

How can we
enhance the
customer
experience?

FACT SHEET #5

Are you missing opportunities to connect with your customers?

WHAT IS THE REAL EXPERIENCE OF YOUR CUSTOMERS WHEN THEY COME IN TOUCH WITH YOUR ORGANISATION? **By Suzy Roden**

Often when we think about what attracts customers to our business, we focus on the products and services we offer. Of course, these offerings to our customers are really important. However, if we want to attract new groups of customers and retain existing good customers, it is often the less tangible interactions with your business that determine whether this occurs or not.

So, is your customer's experience one they really do appreciate, or are you targeting your customer experience to 'things' that are not necessarily important to your customers, or just creating a less than positive experience? How can we enhance the customer experience?

HOW DO WE FIND OUT THE ANSWER TO THESE QUESTIONS?

Many organisations do market research to try to discover what present and potential customers wants and needs are, how customers see their business, products and services that are already offered, and ideas the organisation has generated internally for new products or services. In addition, the usual way that research is conducted is to ask questions to the customer coming from the organisation's paradigm of the world (or inside out); not the customer's (outside in).

This style of research most often provides us with *data and information* about the past, and the more tangible aspects of customer experience. We rarely get into the minds and emotions of customers to uncover what their needs are. This is particularly the case with *unarticulated, unmet* needs, which are the real opportunities for innovation and creating new market space.

So traditional market research will do very little to:

- uncover the less tangible aspects of the customer experience
- tap into the emotions of customers
- help us know about the situations and motivations of potential past and existing customers

As a result, the data gathered from this type of research is unlikely to tap into the emotional and creative power of the talent in our organisations that could surface great opportunities for enhancing the customer experience, that in turn could create future competitive advantage.

When we do get into the minds of customers, we are able to develop empathy for their situations, because we understand the customer as a human being, their context and how we can support them by being more responsive and with the most appropriate solutions.

By approaching the research from the customer's perspective we also are working cooperatively and collaboratively with our customers. We are tapping into their needs – rather than what we think those needs are – and working to satisfy those needs.

Finding out these needs through more holistic types of research will provide the best opportunities for innovation around creating exceptional customer experiences.

Do you know how to tap into the minds and emotions of your customers and potential customers to create better customer experiences that will result in building business value and resilience?