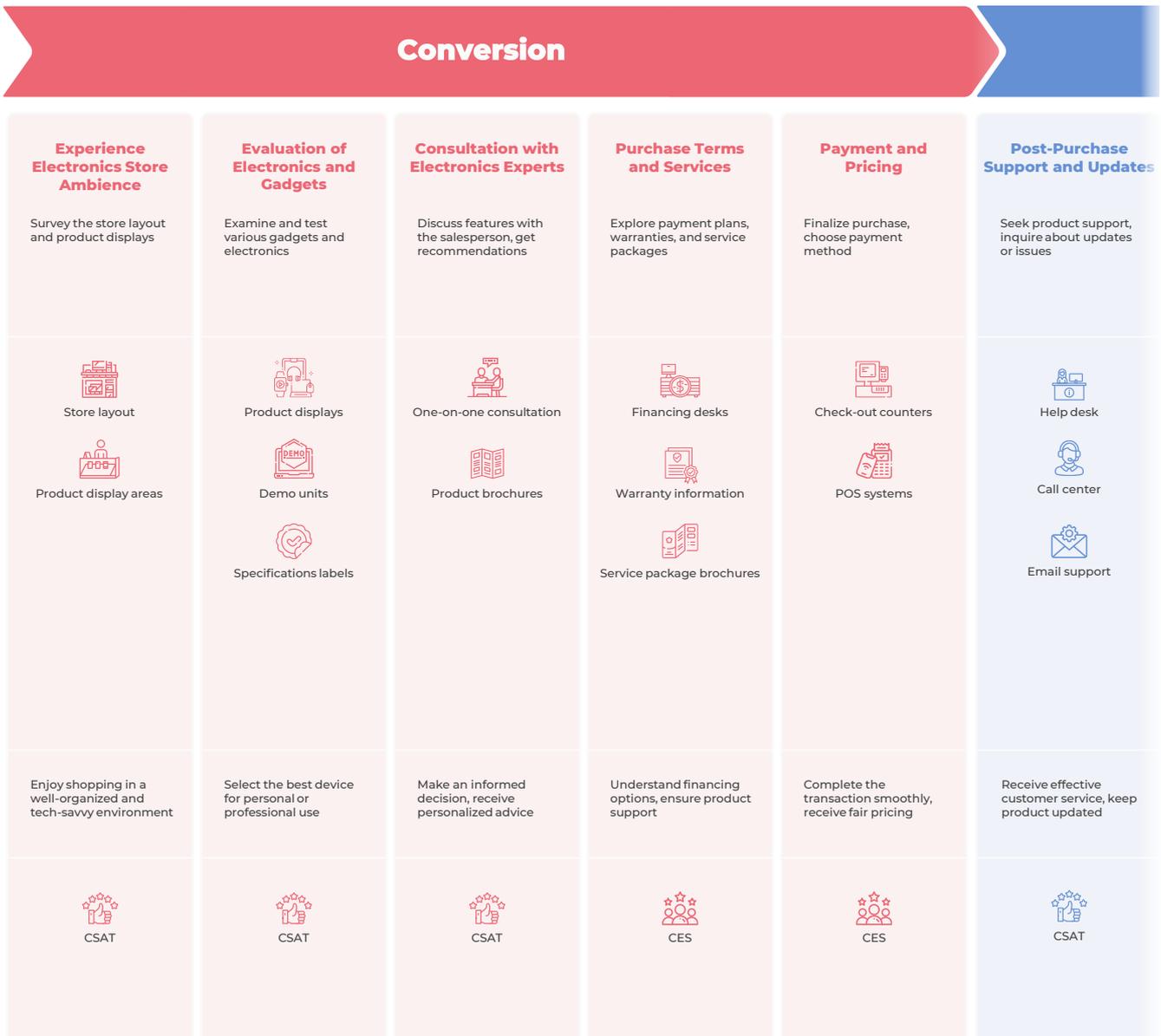


Along this path, customers encounter vital touchpoints: spotting gadget reviews online or through ads, entering sleek showrooms, interacting with friendly sales associates, and comparing specs on demo units. These interactions let retailers showcase cutting-edge products, offer personalized comparisons, and deliver hands-on demonstrations. By making every digital search and in-store engagement seamless and informative, electronics stores can boost satisfaction and foster loyal returning customers.

In the Awareness stage, shoppers first recognize their need for a new gadget – perhaps prompted by a review or a friend's suggestion and start researching specs and user feedback online. In the Consideration stage, they visit the electronics store's website or showroom, where a friendly greeting helps them navigate in the store or online, narrowing choices until they find the right device.

CONVERSION

The **Conversion** stage in the electronics journey is where browsing becomes buying, as customers settle on a device and finalize their purchase. This phase cements confidence in the store's tech selection and ensures shoppers feel content with their choice, turning casual interest into ownership of the latest gadgets.

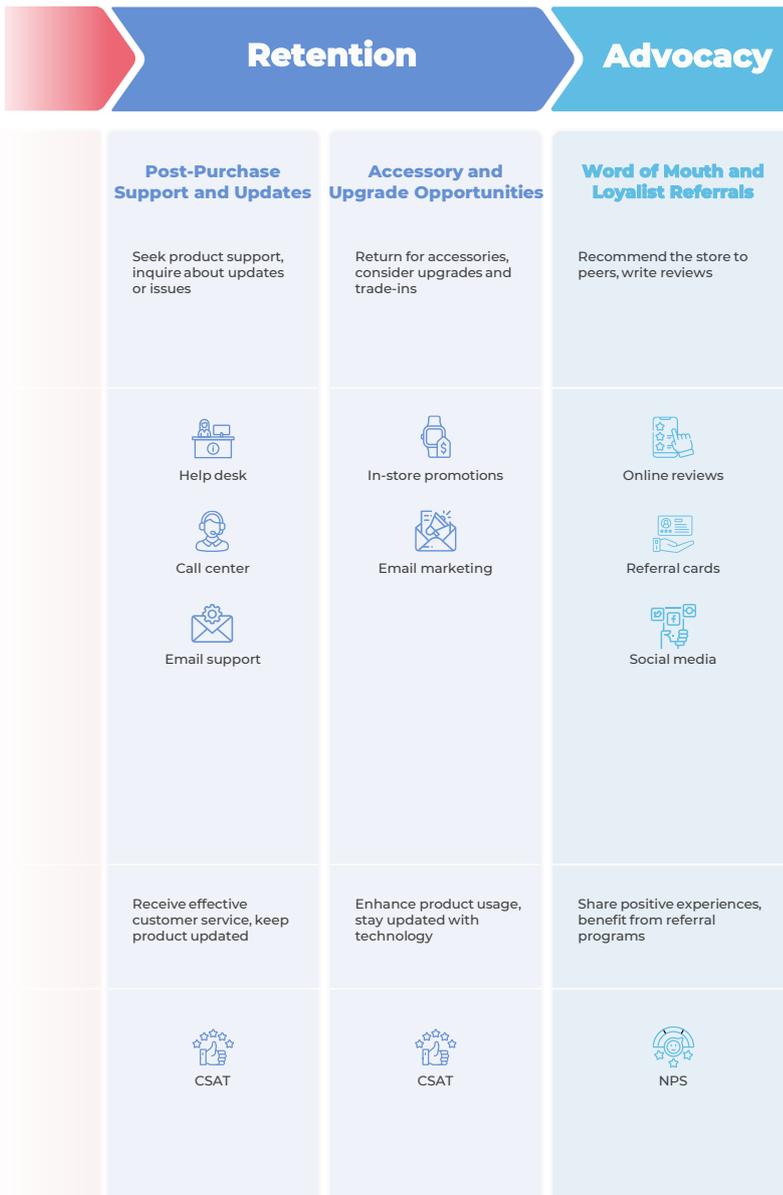


During this stage, customers assess key attributes – design, functionality, and reliability – while comparing options displayed side-by-side. They evaluate features like energy efficiency and usability to confirm the product fits their lifestyle before proceeding to buy.

Next, knowledgeable associates step in to guide the decision, highlighting benefits, explaining service plans, demonstrating the product or arranging custom setups. A smooth checkout with transparent pricing, loyalty rewards, and flexible payment completes the experience.

RETENTION AND ADVOCACY

After finalizing a purchase, shoppers enter the Retention and Advocacy stages, where the real work of building lasting relationships begins. These steps are crucial for reinforcing customer satisfaction, prompting return visits, and encouraging referrals that help electronics retailers stand out in a busy marketplace.



The electronics retail journey is a crafted narrative, guiding customers from that first spark of interest - whether sparked by a review, recommendation, or in-store display - to confident ownership. Each phase, from online discovery and product exploration to hands-on demos and streamlined checkout, is designed to build trust and connect shoppers with the right technology.

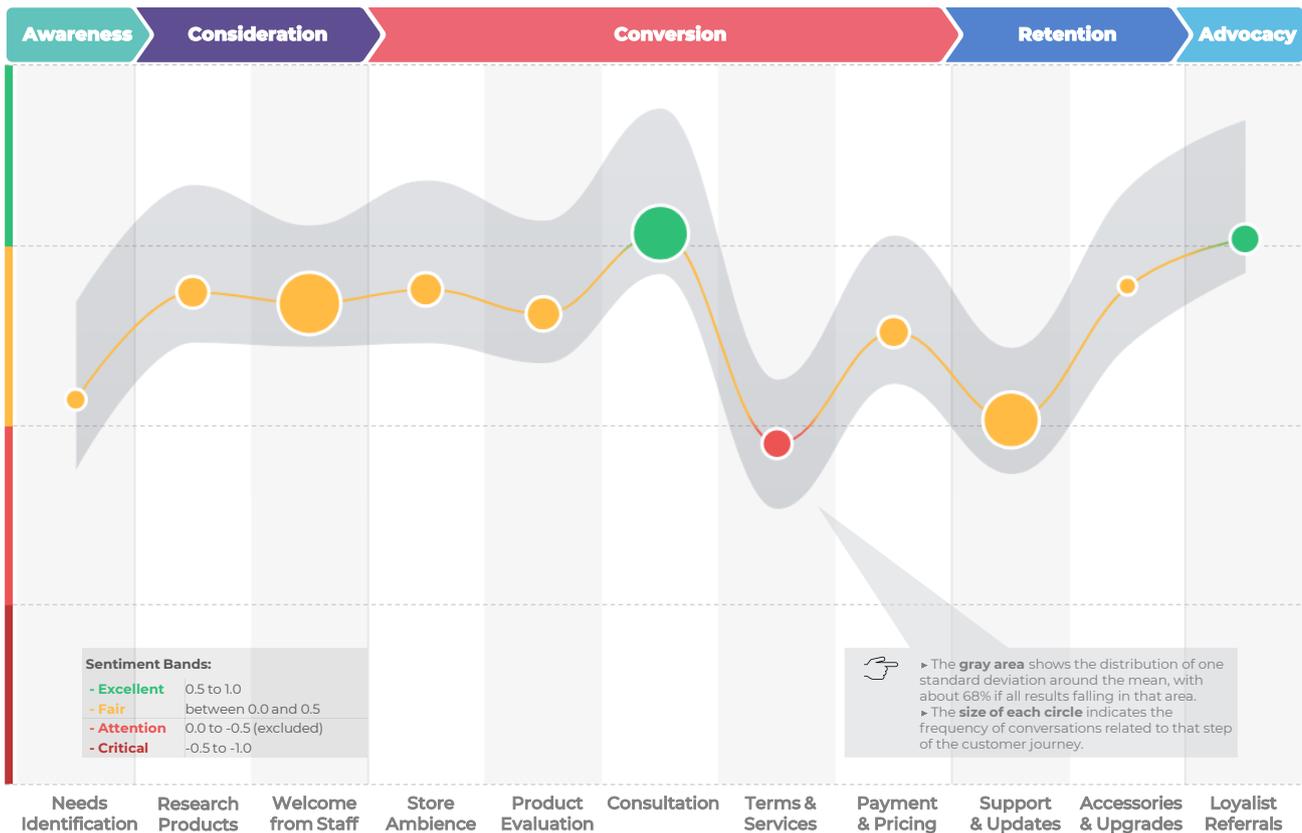
This experience transcends simple transactions - it's about immersive engagement at every turn. Carefully organized displays encourage hands-on exploration, knowledgeable associates offer tailored insights, and clear warranty and return policies ensure peace of mind. Whether purchasing at a staffed counter or via self-checkout kiosk, customers enjoy an efficient, supportive process that feels effortless.

Sustainable success hinges on ongoing dialogue and rewards. By collecting feedback, tracking preferences, and offering loyalty benefits such as exclusive previews or upgrade incentives, electronic stores turn satisfied buyers into return patrons.

In the Retention stage, focus shifts to ongoing support through product care tips, exclusive update alerts, and service reminders. These proactive touchpoints show customers they are appreciated and help them get the most from their gadgets. By cultivating these connections, electronics retailers can turn one-time buyers into enthusiastic brand advocates.

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

The electronics customer journey spotlights two standout highs – **Consultation with Experts** step and **Advocacy** stage. At the opposite end, **Terms & Services** and **Post-Purchase Support** go down to the Critical and Attention bands, signaling urgent need for improvement.



The chart illustrates customer sentiment during the various phases of the Customer Journey. Areas shaded in the graph denote the standard deviation from the average, highlighting the degree of variability at each step and signifying the need for more precise measurement techniques.

The circles on the graph correspond to the frequency of specific elements noted at each phase, with larger circles indicating steps with more frequently cited attributes. This visualization aids in identifying which areas to prioritize for strategic focus.

CASE IN POINT

Aspect-Based Sentiment Analysis (ABSA) is particularly effective for analyzing online reviews and ratings by providing detailed, aspect-specific insights.

A reviewer's review may read: *"My visit at the store left me with mixed feelings. The showroom itself felt cozy and well-organized, making it easy to browse through the gadgets. When I walked in, no one greeted me at the door, so I had to hunt down a sales associate. Once I found Dave, his expertise was spot on – he answered all my questions about different features and helped me compare a few models I was considering. However, the terms and service policy was a nightmare: the return window felt unclear, and the extended-warranty details were buried in fine print. I decided not to buy that.*

When it came time to pay, the checkout line moved painfully slowly, and I ended up waiting nearly 10 minutes to complete my purchase. However, the store surprised me afterward with a nice follow-up email checking that everything worked smoothly and offering a free one-month support trial. That personal touch made me feel valued, despite the long wait at the register.

Aspect	Modifier	Sentiment
Store Ambience	Cozy and Well-organized	Positive
Staff Greeting	Did not greet on entry	Negative
Staff Expertise	Answered all my questions	Positive
Terms & Services	Unclear return policy, buried warranty	Negative
Payment / Checkout	Moved very slowly	Negative
Follow-Up	Friendly and helpful	Positive

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Aspect-Based Sentiment Analysis (ABSA) excels in extracting deeper insights from customer interactions by categorizing aspects of the product, service, or experience being reviewed. It then evaluates the modifying words or phrases in the review, assigning them a sentiment polarity – positive, neutral, or negative – to gauge customer opinions.

ABSA is not, however, without some limitations. Notably, complexity in language and expression: people who frequently employ idioms, sarcasm, or metaphors can pose difficulties for accurate interpretation.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Electronics-store customers move through distinct highs and lows from the standout “Consultation with Expert” step right through to the critical post-purchase gaps. Mapping sentiment across the five journey stages pinpoints exactly where to lean in on strengths and shore up weaknesses.

Key Takeaways:

- **Maximize the “Consultation with Experts” Peak:** This Conversion-stage touchpoint boasts the highest sentiment. Empower experts with advanced product training, decision-support tools, and the autonomy to tailor recommendations – turning consults into conversion catalysts.
- **Simplify Purchase Terms and Services:** Opaque pricing, financing hurdles, and convoluted policies drag down sentiment in Conversion. Streamline disclosures, offer clear financing tiers, and automate checkout transparency to transform confusion into clarity.
- **Elevate Post-Purchase Support:** Retention falters when after-sales care falls short. Guarantee rapid warranty turnarounds, proactive repair updates, and routine check-ins – turning support from a pain point into a loyalty driver.
- **Activate Your Advocates:** The Advocacy stage shows strong positive feedback. Formalize referral and loyalty programs, spotlight real customer stories, and incentivize word-of-mouth to amplify this natural high point into a sustained growth engine.

By continuing to focus on expert consultation and advocacy efforts while simplifying purchase terms and strengthening after-sales care, electronics retailers can smooth out sentiment dips, amplify the journey’s peaks, and forge lasting customer loyalty.

MEET THE EXPERT



Meet the experts featured in our podcast series. Discover their backgrounds, unique perspectives, and invaluable contributions to the field of Customer Experience.

ANDY FIRTH

Andy Firth has worked in the market research industry for almost 30 years since graduating from the University of Sheffield with a degree in History.

Andy started his worked life on the graduate scheme of a large market research company called NOP, focusing initially on the Financial Service sector across a broad range of research techniques including Qual, Quant, and CX.

Andy moved to the Mystery Shopping division in 2007 (following the purchase of NOP by GfK), initially in a Business Development capacity and latterly as Deputy Managing Director. Following the purchase of GfK Research by Ipsos in 2018, Andy moved into a more Advisory and Analytics role, whilst also joining the board of MSPA Europe & Africa.

Since then, Andy has built-up a specialist Advisory and Analytics team within Ipsos's Channel Performance division which is focused on Advanced Analytics, Data Aggregation, and Story-telling, aimed at elevating everyday mystery shopping data into truly added-value, actionable insights focused on driving strategic improvement.

This is where Andy's true passion lies, and where he believes the Mystery Shopping industry should be focused in order to grow. Indeed, as the new President of the MSPA, this will be his focus in addition to driving innovation across the sector.



INSIGHT FUSION: MERGING MYSTERY SHOPPING WITH THE VOC

Objective metrics, such as mystery shopping data, sales figures, and operational data, offer precise insights, but they only tell half the story. As Andy Firth points out, only by merging these hard numbers with subjective metrics, like Voice-of-Customer surveys and online reviews, can retailers grasp both the what and the why, unlocking a complete, actionable view of the customer experience.

“Mystery shopping data by itself is often a treasure trove of data, but when it really comes to life is when you wrap it together with other data sources.”

– Andy Firth

Retailers often collect mystery shopping assessments, sales dashboards, and operational metrics in separate silos, missing the bigger picture. Andy Firth warns, *“Mystery shopping data by itself is often a treasure trove of data, but when it really comes to life is you wrap it together with other data sources.”* Only by breaking down these silos can teams move from isolated observations to holistic insights that drive meaningful CX improvements.

Hard numbers pinpoint what’s happening on the shop floor, but only customer feedback explains why. *“So tying mystery shopping up with your data would make a lot of sense to me”* Andy explains, emphasizing the power of layering Voice-of-Customer surveys, online reviews, and direct interviews atop transactional and observational data. This fusion uncovers the root causes of friction – whether it’s a confusing checkout flow or a missed upsell – and helps prioritize interventions with precision.

Observations from mystery shopping reveal which in-store practices catch or

lose customer attention, but quantifying their business impact may require pairing those insights with other business metrics. *“When we see that in our studies ... and we combine data-sets, you can see that very strong relationship,”* Andy notes. By directly mapping behavioral scores - like proactive upsell attempts or product demos, to conversion rates, retailers can identify which frontline actions truly drive revenue and focus training where it moves the needle most.

As Andy notes, *“There are providers out there who offer really short, sharp, almost crowdsourced type surveys, and I think they can be useful for small audit-type work. But then there is still the more complicated mystery shopping where you need a robust sample, you need a detailed questionnaire, you need detailed briefing notes and guidelines...”* By pairing rapid Voice-of-Customer with periodic, in-depth mystery-shops, retailers maintain analytical rigor while staying nimble – quickly validating fixes and uncovering new pain points to continuously refine the customer experience.

PRODUCT RECOMMENDATION: OPTIMIZING SUGGESTIONS FOR HIGHER CONVERSIONS



High-ticket electronics sales hinge on which product the staff recommend and whether anything negative is expressed, which can undermine purchase rates. Andy Firth illustrates that targeted mystery-shopping audits of product recommendations expose these blind spots, revealing precise behaviors that, when corrected, can drive significant lifts in sales.

“If someone goes into a store and says I’m looking for a new TV... If the sales person recommends Brand A, that is likely to increase the chance of that sale being converted over a brand which is not recommended.”

– Andy Firth

Highlighting the power of first impressions reveals their outsized influence on customer decisions. As Andy explains, *“If someone goes into a store and says I’m looking for a new TV... If the sales person recommends Brand A, that is likely to increase the chance of that sale being converted over a brand which is not recommended.”* By homing in on this pivotal exchange, retailers can identify which recommendation and demo techniques most effectively convert interest into purchase, ensuring training resources focus on these high-impact moments.

Ensuring mystery-shop briefs mirror genuine customer needs guarantees unfiltered insights into associate behavior. *“You’ve got to make sure that the shoppers are going in, they’re meeting the profile of a typical buyer... and normally you wouldn’t allow them to say, ‘I’m looking for this brand.’ You would leave it open,”* Andy advises. Recruiting shoppers whose demographics, intent, and budget match real in-store visitors uncovers hidden biases and highlights opportunities to refine briefing protocols and scripts, to align staff engagement with authentic customer expectations.



PRODUCT RECOMMENDATION: OPTIMIZING SUGGESTIONS FOR HIGHER CONVERSIONS

Treating product recommendation as its own audit module brings clarity and precision to coaching efforts. *“This is what we would call product recommendation mystery shopping...”* Andy explained. By dissecting each recommendation interaction – feature comparisons, demo depth, objection handling, and upsell prompts – retailers gather granular data on which conversational pivots resonate or create friction. These insights inform bespoke training modules, update scripting guidelines, and drive role-play exercises that amplify staff confidence and consistency across all device categories.

“Product recommendation is a specific type of mystery shopping requiring, where the assessment shines a light on specific behaviors,” Andy emphasizes. By elevating recommendation as its own KPI, retailers transform coaching from scattershot feedback into a precision tool – tracking progress in unified dashboards, holding teams to a clear standard, and celebrating improvements when conversion rates climb. Embedding recommendation excellence into the company culture ensures that every customer benefits from consistent, high-quality guidance.





FUTURE-READY CX: TRANSLATING COMPLEX ANALYTICS INTO ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES

As customer experience data multiplies – from AI-driven text analysis and in-store sensors to mystery-shop results, retailers risk becoming swamped by information they can't effectively act on. Andy Firth argues that the true competitive edge comes from distilling these complex analytics into clear, narrative-driven insights that teams can immediately understand and implement.

“You’ve got to try and translate often quite complex analytics and stats into a story and a narrative... and make it easy for your client to understand and act on.”

– Andy Firth



Distilling complex CX analytics into actionable narratives is a game-changer for electronics retailers. *“You’ve got to translate often quite complex analytics and stats into a story and a narrative... and make it easy for your client to understand and act on,”* Andy explains. By turning disparate data streams – whether sensor-driven footfall metrics, detailed mystery-shop observations, or extensive customer feedback – into a unified storyline, brands move beyond mere reporting. When metrics are woven into a coherent narrative, teams gain clear guidance on which best practices to replicate, which friction points to resolve, and how to prioritize limited training and investment resources for maximum impact.

Even the richest dashboards fall short without context. *“You’ve got all these charts and numbers... but unless you can wrap them in a story that resonates with the team, they’ll never know how to change their day-to-day behaviors,”* Andy observes. Framing data through real-world scenarios turns abstract figures into clear, memorable guidance that frontline staff can immediately apply.

FUTURE-READY CX: TRANSLATING COMPLEX ANALYTICS INTO ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES

With data volumes growing exponentially, focus becomes critical to prevent teams from chasing noise instead of value. *“There is going to be more and more data, and the more data you have, the better insights you can deliver, but actually, you need to work out which data points really move the needle,”* Andy notes. Retailers must establish a clear KPI hierarchy while deprioritizing less actionable measures. By concentrating on a concise set of high-impact indicators, organizations ensure daily stand-ups, performance reviews, and coaching sessions center on the performance drivers that most directly influence customer satisfaction and long-term revenue.

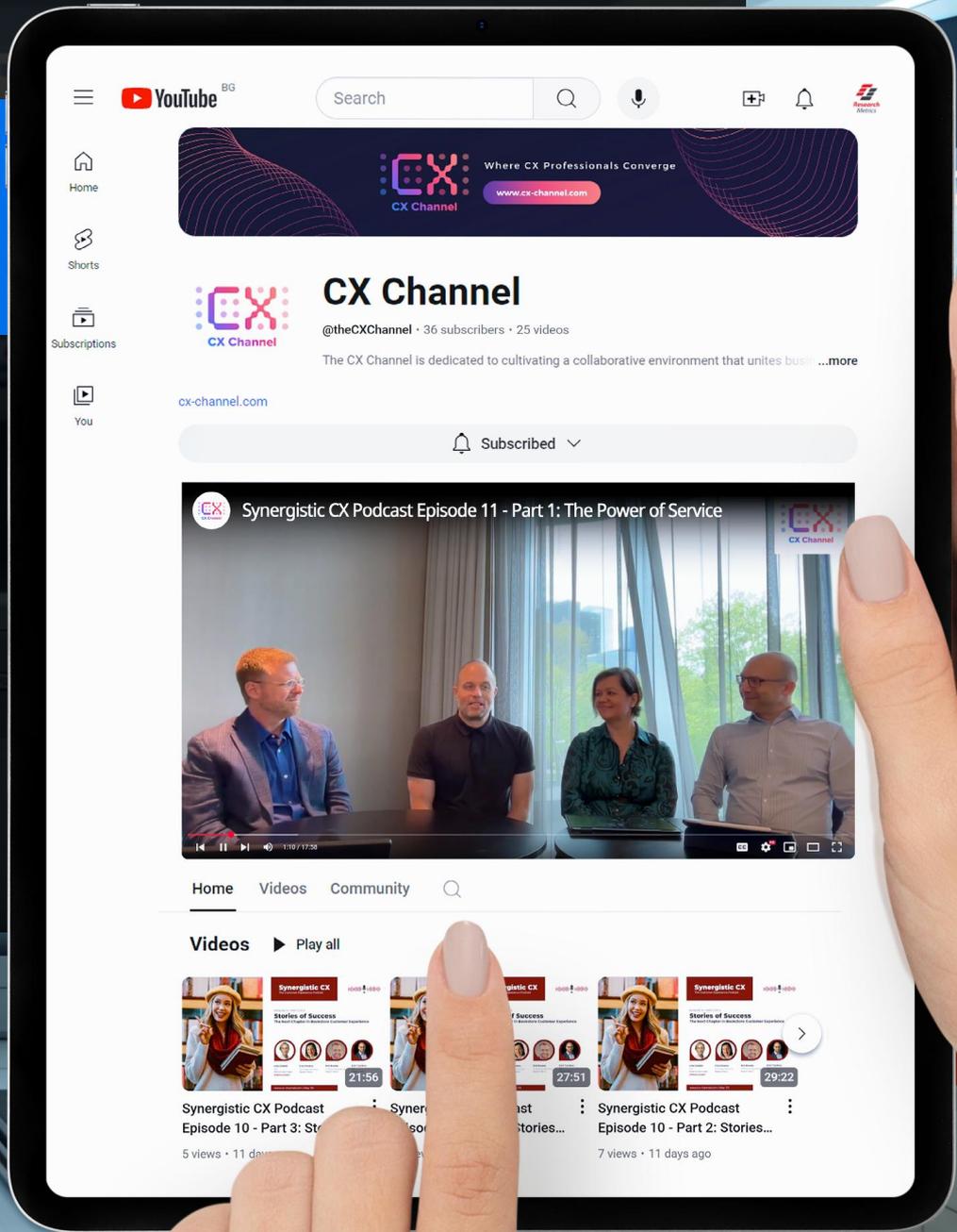
Evolving analytics capabilities now extend beyond manual dashboards, as AI can swiftly sift vast feedback streams into targeted insight pipelines. *“I think from an analytics point of view, particularly text analytics...using AI to really spot the trends and narrow in on the trends and help you with the analytics.”* Andy explains. AI can pre-process thousands of customer reviews, survey comments, and mystery-shop notes to surface critical patterns within minutes. This automated filtering allows analysts to concentrate on crafting clear, example-driven narratives that resonate with store managers and guiding quick fixes. Collaboration between AI insights and human expertise ensures that CX improvements are both data-backed and relevant to staff realities.



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www.cx-channel.com/podcasts







THE VALUE OF PRODUCT RECOMMENDATION MYSTERY SHOPPING

By Andy Firth





As the biggest Mystery Shopping provider in the UK, Ipsos conducts a broad range of Mystery Shopping.

Product Recommendation Mystery Shopping (MS) is the most common 'type' of MS used by manufacturers who do not own the network of stores through which they sell their products and services. It is critical for these organizations to understand how their products are being sold by employees at the point-of-enquiry, and the only way to gain a truly objective assessment of this is Mystery Shopping.

We work for clients across a broad range of sectors, including manufacturers selling big-ticket items as well as FMCG providers, where the focus is on 'first recommendation', due to the relationship between advocacy and sales. On the flip side, identifying which competitor products / services are being recommended, and whether there is any negativity expressed towards the brand are also key components of an effective Mystery Shopping exercise.

What is important for manufacturing clients to understand is what influences employees to recommend, and how manufacturers can work with retailers to ensure the best outcomes for their product.

In addition, as the data from the survey shows, just recommending a product isn't enough. In order to make the sale, the employee has to demonstrate knowledge and offer the solution which suits the customer needs. Clear information also needs to be provided on finance and, crucially, the next steps such as delivery. This is particularly important, because lack of clarity on what is included (e.g. a delivery charge) and the delivery itself can be significant pain points for the customer, damaging the brand (of both the manufacturer and retailer).

PRODUCT RECOMMENDATION BUSINESS QUESTIONS

Whilst the focus here has been on Electronics, Product Recommendation Mystery Shopping is used by organizations across multiple sectors. And, whilst the product may differ, the business questions are still the same:

1. Are employees in third-party partners recommending our product?
2. If they are, what are they saying about it? And are they saying anything negative?
3. Which competitors' products are they recommending; and why?

Indeed, the only way these organizations can answer those questions is through Mystery Shopping. No other method (including consumer surveys or interviews with staff) can provide a detailed, objective analysis of real point-of-sale conversations. In addition, the insights and recommendations these studies deliver are highly actionable, allowing organizations to focus on improvements in such things as training, retailer communications and in-store marketing investment.

In many categories, a customer will know what they want to buy and undertake their shopping accordingly (e.g. online). However, in the categories where Product Recommendation MS is commonly used, many customers choose to visit a store because they are looking for expertise and advice – this includes telco, tech, white goods, furniture, OTC pharmaceuticals, beauty and cosmetics. And, for these enquiries, the advice / recommendation of the employee is critical in influencing the sale.

For example, someone is suffering with back pain for the first time but cannot get an immediate appointment with a doctor and, therefore, visits a local pharmacy. Once there, they are very reliant on the advice from the expert (i.e. the pharmacist) and if they are recommended a product, the likelihood of a sale is very high. If, however, the doctor says something negative it is very unlikely the sale will be made. This interaction can only be assessed using Mystery Shopping. By undertaking this type of research, the pharmaceutical provider will gain a unique insight into how their product is being sold, whether they are losing out to competitors and, critically, where they need to focus to improve visibility.

Of course, the Mystery Shopping survey has to be well designed, and as the world's biggest Mystery Shopping provider and leading member of the MSPA, Ipsos are experts in this area. This includes helping clients construct an appropriate sample, designing an effective questionnaire and scorecard, advising on the most appropriate shopper profiles and scenarios; and analyzing the data alongside other data-sources to deliver truly actionable insights.

Andy Firth

Head of Advisory & Analytics,
Channel Performance UK, Ipsos

www.ipsos.com





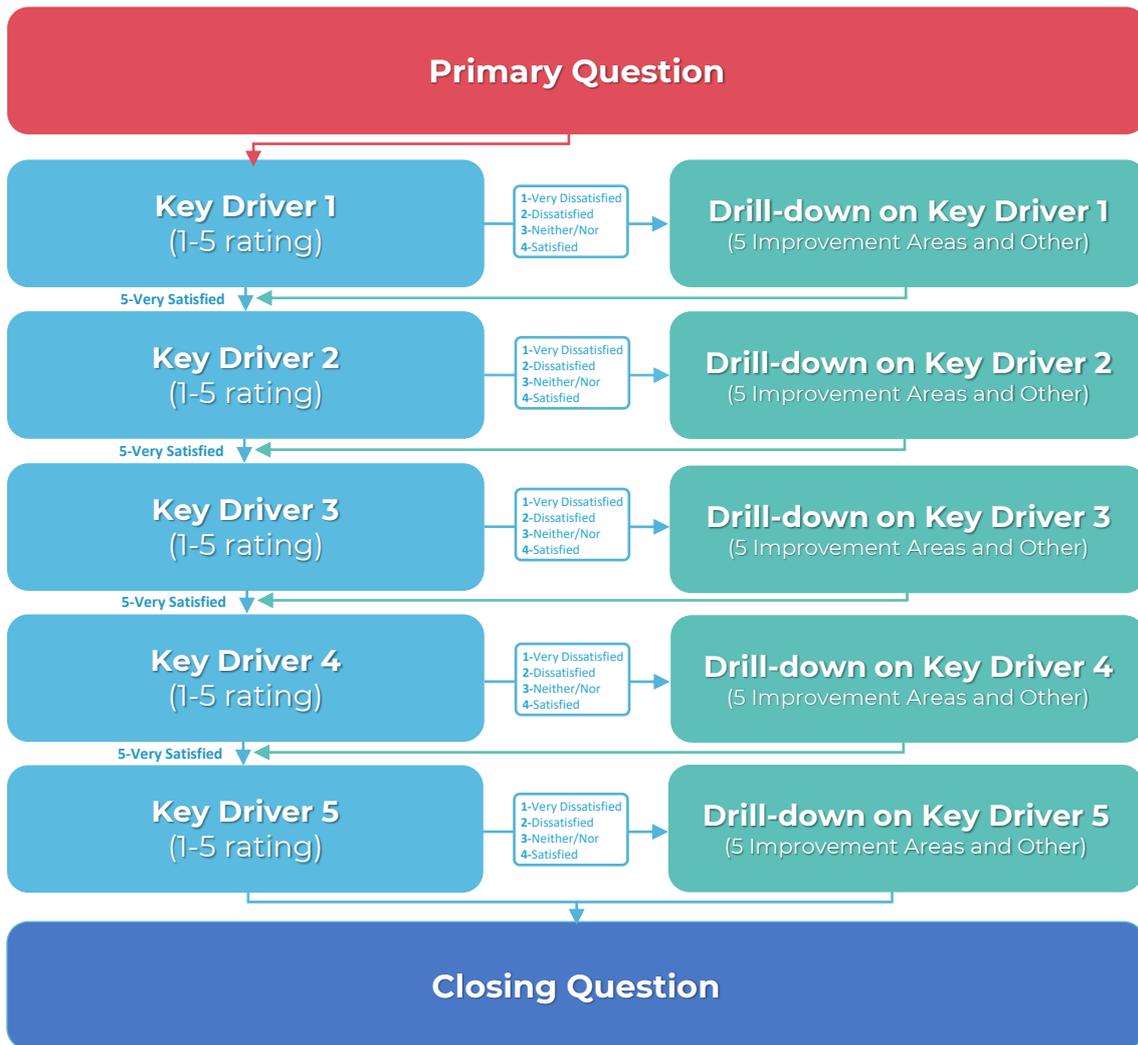
Creating a Starter VoC Survey

A well-crafted VoC survey helps retailers pinpoint shopper priorities - from the first greeting and hands-on product evaluation to expert consultations, seamless checkout, and reliable post-purchase support, providing the insights needed to fine-tune every touchpoint.

This section walks you through creating your starter electronics VoC survey: writing clear, targeted questions on staff welcome, device performance, expert advice, sales and checkout ease, and after-sales care; choosing a simple 1-5 scale plus an overall recommendation score; and using feedback to enhance service protocols, optimize product demos, and boost repeat business.

CREATING A STARTER VOC SURVEY

A starter VoC survey can be created by harnessing insights from customer sentiments, thoughts, and feelings expressed in their online reviews and **focusing on the topics customers discuss most frequently.**



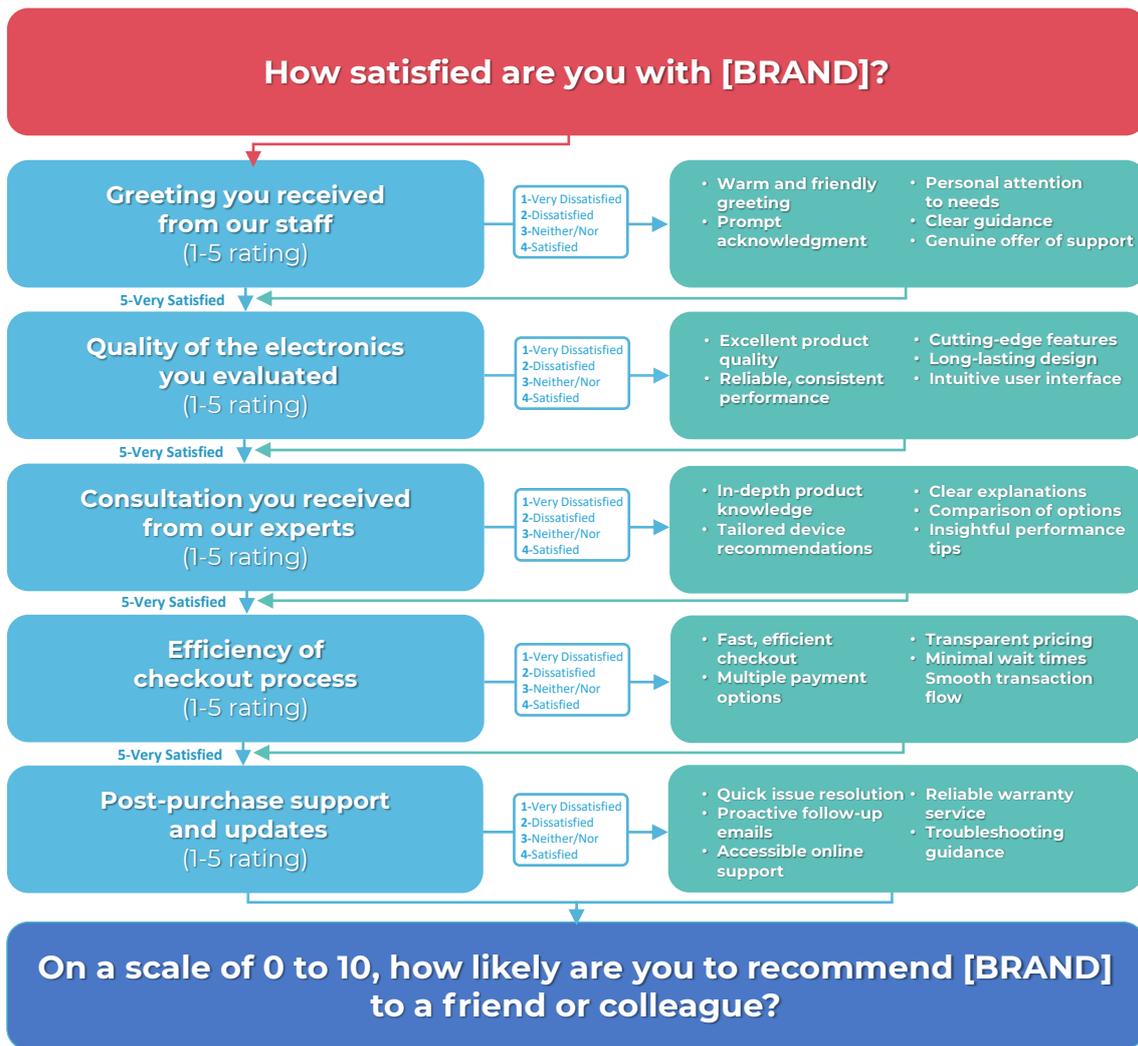
Primary Question: The starting point of the survey, setting the general direction and context. It gathers a quick overall snapshot on the customer's opinion of the brand, company, or product.

Closing Question: The final question posed to the respondent. This can capture valuable insights that might not otherwise fit the general format/structure of the survey.

KEY DRIVER AND DRILL-DOWN QUESTIONS

Primary Question: Rate “How satisfied are you with [BRAND]” on a scale from 1 ('Very Dissatisfied') to 5 ('Very Satisfied')

Closing Question: Evaluate customer retention and advocacy potential, gaining insights into the customer experience.

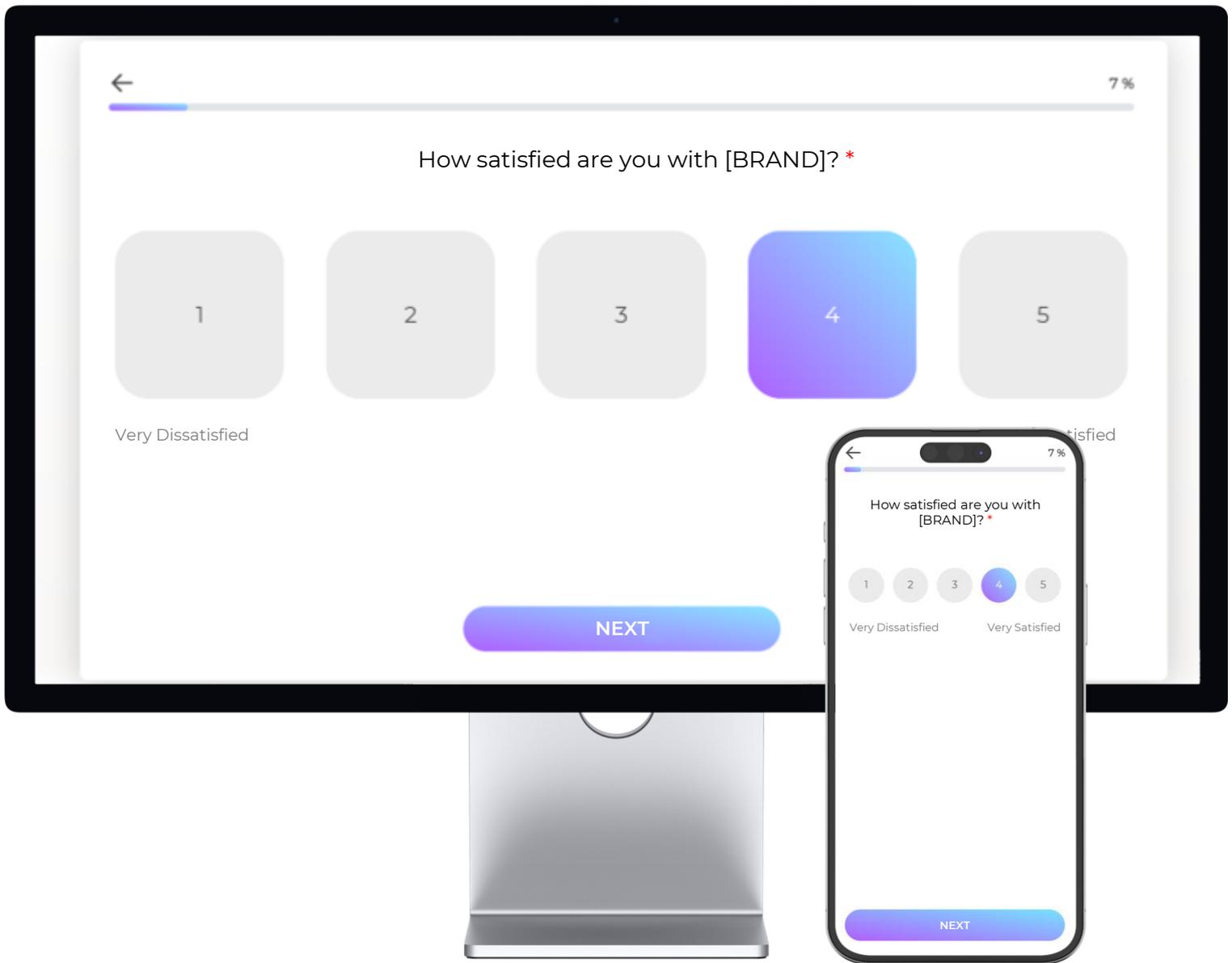


Key Driver Question: Used to assess user satisfaction on top 5 critical industry topics using a 1-5 scale.

Drill-Down Questions: Respondents not fully satisfied identify their top dissatisfaction factors.

A STARTER VOC SURVEY FOR ELECTRONIC STORES

Creating a starter Voice of the Customer (VoC) survey based on insights from online customer reviews ensures that the survey is relevant and focused on actual customer experiences. This approach leads to higher engagement and response rates, as it addresses the issues and trends that matter most to customers. Such a survey provides valuable data for prioritizing business strategies and improving customer satisfaction.



← 15 %

How satisfied were you with the GREETING YOU RECEIVED FROM OUR STAFF?*

1 2 3 4 5

Very Dissatisfied Very Satisfied

NEXT

← 23 %

What part of "GREETING YOU RECEIVED FROM OUR STAFF" fell short?*

Warm and friendly greeting

Prompt acknowledgment

Personal attention to needs

Clear guidance

Genuine offer of support

Other

NEXT

← 30 %

How satisfied were you with the QUALITY OF THE ELECTRONICS YOU EVALUATED?*

1 2 3 4 5

Very Dissatisfied Very Satisfied

NEXT

← 38 %

What part of "QUALITY OF THE ELECTRONICS YOU EVALUATED" fell short?*

Premium product quality

Reliable, consistent performance

Cutting-edge features

Long-lasting design

Intuitive user interface

Other

NEXT

← 46 %

How satisfied were you with the CONSULTATION YOU RECEIVED FROM OUR EXPERTS?*

1 2 3 4 5

Very Dissatisfied Very Satisfied

NEXT

← 53 %

What part of "CONSULTATION YOU RECEIVED FROM OUR EXPERTS" fell short?*

In-depth product knowledge

Tailored device recommendations

Clear explanations

Comparison of options

Insightful performance tips

Other

NEXT

← 61 %

How satisfied were you with the EFFICIENCY OF CHECKOUT PROCESS?*

1 2 3 4 5

Very Dissatisfied Very Satisfied

NEXT

← 69 %

What part of "EFFICIENCY OF CHECKOUT PROCESS" fell short?*

Fast, efficient checkout

Multiple payment options

Transparent pricing

Minimal wait times

Smooth transaction flow

Other

NEXT

← 76 %

How satisfied were you with the POST-PURCHASE SUPPORT AND UPDATES?*

1 2 3 4 5

Very Dissatisfied Very Satisfied

NEXT

← 84 %

What part of "POST-PURCHASE SUPPORT AND UPDATES" fell short?*

Quick issue resolution

Proactive follow-up emails

Accessible online support

Reliable warranty service

Troubleshooting guidance

Other

NEXT

← 92 %

On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend [BRAND] to a friend or colleague?*

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not likely at all Extremely likely

NEXT

VoC SURVEY NEXT STEPS

In this 'starter' VoC survey, we selected the top five key driver questions based on what customers talk about and frequently mention in negative aspects in their online reviews. The drill-down questions were chosen following the same principle.

The VoC Survey Process

	Awareness	Consideration	Conversion	Retention	Advocacy
People	0.27%	22.44%	11.93%	5.33%	0.94%
Process	0.30%	2.10%	9.79%	20.16%	0.78%
Product	0.27%	2.21%	5.87%	4.12%	0.05%
Place	1.26%	0.67%	3.82%	1.08%	0.12%
Price	0.07%	0.45%	5.16%	0.37%	0.04%
Promotion	0.01%	0.05%	0.23%	0.04%	0.04%
Physical Evidence	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Step 1: Data Analysis

We begin by analyzing online reviews and ratings to create a customer response score matrix. The Marketing Mix-Funnel matrix highlights how different Marketing Mix Elements perform across various Customer Journey Stages.

Step 2: Identify Critical Areas

From the Marketing-Mix Funnel, we identify the top five areas showing the most critical feedback, based on their online reviews and ratings scores.

Step 3: Key Drivers

These areas are selected for deeper examination in the VoC survey. They are converted to questions, following the pattern "How satisfied were you with...", used to assess user satisfaction using a 1-5 scale.

Step 4: Key Driver Details

For each key driver, additional questions are designed and visualized if the driver is scored with a 4 or lower. This direct questioning helps to drill down into the exact reasons behind the customer negative experiences.

Step 5: Data Collection

The VoC survey is distributed, and data is collected.

Step 6: Actionable Insights

The collected data reveals specific aspects that negatively affect the overall customer perception of the brand. With this detailed insight, the company can directly target improvements in the critical areas to enhance the customer experience and improve brand reputation.

NOTE: It is up to the CX professional to selectively fine-tune and adjust the key drivers and appropriate drill-down questions, considering the specific needs and objectives of the business.

GREETING RECEIVED FROM STAFF

The moment guests enter an electronics store, a warm welcome from staff shapes their first impression. Friendly greetings, genuine smiles, and attentive eye contact signal readiness to assist and build immediate rapport. A positive reception sets the tone for a seamless shopping journey.

The top 5 key driver details, followed by an additional 2, offer detailed insight into areas where the **GREETING RECEIVED FROM STAFF** key driver may fall short.



TOP 5 KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Warm and friendly greeting
- Prompt acknowledgment
- Personal attention to needs
- Clear guidance
- Genuine offer of support

ADDITIONAL KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Eye contact upon arrival
- Enthusiastic welcome
- Personalized introductory questions
- Friendly first impression
- Attentive listening at first Hello
- Respectful acknowledgment
- Open body language
- Polite verbal introduction
- Courteous handshake or nod
- Friendly ice-breaker comment

QUALITY OF ELECTRONICS EVALUATED

The quality of electronic products underpins customer satisfaction and builds lasting confidence in the store. In-depth assessments of performance, reliability, and durability ensure each device meets real-world demands. Premium, high-functioning gadgets reassure shoppers, encourage repeat visits, and boost the store's reputation.

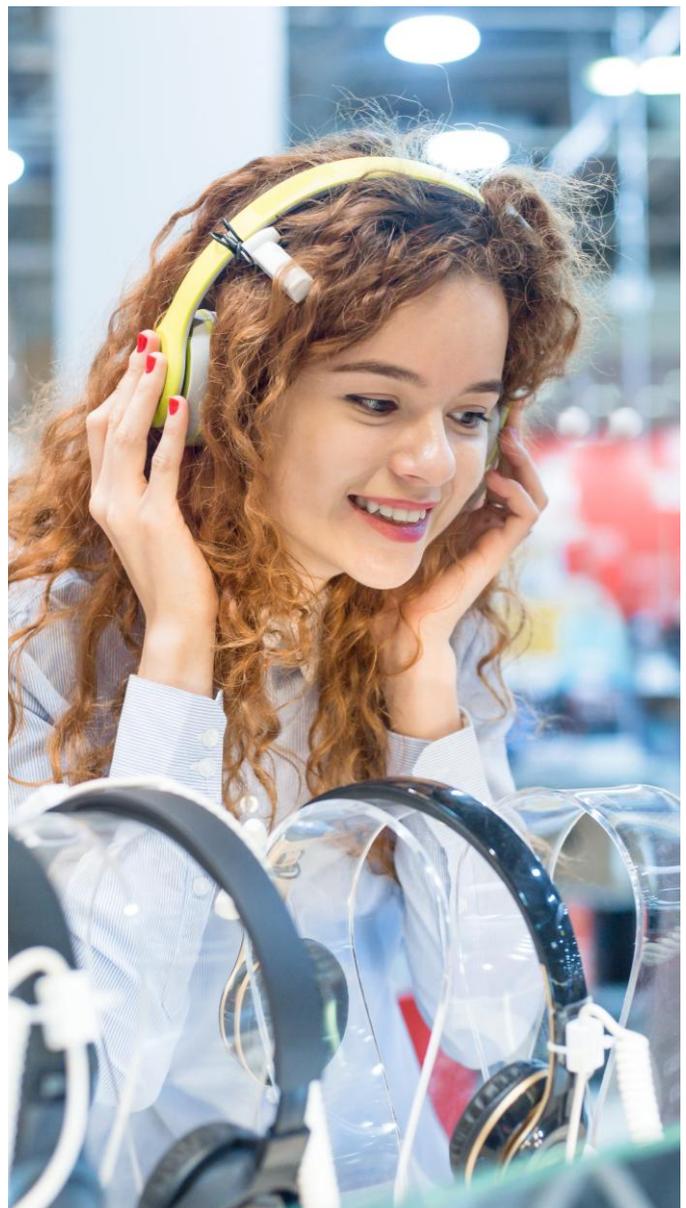
The top 5 key driver details, followed by an additional 10, offer detailed insight into areas where the **QUALITY OF ELECTRONICS EVALUATED** key driver may fall short.

TOP 5 KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Excellent product quality
- Reliable, consistent performance
- Cutting-edge features
- Long-lasting design
- Intuitive user interface

ADDITIONAL KEY DRIVER DETAILS

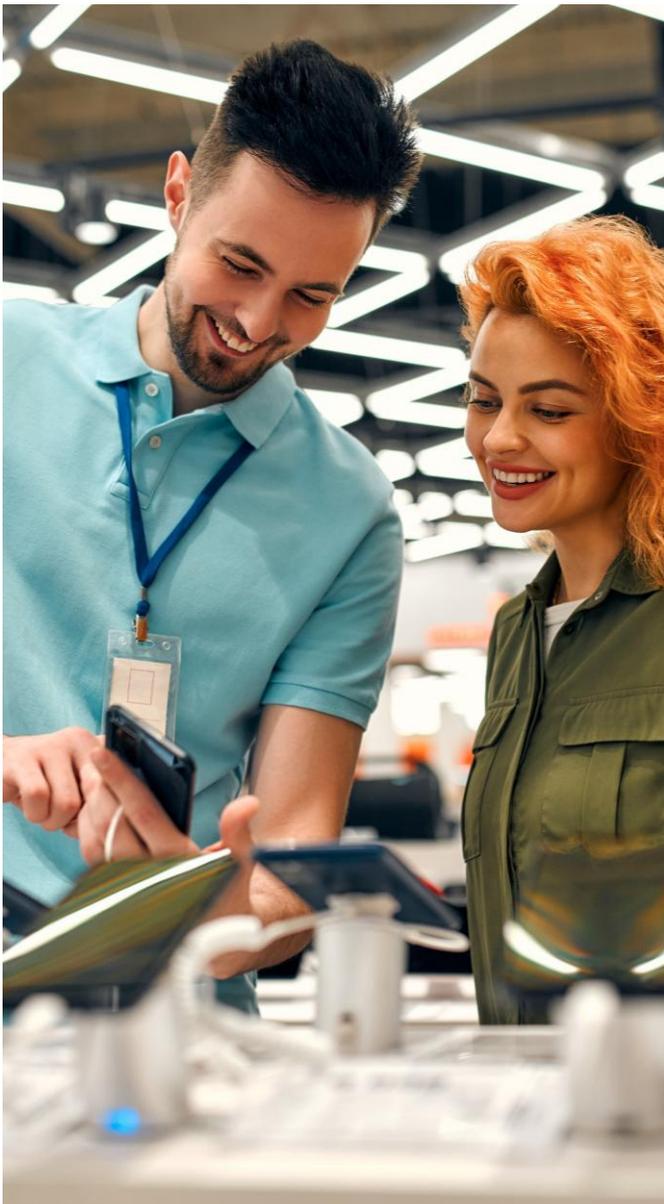
- Durable chassis and build feel
- Functionality via demo units
- Crisp display and sound test
- Intact, high-quality packaging
- Complete accessory inclusion
- Solid button and port operation
- Visible warranty/certification labels
- Responsive touchscreen/controls
- Sturdy hinge and component fit
- Informative specification sheets



CONSULTATION RECEIVED FROM EXPERTS

Personalized advice from knowledgeable specialists bridges the gap between technical specs and real-world needs. Expert guidance on compatibility, usage, and setup ensures customers feel supported and understood. Customized consultations foster trust and simplify complex purchasing choices.

The top 5 key driver details, followed by an additional 10, offer detailed insight into areas where the **CONSULTATION RECEIVED FROM EXPERTS** key driver may fall short.



TOP 5 KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- In-depth product knowledge
- Tailored device recommendations
- Clear explanations
- Comparison of options
- Insightful performance tips

ADDITIONAL KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Empathetic listening to needs
- Honest pros & cons discussion
- Clear demonstration of features
- Patient step-by-step guidance
- Comparison of similar models
- Advice on future upgrades
- Practical usage examples
- Tailored budget considerations
- Answer to technical questions
- Knowledge of technology trends

EFFICIENCY OF CHECKOUT PROCESS

A streamlined payment experience minimizes wait times and prevents frustration at the point of sale. Clear signage, multiple payment options, and well-trained cashiers keep lines moving smoothly. Fast, friction-free checkout reinforces convenience and satisfaction.

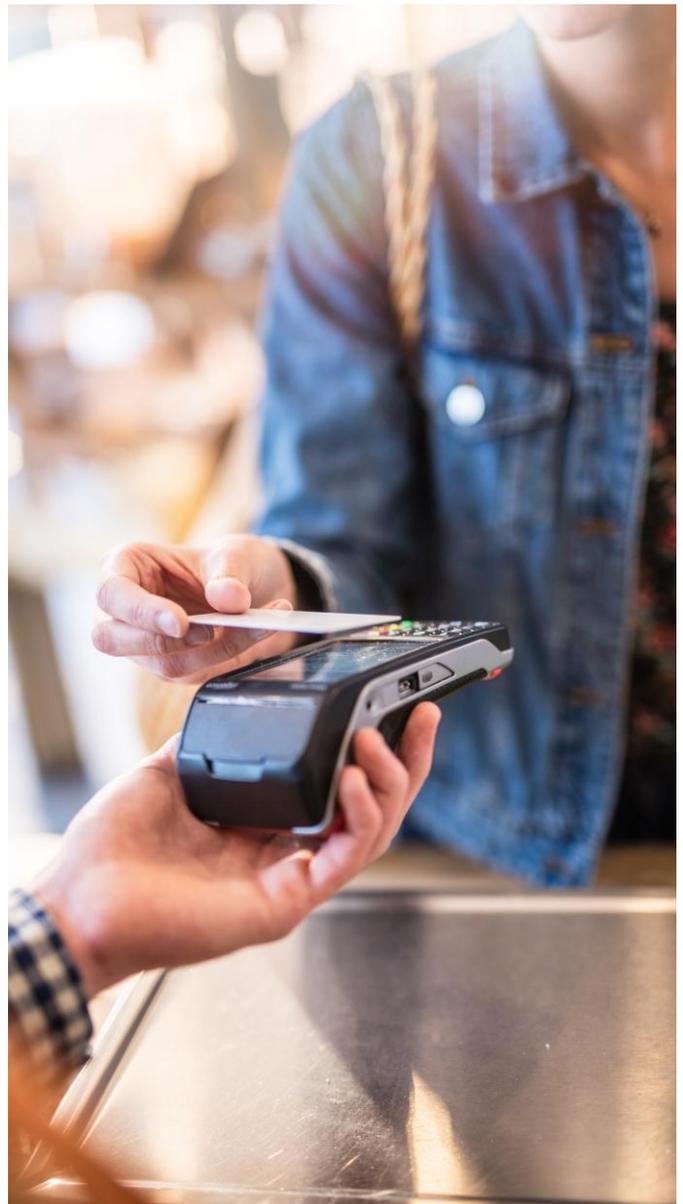
The top 5 key driver details, followed by an additional 10, offer detailed insight into areas where the **EFFICIENCY OF CHECKOUT PROCESS** key driver may fall short.

TOP 5 KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- **Fast, efficient checkout**
- **Multiple payment options**
- **Transparent pricing**
- **Minimal wait times**
- **Smooth transaction flow**

ADDITIONAL KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Intuitive self-checkout
- Assistance during payment
- Smooth loyalty card scan
- Quick invoice printing
- Well-organized payment stations
- Clear signage to checkout lanes
- Digital receipt delivery option
- Seamless wrapping service
- Effective queue management
- Hassle-free return authorization



POST-PURCHASE SUPPORT AND UPDATES

Ongoing assistance through tutorials, firmware updates, and service alerts extend product lifespan and usability. Proactive communications – such as follow-up emails, how-to videos or maintenance reminders, show customers they remain valued beyond the sale. Reliable aftercare strengthens loyalty and encourages word-of-mouth referrals.

The top 5 key driver details, followed by an additional 10, offer detailed insight into areas where the **POST-PURCHASE SUPPORT AND UPDATES** key driver may fall short.



TOP 5 KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Quick issue resolution
- Proactive follow-up emails
- Accessible online support
- Reliable warranty service
- Troubleshooting guidance

ADDITIONAL KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Friendly follow-up calls
- Timely software update alerts
- Helpful how-to video links
- Proactive service reminders
- Dedicated support hotline
- Efficient parts replacement service
- On-site repair appointment booking
- Clear escalation process
- Helpful FAQs follow-up
- Scheduled maintenance tips

BEYOND THE STARTER TWO MORE KEY DRIVERS

Our Starter Voice of the Customer (VoC) survey for electronics stores covers several essential in-store touchpoints, including two added drivers - **Clarity of Terms and Services** and **Store Ambience**. These elements ensure shoppers fully grasp warranty details, return policies, and feel comfortable spending time discovering gadgets under welcoming lighting.

Adding these drivers emphasizes that clear, concise service agreements and a thoughtfully-designed retail space are crucial to customer confidence. Often overlooked, these aspects repeatedly emerge as decisive factors in whether guests feel secure and inclined to return.

By foregrounding transparent policy explanations alongside an inviting, tech-driven environment, electronics retailers can enhance overall satisfaction. When customers enjoy browsing in a modern, accessible setting and understand all terms and conditions, they're more likely to revisit, explore additional product lines, and recommend the store – building lasting loyalty and positive referrals.

CLARITY OF TERMS AND SERVICES

Transparent return policies, warranty explanations, and service fees help customers feel confident in their purchase. Easily-accessible information - whether online or in-store - prevents misunderstandings and reduces support calls. Clear terms empower shoppers and foster reciprocal, lasting relationships.

The top 5 key driver details, followed by an additional 10, offer insight into areas where the **CLARITY OF TERMS AND SERVICES** key driver may fall short.



TOP 5 KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Clear service terms and conditions
- Easy-to-find warranty information
- Straightforward return policies
- Transparent fees and surcharges
- Useful product information guides

ADDITIONAL KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Simple repair service timelines
- Accessory coverage details
- Clear repair turnaround times
- Readable service agreement format
- Highlighted exclusion lists
- Clear technical information
- Well-labeled subscription tiers
- Clear software update policies
- Noticeable disclaimer sections
- Clear extended-warranty options

ELECTRONIC STORE AMBIENCE

A thoughtfully designed showroom with dynamic displays and organized aisles enhances the shopping experience. Appropriate lighting, comfortable layouts, and interactive demos invite customers to explore at leisure. An engaging environment encourages guests to discover and compare products with ease.

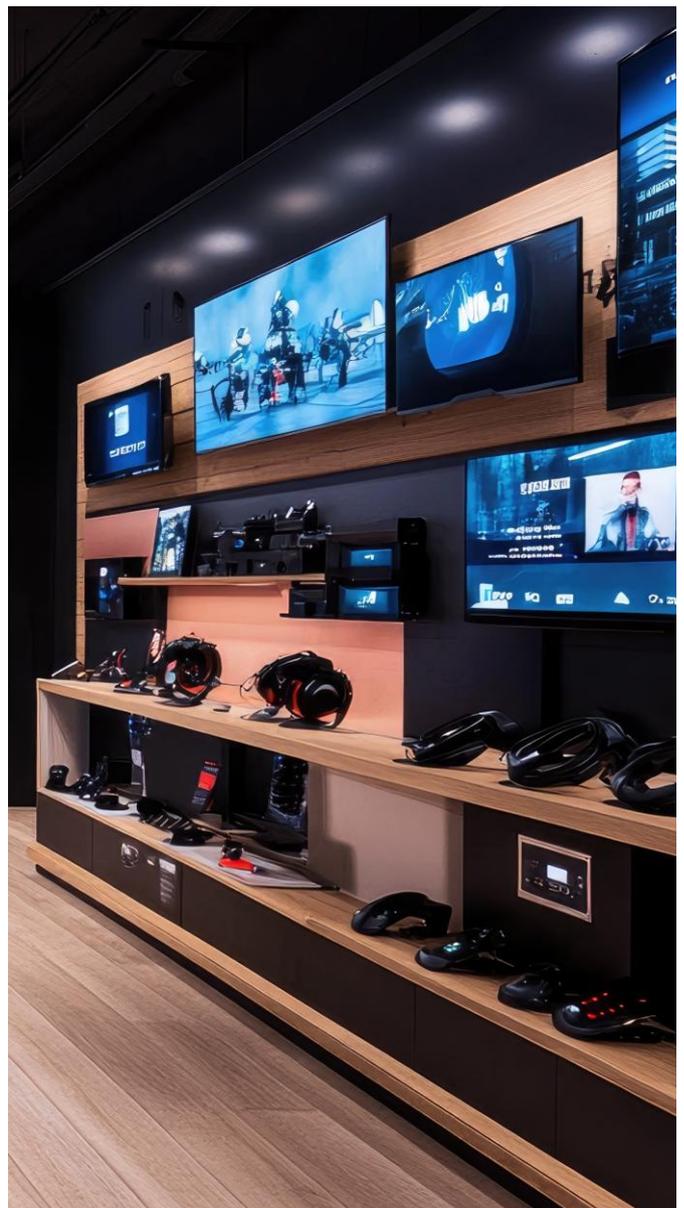
The top 5 key driver details, followed by an additional 10, offer a detailed insight into areas where the **ELECTRONIC STORE AMBIENCE** key driver may fall short.

TOP 5 KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Bright, uniform lighting
- Organized product displays
- Comfortable browsing space
- Pleasant background music
- Clean, clutter-free aisles

ADDITIONAL KEY DRIVER DETAILS

- Clear wayfinding signage
- Inviting demo stations
- Temperature-controlled comfort
- Spacious checkout areas
- Visual merchandising accents
- Friendly staff presence
- Organized accessory wall layouts
- Fresh, modern decor
- Hands-on gadget testing tables
- Clearly-zoned product categories



FROM QUALITY AND DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS TO CX EXCELLENCE



When CX professionals talk about data-driven decisions, continuous improvement, and operational excellence, they're unknowingly echoing the wisdom of a man born more than a century ago: W. Edwards Deming (1900–1993).

Deming, an American engineer, statistician, and management consultant, transformed modern industry with ideas that remain strikingly relevant to CX today. Best known for helping post – World War II Japan rebuild its economy, Deming taught manufacturers how to weave quality into their processes rather than inspecting defects afterward. His work sparked the Japanese quality revolution, leading to global recognition for companies obsessed with excellence.

Deming is associated with the [Plan-Do-Check-Act \(PDCA\)](#) cycle, a simple yet powerful framework for problem-solving and continuous improvement. Deming also famously declared, *“Without data, you're just another person with an opinion.”* In today's CX world, this is more than a pithy quote – it is a guiding principle.

“Without data, you’re just another person with an opinion.”

- W. Edwards Deming -

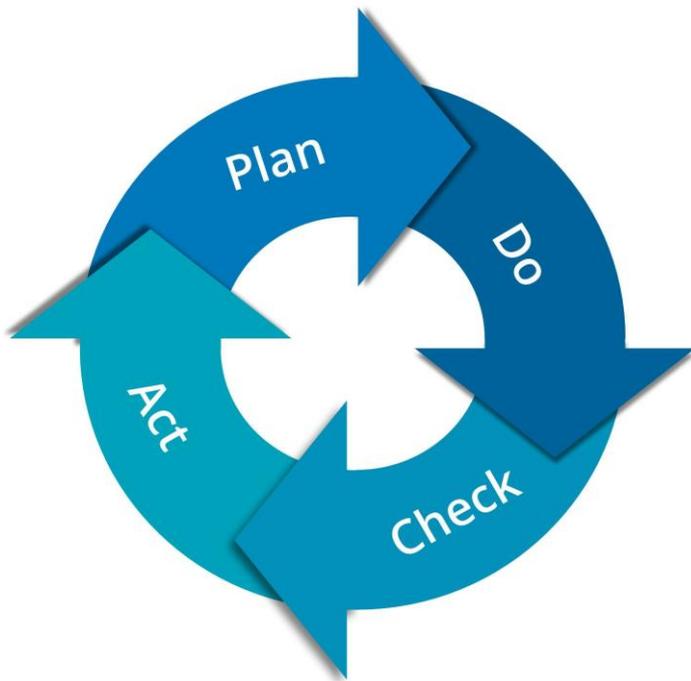


Modern customer experience leaders face overwhelming volumes of data: surveys, mystery shopping results, NPS scores, operational metrics, social listening, and more. Yet Deming’s message rings clear: data must be used purposefully. It is not enough to collect scores - organizations must tie insights to clear objectives, analyze trends systematically, and drive actions that improve customer journeys.

Deming’s legacy lives on through the Deming Prize in Japan, awarded for significant contributions to quality management. His teachings underpin the foundations of Lean and Six Sigma, disciplines now deeply embedded in many CX strategies. These methodologies help teams reduce waste, improve consistency, and focus resources where they drive the most customer value.

At its heart, Deming’s philosophy reminds us that customer experience design isn’t merely a collection of touchpoints – it is a system. Just as in manufacturing, inconsistencies in processes ripple outward, eroding trust and loyalty. Deming’s emphasis on systems thinking urges CX leaders to look beyond isolated metrics and examine how people, processes, and technology interconnect to shape customer perceptions and how each small factor can impact the customer journey.

In a world where customers expect seamless, personalized, and effortless experiences, Deming’s timeless advice feels as urgent as ever. After all, in CX as in quality, success depends not on opinions but on data, discipline, and a relentless commitment to making things better every day.



The PDCA Cycle

Continuous improvement of processes, products, or services.

In the context of customer experience, PDCA helps businesses understand what contributes to customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction and implement improvements.



Plan

Define clear CX objectives by mapping the customer journey and analyzing feedback.



Do

Execute pilot initiatives and collect customer feedback and performance metrics.



Check

Analyze the collected data to see how well the changes met CX goals and where gaps remain.



Act

Implement improvements, adjust any underperforming elements and prepare for the next cycle.

EXAMPLES



EXAMPLE 1

Toyota – PDCA in Customer Experience

W. Edwards Deming’s Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle became legendary through Toyota’s approach to quality and continuous improvement.

But Toyota doesn’t limit this mindset to manufacturing. Today, they apply PDCA to customer experience by:

- Collecting customer feedback systematically across markets
- Planning solutions to address recurring issues or customer pain points
- Testing those solutions in controlled pilots before wider rollout
- Checking results to ensure changes improve quality and satisfaction

This disciplined process ensures improvements are data-driven, consistent, and customer-focused – hallmarks of Deming’s philosophy.

EXAMPLE 2

Amazon – Data, Action, and Working Backwards

Deming insisted: “Without data, you’re just another person with an opinion.” At Amazon, that principle is almost a religion.

- Amazon measures everything – from clickstreams and delivery times to customer sentiment.
- Data isn’t just for reporting – it’s used to continuously iterate and improve processes, whether tweaking website layouts or refining delivery routes.
- Their “Working Backwards” approach mirrors Deming’s focus on purpose: they start by defining the customer problem first, then develop solutions to address it.

At every level, Amazon embodies Deming’s belief that data fuels improvement, and that great experiences begin by understanding – and obsessing over – what customers truly need.



THE HOME OF
MYSTERY SHOPPING
CONNECT, LEARN & SHARE
WITH THE PROFESSIONALS

MSPA[®] EUROPE/AFRICA
MYSTERY SHOPPING PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION

WHO WE ARE

MSPA is the representative Trade Association for companies involved in the Mystery Shopping industry. The Association operates on a regional basis worldwide, with chapters located in America, Europe/Africa and Asia/Pacific. Member companies unite as a common body for the purpose of strengthening the Mystery Shopping industry through combined efforts and actions.



OUR GOAL

Our goal is to improve and stimulate the acceptance, performance, reputation and use of Mystery Shopping services worldwide.

The primary goals of MSPA are to:

- Establish professional standards and ethics for the industry
- Educate providers, clients and shoppers to improve quality of service
- Improve the image of the industry through public relations and professional conduct
- Promote members to other industry associations and prospective clients

With over 450 member companies worldwide, our diverse membership includes marketing, research and merchandising companies, private investigation firms and training organisations as well as companies that specialise in using, supporting and providing Mystery Shopping services.



INTERESTED IN JOINING US?

Find out more www.mspa-ea.org

Or by contacting Nikky Alkemade
Executive Director by email or phone:

Email: nikky@mspa-ea.org

Phone: +31-70-358 73 71



MSPA Europe/Africa
P.O. Box 82276
2508 EG The Hague
The Netherlands

THE BENEFITS OF MSPA MEMBERSHIP

- Work to industry standards by adhering to our code of ethics
- Receive training support for your executive staff, support staff and mystery shoppers
- Certification of mystery shoppers
- Access to the latest news on industry trends and guidance on best practice
- Worldwide networking opportunities with industry experts
- Support with arbitration if conflicts arise with other members
- Annual EU/Africa conference attendance - discuss best practice with 250 other members from 50 countries across Europe and Africa
- Discounts on all worldwide MSPA conferences
- Access to education workshops and learning modules for your employees

MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

MEMBER MSPA

FULL MEMBERSHIP

As a full member you'll have an unlimited opportunity to connect, learn and share with the industry leaders in Mystery Shopping techniques and working practices. Full membership costs € 550 per year and provides you with access to all the benefits that MSPA has to offer, including the members area of the website which contains useful features such as our Knowledge Centre, FAQ, Hints & Tips, 'Ask the Governor' Q&A and Jobs Board.

MSPA CANDIDATE MEMBER

CANDIDATE MEMBERSHIP

We recognise that some companies that are new to the Mystery Shopping industry still need our support to grow their client base. Therefore, we offer Candidate membership to companies that have been trading for less than 2 years but meet all other criteria, at a cost of € 325 per year. Candidate Members are encouraged to participate fully in MSPA activities and may progress to Full Membership in the future.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER MSPA

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

MSPA offers Associate Membership to companies or individuals involved in the industry, but who don't directly offer Mystery Shopping services. Associate Members include technology vendors, academics, training companies, HR agencies and other companies that cooperate with or sell products/services to Mystery Shopping providers. This category of membership costs € 550 per Year.

All MSPA membership applicants need to provide proof that they operate professionally and with integrity before they are accepted into our organisation. More detailed information on member benefits and criteria for each membership category can be found on our website, however as a minimum you must be able to demonstrate:

- A reputation for excellence in operation
- Agreement to abide by and to apply the MSPA Code of Professional Ethics
- Agreement to abide by and to apply the MSPA Code of Professional Standards
- Official proof of business existence (i.e. articles of incorporation, insurance records, or business license)





SPREADING THE WORD

Research Metrics and the CX Channel at MSPA Europe/Africa 2025, Tallin

Tallinn, Estonia, played host to the **MSPA Europe/Africa Conference**, bringing together over 190 delegates from 45 countries and more than 100 companies. It is the largest mystery shopping event worldwide – a powerful testament to how vibrant and essential this industry remains.

At the **CX Channel**, our mission is to connect and empower Customer Experience professionals by sharing the latest concepts and technology on a global scale. By blending community insights with new methodologies and the transformative force of AI and digital tech, we strive to enrich CX across every industry with a humanized and data-informed approach to the future.

Being present at MSPA Europe/Africa 2025 was more than simply attending a conference – it was about connecting directly with our audience: industry leaders, practitioners, and innovators who share our passion for pushing CX forward. These face-to-face conversations and live sessions offered invaluable insights into the challenges and breakthroughs shaping our sector today.

Adding to this synergy, **Research Metrics**, a long-time sponsor of the conference, and the CX Channel team, had fully booked schedules, connecting and learning alongside our clients and many guests at the event.

This year's conference theme, "**Help us... SPREAD THE WORD**" challenged participants to extend the **Reach** of their services, increase their **Relevance**, and demonstrate a clear **Return** on investment. These pillars resonated across sessions, networking, and vibrant discussions.

"Now we see technology as our safety line with AI to help us generate more content quickly and accurately and to help translate, convert, process and validate our data!"

Andy Firth
Incoming President
MSPA Europe/Africa

SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE

The **CX Channel** was proud to be part of this global gathering, both as observers and active contributors shaping the future of customer experience and operational excellence, and as an active associate member of MSPA Europe/Africa.

Cristiani Oliveira, co-host of The CX Channel Team and CX Strategy Ambassador of Research Metrics, was one of the trainers for the pre-conference **Operational Excellence Workshop – Make the Most of Your Operations in the New AI World**. Together with **Stefaan Vandrogenbroeck**, CEO of Multi Value, Cristiani delivered a session focused on the four pillars of operational excellence: **Efficiency, Accuracy, Scalability, and Agility**.

Key topics included designing and implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), agile project management, and leveraging AI to automate



Picture: Courtesy of MSPA Europe Africa

© MSPA



repetitive tasks and improve fieldwork speed and data quality. The second session delved into essential metrics and KPIs for operational success, offering attendees practical ideas and best practices for project management and total quality management frameworks.

Kerli Zeiger-Sosaar, CEO at Dive Group, and **Monica Luciani**, Mystery Shopping Director at Melbius, led modules on **Process Optimization and Workflow Design**, as well as Team Management and Collaboration. Beyond the traditional emphasis on planning and clear job descriptions, Monica and Kerli highlighted the need for flexibility to keep pace with today's fast-moving marketplace. Another crucial discussion centered on navigating cultural differences in international partnerships and understanding generational shifts in workplace expectations – emphasizing that new perspectives can drive positive change.

SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CONFERENCE

Among many insightful sessions, our esteemed client **Jill Spencer**, Director of Business Intelligence at Proinsight and former MSPA Global Chair, delivered a standout presentation titled “**Driving Relevance and Return.**” Jill opened with a compelling ROI case study and led interactive discussions on translating mystery shopping data into tangible business value. We were particularly proud to see Jill share her experiences using the **Synergistic CX** framework, designed by Research Metrics. Her insights perfectly aligned with the conference’s theme, demonstrating how structured methodologies transform data into strategic action.



“Mystery shopping uncovers 96% of problems never reported through other feedback mechanisms. Developing a customised ROI calculator transforms abstract benefits into concrete financial projections.”

- Jill Spencer

SHARING OUR TECH JOURNEY

Erik Brooks, Vice President at Research Metrics and part of the core **CX Channel** team, joined other technology leaders on stage in the panel session “**Past, Present, and Future.**”

Relating to the title of the session, and with AI as a current context, the panelists shared transformative industry technology experiences from their past, commented on the present, and gave their insights into the future.

Of particular interest were Erik's comments on the advances in AI, sensor-based feedback, and new continuous-recording devices, both covert and in-store. Such technologies will open entirely new CX measurement methodologies, taking CX to the next level.



CONNECTING WITH CLIENTS



Research Metrics hosted an exclusive **Client Day** to showcase the latest developments of the Shopmetrics CX platform and CX Suite, and the **Synergistic CX** methodology. This session, hosted by **Emil Tsankov**, CEO, and **Erik Brooks**, VP, highlighted cutting-edge tools for data integration, advanced analytics, and AI-powered solutions designed to drive operational excellence, speed delivery, and deepen customer understanding.

One of the many engaging presentations covered commercial tools available to Research Metrics' clients included the innovative module "**From Prospect to Client in Five Easy Steps**":

1. Use the CX Dataverse prospecting tool to identify a prospect's industry, brand, and locations.
2. Click to add locations to the CX Suite platform.
3. Online reviews and ratings are pulled and analyzed automatically.
4. The CX Suite "auto-magically" generates VoC surveys and/or mystery shopping programs that can be executed instantly.
5. Providers gain near-immediate, real data to share with prospects or existing clients, delivering actionable insights across two of the four key CX program methodologies.

The Client Day also offered a glimpse into the future, previewing upcoming features strongly backed by AI that will transform how the CX Suite platform – and the industry – operate. Many tasks traditionally handled by mystery shoppers are poised to be heavily augmented by AI-driven sensor technology, underscoring the need for clients to adapt quickly to these advancements.



MORE ON AI

The hot topic amongst delegates was Artificial Intelligence. AI is rapidly transforming the mystery shopping industry, automating tasks that were once time-consuming and labour-intensive – such as data validation, sentiment analysis, and even certain observational checks traditionally performed by human shoppers. While this shift promises greater efficiency, speed, and consistency, it also presents a paradox: businesses face mounting pressure to reduce costs, yet many customized AI tools remain expensive to implement and maintain. As a result, companies must carefully balance the pursuit of innovation with financial sustainability, ensuring that technology investments deliver tangible value without eroding margins.

As companies embrace AI they must stay vigilant about risks tied to cybersecurity, GDPR, and emerging regulations like the EU AI Act. Handling vast amounts of personal and behavioural data demands robust safeguards to protect privacy and prevent breaches. Organizations need to ensure that new AI tools comply with legal standards and ethical guidelines to avoid hefty fines and preserve customer trust.

**“SPREAD THE WORD
AS WE CONNECT, LEARN
AND SHARE TOGETHER.”**

- MSPA Europe/Africa
The motto that feels more
relevant than ever!

**We hope to see the MSPA
community again next year
in Alicante, Spain!**

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS AND NEW LEADERSHIP

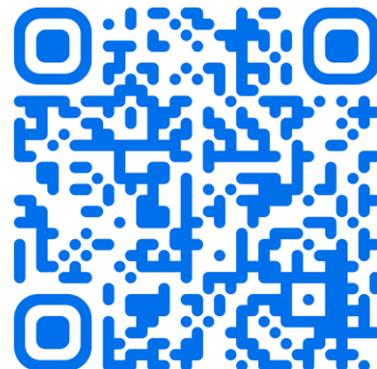
In addition to knowledge sharing, Tallinn provided the backdrop for significant updates within the MSPA Europe/Africa community. Vaclav Šojdel, President of MSPA Europe/Africa, presented the board for 2025/2026. Jill Spencer was re-elected to the board, and David Butruille from Qualimetrie (France) joined as a new director. Andy Firth from Ipsos UK was welcomed as the new President for 2025–2027, supported by Monica Luciani from Mebius (Italy) as Vice-President. The board also expressed heartfelt thanks to outgoing director Luis Duarte for his dedication and contributions.

WHY MSPA EUROPE/AFRICA CONFERENCE MATTERS FOR CX PROFESSIONALS

The Tallinn conference underscored that CX measurement is evolving rapidly in an environment shaped by digital transformation, economic uncertainty, and rising customer expectations. From AI-powered data analysis to innovative benchmarking models, insights such as those shared in Estonia are vital for any organization seeking to stay ahead.

We left Tallinn inspired – ready to continue our mission of connecting CX professionals with the best practices, tools, and thought leadership driving our industry forward.

**Watch some additional insights
from CX leaders here:**





Innovating Customer Experience

We promote customer experience excellence through collaborative and community-driven innovation. We achieve this through an open approach to knowledge sharing and expertise development.



PODCASTS

Synergistic CX and Foresight CX: the Customer Experience and AI Tech in CX Podcasts



MAGAZINE

A monthly periodical with industry studies, actionable results and expert insights



BOOK

The Practical Guide to CX: for those who are at the forefront of crafting the customer experience



BLOG

The Customer Experience Blog for collaborative exploration and discovery

www.cx-channel.com

Synergistic CX

The Customer Experience Magazine

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