


Customer

When we think about customer success, we are thinking about ways to meaningfully engage our customers,

Success

and how we can make sure that they get the value they expect from our business.



Customer-centric companies put the business methodology of customer success at the heart of their business and are committed to supporting their customers in reaching their goals, through the product they buy and the service they receive.

Customer success is associated with customer experience, loyalty, satisfaction and preference, but it will mean something slightly different to every business.

Is customer **success** the same as customer **service**?

Although the two are often used interchangeably, customer success and customer service are different in several ways. Simply put, customer service is reactive, typically focusing on providing solutions to immediate issues with a product or service.

Customer success on the other hand is proactive, and long-term. More than just 'service with a smile', putting customer success at the forefront of your organisation's activities and processes means that every effort is made to make each interaction a customer has with your business as positive as possible, by continuously looking for ways to improve, taking on board and implementing feedback, and innovating new processes which benefit the customer.

Trust develops when customers see you helping them achieve their goals. So, the customer success approach can be a powerful loyalty driver, generating business benefits such as revenue and retention.



Companies with a customer success approach aim to ensure that all areas of their business work together in understanding their clients' needs holistically, so that they can offer a long-term partnership of value. In practice, this could mean that one department might be enhancing a particular product to provide greater reliability for the customer at the same time as customer-facing teams are receiving training on phone manner and how to deliver great service.

Customer success is about being sensitive to each touchpoint that a customer will have with your business, and how each of these can be optimised to leave a lasting impression.



Companies with a more traditional approach to customer service are less likely to invest in embedding a customer-first approach across the entire business, and may have a specific service department instead.

Whilst having a service infrastructure is of course hugely important, and vital for certain sectors (such as retail and banking), this limits the opportunities to engage and delight customers.

Organisations with customer success: **Amazon and HubSpot**

Consumers are now faced with more choice than ever before when it comes to vendors or providers so end-to-end experience can become a key differentiator for companies wanting an edge over the competition. Amazon knows this well, having adopted a “customer-obsessed” culture that seeks to go beyond customer expectations. Its business development team regularly dialogues with wholesalers, resellers, manufacturers and brand owners so that they can get on board with Amazon. Then the team makes sure that they help sellers manage their accounts effectively.

Meanwhile, HubSpot markets products – a customer feedback survey system, knowledge base and ticketing system – that are all about customer success.

HubSpot constantly monitors user engagement and satisfaction through a variety of tools and software, and provides certification training geared to result in success at every stage of the customer’s journey.



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The business **benefits** of customer success

Customer loyalty

As happy customers are loyal customers, customer success can lower client acquisition costs because we don't lose them to our competitors. Given that it's reportedly **6 times more expensive** to win a new customer rather than retain an existing one, more and more businesses are looking for ways to keep their customers happy. Satisfied and loyal customers also influence new sales because they promote our products and services to others.

Thanks to the persuasive power of recommendations and testimonials from current customers, a business can increase its market share and brand integrity over time.

The bottom-line. Renewals, upgrades, reduced churn and referral business all contribute to a company's bottom-line growth and can be driven by embedding an effective customer-centric approach in your business.

Customer insights

Customers feel valued when they are heard and understood. With research showing that just **8%** of customers feel that their voices are being heard all of the time, many brands are missing out on constructive insights that have the power to improve their businesses. We're likely to retain our customers when we give them opportunities to tell us how we can improve our services or add more value for them.

By proactively asking for feedback, businesses can learn first-hand from their customers about any changes in their needs and demands, providing the opportunity to customise their services to better suit their customers' needs and relieve pain points.

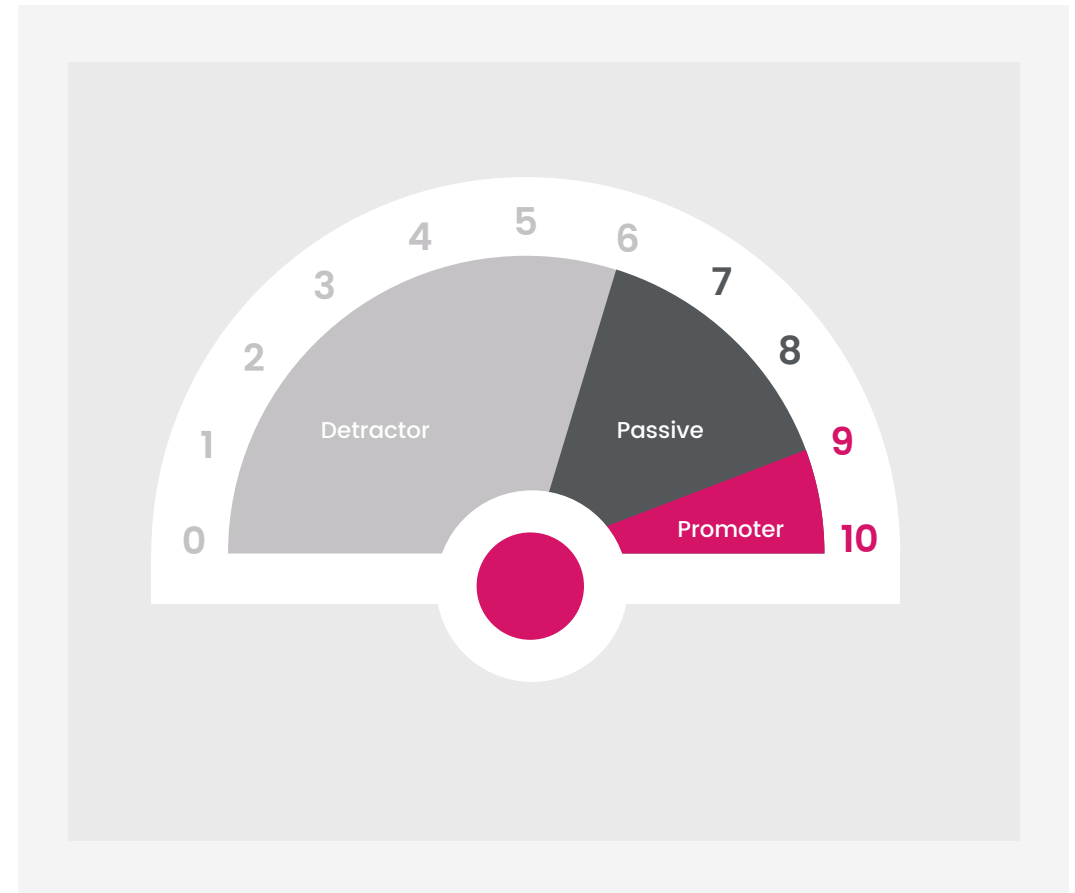


How do we **measure** customer success?

Survey tools: Net Promoter Score (NPS)

One of the most effective ways to measure customer loyalty and satisfaction is NPS, a survey tool which simply asks whether or not someone is likely to recommend your product or service to someone else. It asks customers to provide a rating (on a scale of zero to 10), and provides free text should they wish to give a reason for their score.

'Promoters' are those that give a score of nine or 10 – they are likely to promote your business to friends and colleagues. Meanwhile, "Passives" are those who give a rating of seven or eight. They are relatively satisfied but may move to a competitor if they receive a better offer. "Detractors" are those who give a score of six or lower, and as you might be able to guess from the name, they are unlikely to promote your business to other people.



To calculate your Net Promoter Score, find the total percentage of promoters and total percentage of detractors. Next, you subtract the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters. Then, represent that number as a whole number instead of a percentage. A score between 50 and 70 is "excellent" and indicates that your organisation is enjoying plenty of positive referrals, while beyond 70 is considered "world-class." Companies with some of the highest **NPS scores*** over their competition include Netflix (68), Starbucks (77), Amazon (62) and Airbnb (74). So what do these companies have in common?

1. Fast, convenient services: Products and services that are easy-to-use, fast and convenient will drive customer satisfaction and keep them coming back.

2. Simple, reliable, quality products and services: From Airbnb's easy-to-navigate platform to Starbucks' ability to deliver 'the best coffee experience', customers will value a reliable and smooth experience.

3. Hassle-free customer interactions with their business: Amazon keeps a comprehensive record of customer complaints in a centralised database, which can be easily accessed by customer service colleagues when needed. A helpful, speedy live chat experience, or comprehensive knowledge-base for common queries also helps to relieve pain points and provides a positive brand experience.

*Source: Retently March 2019

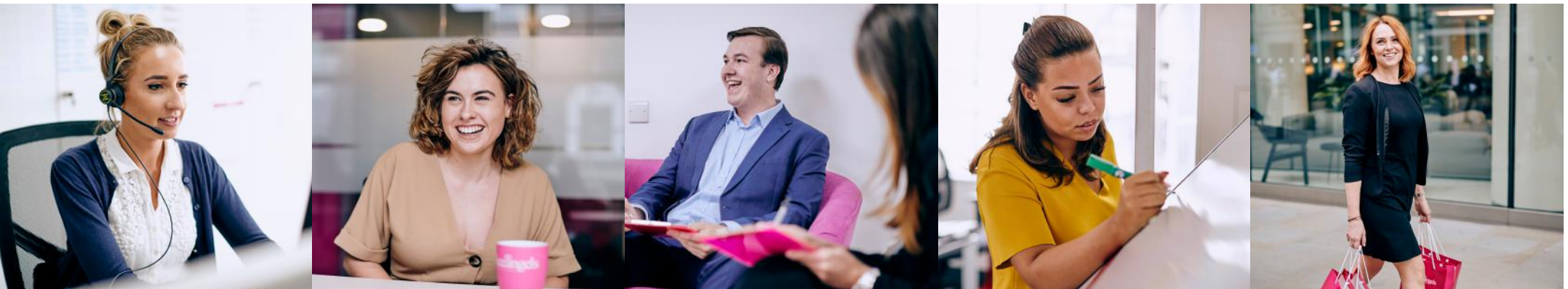


Customer success at Office Angels

Delivering an outstanding experience for our clients gives the service-led workforce of Office Angels personal satisfaction from a job well done. Values and culture fit are vital parts of our hiring strategy; we assess candidates applying for roles at Office Angels in terms of competency in collaboration, problem-solving and resilience, and we determine if they share our values.

We don't look for sales people, we look for service people, hiring individuals who are mainly motivated by two goals: seeing their clients happy and supporting their team.

Customer success is absolutely at the heart of our business, and we want individuals with these motivations to join our team, so that we can continue delivering on our brand promises.



How does Office Angels put customer success at the **heart** of its business?

Office Angels has always had a customer-focused business model. This approach wasn't determined after holding focus groups or surveys; we've simply always held the belief that our customers drive our business and they keep us performing at our best.

Over time, we developed a well-thought-out onboarding process that features customer service elements to ensure that employees have the tools and training to deliver a great experience for their clients.

New hire training includes telephone etiquette and 'netiquette' (the correct way of using the internet, for example email communications), as well as an emphasis on consistently maintaining behavioural and performance standards across all aspects of the business.



Designing an effective employee experience will in turn help our team provide an excellent client and candidate experience.

We consider our workforce our internal customers, and our most valuable asset. Just like the Virgin Group founder Richard Branson, whose message is to 'take care of your employees and they'll take care of your business' we believe that designing an effective employee experience will in turn help our team provide an excellent client and candidate experience.

Aside from our supportive onboarding and training processes, we make sure to recognise and praise our employees' contributions to the company. Office Angels UK holds an annual awards ceremony, featuring the year-on-year performance highlights of each of our branches.

NPS results and feedback are highlighted during the occasion, allowing us to shine a spotlight on what has been achieved and to celebrate success together.



Top takeaways: How to put customers first in your business

With a few changes, you can make customer success a key part of your business strategy. Here are some of our top tips.

Build a best-in-class customer success team.

Hire and develop the right people – source candidates that share your values and can give examples of how they have contributed to a top-class customer experience.

Use feedback to help improve the customer experience.

Don't be afraid of negative feedback – it can be incredibly useful in strengthening or turning around a relationship. Listen, take on-board the areas that need improvement, and create an action plan. Make sure that mistakes aren't repeated.

Communicate with your customers.

Optimise your touch points with customers and deliver a positive interaction at each one. Don't overlook any stage of the customer journey – even a brief telephone conversation with reception can leave a lasting impression, so make sure it's a good one.



Use data – but don't get lost in it.

Tools like NPS and long-form surveys can be hugely valuable. However, statistics and clients' comments only become useful when they are acted upon to enhance your customer experience. What do your clients really want or need? Study the outcome of your survey tools to frame your next steps.

When implementing surveys into your business, although it's tempting to benchmark against competitors, it's important to set your own targets and track your performance against these over time, whether that is on a quarterly or annual basis.

Put your people at the heart and customer success will follow.

Customer success really starts with building up your people. Employees that feel valued and appreciated in a supportive environment are likely to stay engaged in their role and go the extra mile for their customers. Nurture their talent, provide the right training, and praise their contributions.

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