

COMMERCE

## Centralized measurement of customer satisfaction ensures standard experience

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*Client satisfaction measurement should go beyond checking boxes*

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By SARAH JONES

NEW YORK – The consumer’s voice needs to be more a part of the measurement of client satisfaction than numbers, said an executive from Automatic Data Processing June 25 at Forrester’s Forum for Customer Experience Professionals East: “Why Good Is Not Good Enough.”

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While it can be easy to put a lot of emphasis on the score results from client surveys, it is more effective to look at the cause of the scores. This gives more insight into how to change and improve from a consumer experience standpoint.

“Customer experience is going to be a game changer in the future,” said Jessica Sapperstein, division vice president strategy and business development at [ADP](#), Parsippany, NJ.

“I learned early on in my career how important that voice of customer is in terms of driving your strategy, identifying where to look for the future for growth and innovating in your business model,” she said.

"I firmly believe that customer experience is going to define who are the next winners in the marketplace."

Clients first

ADP began as just a payroll operator for small business clients. Over its 65 years in business, it has grown to serve both small and large corporations with different facets of human resources, including retirement and recruitment.



*Jessica Sapperstein speaking at Forrester's Forum*

Service was central to the value proposition of ADP, but as the company grew, it became more difficult to execute and make sure that service was up to par.

Part of the challenge was measurement. Because of the many different business areas that the company works in, there was no central, standardized method for evaluating customer experience, with each department using their own established procedure.

By internal metrics, ADP was doing well, with the highest retention level and quality scores that were trending up.

However, anecdotes from clients told the company that there were areas in customer experience that could use improvement. ADP also compared its scores to its competitive set and saw that it was lumped together with them, rather than rising above the group.

In order to standardize the measurement and the client experience, ADP turned to the Net Promoter Score. This system's open-ended questions allow them to get insights from clients that would not be included in a form.



*Net Promoter Score*

ADP went from asking 30 questions to asking only seven, but those seven shed more light on what they could do to make sure that their consumers were getting the best experience possible across the organization.

A center for excellence team was formed, and the company now shares best practices across segments of its business.

Once ADP figured out who its promoters were, it created a number of ways for them to share their experiences with others. An ADP ambassador program and a social network called "The Bridge," used by thousands of clients, has led to less service help required and higher satisfaction scores.

## Keeping business

When companies are dealing with sensitive material, making sure that the customer experience is good is important, since any negatives can create emotional reactions.

Merchant payment solutions are generally unremarked upon by the public, but as soon as a variable goes awry consumers can quickly lose confidence.

For luxury retailers that deal with high-spending clientele and lean on hard-earned reputations, ensuring the safety of customer data is especially important. However, misinformation about payment solutions and delayed implementation of advanced infrastructure makes the landscape seem more ominous than it should ([see story](#)).

By listening to consumers and building a relationship with them, a company can make sure it will be able to bounce back from any client negativity.

"We find our successful leaders and the associates that really get that really are committed to that, and they will do whatever it takes to not disappoint and let down that client," Ms. Sapperstein said.

"It is based on relationships, and we are privileged to have very strong client relationships, so when things do go wrong, and sometimes they will, if you have that strong relationship, it enables you to recover from it and really come back from it effectively," she said.

## Final Take

*Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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