Customer-driven Operations of the Alumni Association Office in a University

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Abstract

This study measured the customer-driven operations systems of the alumni association office in a university through a customer satisfaction survey and narratives of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This descriptive study was conducted in the alumni association office of a university covering 2016, 2017 and 2018 secondary data. The secondary data from 600 respondents (200 respondents per year) includes quantitative data and narratives from the comments section of the survey instrument. Statistical treatment includes weighted mean and frequencies.

In 2016, the customers perceived the operations as very good. The respondents rated the cleanliness and orderliness of the office as excellent. The rest of the indicators were rated very good. The waiting and processing time for the release of the ID was rated the lowest among ten indicators.

It was noted by the researchers that the respondents viewed the association as excellent in 2017 and 2018. In 2017, four indicators were rated as excellent: cleanliness and orderliness of

the office, attitude of the office staff, quality of alumni ID released to graduates, and comfort & personalized service in the office. Moreover, the indicator with the lowest mean was the appearance and content of the association's Facebook Page ®.

In 2018, eight out of ten indicators were evaluated as excellent. The top three indicators were: attitude of the staff; cleanliness and orderliness of the office; and quality of alumni ID released to graduates. The indicator with the lowest mean was the waiting & processing time for the release of alumni ID.

Keywords: Customer-driven operations; Attitude of the staff; cleanliness and orderliness; quality of alumni ID; waiting time

Introduction

Organizations – profit and non-profit – exist to meet the needs of customers. Customers are important to organizations. Without customers, there's no one to absorb the organizations outputs. But it is not enough for managers to simply recognize that customers exist. The revenues earned from customers whose needs are thoroughly and completely satisfied are the lifeblood of any organization. However, it's only through complete and total satisfaction of their needs that customers keep coming back. This type of customer loyalty can reap big rewards for organizations. In fact, one estimate is that "raising customer retention rates by 5 percentage points increases the value of an average customer by 25 percent to 100 percent. Customer-driven operations system is designed around meeting and exceeding customer's needs. Successful organizations (1) think continuously about who their customers are, (2) maintain close and frequent contact with their customers, (3) determine how to provide products in a way that competitors cannot imitate, and (4) determine how to satisfy

customers' current, anticipated, and even unanticipated needs. In addition, their operations systems support the people and work processes to meet those needs (Robbins & Coulter, 2001).

Quality is the degree of excellence on which products or services can be ranked on the basis of selected features or characteristics. It is the customer who determines this ranking, and the customer defines the quality in terms of appearance, performance, availability and flexibility. Product quality determines an organization's reputation (Certo, 2009).

In the 1970's, Dr. Nariaki Kano of Tokyo Rika University, came up with an interesting and practical model for understanding customer satisfaction known as the Kano Model. The Kano Model is a set of ideas for planning a new product, service or process. It lists all the potential customer needs that the product, service or process should perhaps try to satisfy. The resulting customer satisfaction co-efficient analyzes the product, service or processes criteria which have the greatest influence on the customer's satisfaction. Thus, the two-dimensional model combines two characteristics pertaining to quality namely implementing the product function or degree of implementing the features of a product or service and level of satisfaction of the customer. Combining both the quality parameters, namely the performance and customer satisfaction in a two-dimensional plot facilitates understanding quality in a more sophisticated and holistic manner (Ramasamy, 2012).

Related Studies

In one research, it presents the findings performed on data from a large bank's retail-banking operations. It illustrates the relationship of customer satisfaction to customer loyalty, and

customer loyalty to profitability, using multiple measures of satisfaction, loyalty, and profitability. An estimate of the effects of increased customer satisfaction on profitability (assuming hypothesized causality) suggests that attainable increases in satisfaction could dramatically improve profitability (Hallowell, 1996).

In another study, it synthesizes and builds on the efforts to conceptualize the effects of quality, satisfaction, and value on consumers' behavioral intentions. Specifically, it reports an empirical assessment of a model of service encounters that simultaneously considers the direct effects of these variables on behavioral intentions. The study builds on recent advances in services marketing theory and assesses the relationships between the identified constructs across multiple service industries. Several competing theories are also considered and compared to the research model. A number of notable findings are reported including the empirical verification that service quality, service value, and satisfaction may all be directly related to behavioral intentions when all of these variables are considered collectively. The results further suggest that the indirect effects of the service quality and value constructs enhanced their impact on behavioral intentions (Cronin Jr., Brady & Hult, 2000).

Sivadas & Baker-Prewitt (2000) utilized a national random telephone survey of 542 shoppers, examines the relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction, and store loyalty within the retail department store context. They also tested two complementary models that examine this interrelationship. The results indicate that service quality influences relative attitude and satisfaction with department stores. Satisfaction influences relative attitude, repurchase, and recommendation but has no direct effect on store loyalty. Fostering favorable relative attitude

and getting customers to recommend the product or service holds key to fostering store loyalty. Results also indicate support for Oliver's four-stage cognitive-affective-conative-action model of loyalty.

Objectives

This study measured the customer-driven operations systems of the alumni association office in a university through a customer satisfaction survey and narratives of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Methods

This descriptive study was conducted in the alumni association office of a university covering 2016, 2017 and 2018 secondary data. The secondary data from 600 respondents (200 respondents per year) includes quantitative data and narratives from the comments section of the survey instrument. Statistical treatment includes weighted mean and sum of ranks. To interpret the results, the following ranges were used:

4.20-5.00	-	Excellent
3.40-4.19	-	Very Good
2.60-3.39	-	Good
1.80-2.59	-	Fair
1.00-1.79	-	Poor

Results and Discussion

Tables 1, 2 and 3 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of department, age and year of graduation for 2016, 2017 and 2018. In 2016, the data shows that the top three departments

who participated in the survey were the College of Marine Transportation (19%), College of Business & Accountancy (15.5%), College of Marine Engineering (14%), and College of Customs Administration (14%). Most of the respondents were 20-24 years old (70%) and graduates of the year 2016 (83.5%)

Table 1. Profile of the respondents in 2016 (n=200)

Department	Frequency	Percentage
Business & Accountancy	31	15.5
Computer Studies	15	7.5
Customs Administration	28	14
Criminology	11	5.5
Engineering	5	2.5
Hospitality Management	17	8.5
Marine Engineering	28	14
Marine Transportation	38	19
Nursing	9	4.5
Teacher Education	18	9
Total	200	100
Age		
20-24	140	70
25-29	31	15.5
30-34	28	14
35-39	1	0.5
Total	200	100
Year of Graduation		
2005	1	0.5
2007	1	0.5
2009	1	0.5
2010	1	0.5
2011	5	2.5

2012	4	2
2013	1	0.5
2014	7	3.5
2015	12	6
2016	167	83.5
Total	200	100

In 2017, the top three departments who participated in the survey were the College of Marine Transportation (19.5%), College of Business & Accountancy (16%) and College of Hospitality Management (13%). Majority of the respondents were 20-24 years old (80%) and graduates of the year 2017 (73.5%).

Similarly, the top three departments who participated in the 2018 survey were the College of Teacher Education (34%), College of Business & Accountancy (15%) and College of Marine Transportation (11.5%). Most of the respondents were 20-24 years old (67.5%) and graduates of the year 2018 (57.5%).

Tables 4, 5 and 6 presents the customer-driven operations of the alumni association office for 2016, 2017 and 2018. In 2016, the customers perceived the operations as very good. The respondents rated the cleanliness and orderliness of the office as excellent (4.22). The rest of the indicators were rated very good. The waiting and processing time for the release of the ID (3.76) was rated the lowest among ten indicators.

It was noted by the researchers that the respondents viewed the association as excellent in 2017 and 2018 (means of 4.20 and 4.26, respectively). In 2017, four indicators were rated as excellent: cleanliness and orderliness of the office (4.36), attitude of the office staff (4.34), quality of alumni ID released to graduates (4.30), and comfort & personalized service in the office (4.24).

Moreover, the indicator with the lowest mean was the appearance and content of the association's Facebook Page ®.

In 2018, eight out of ten indicators were evaluated as excellent. The top three indicators were attitude of the staff (4.5); cleanliness and orderliness of the office (4.4), and quality of alumni ID released to graduates (4.37). The indicator with the lowest mean was the waiting & processing time for the release of alumni ID (4.06).

Table 2. Profile of the respondents in 2017 (n=200)

Department	Frequency	Percentage
Business & Accountancy	32	16
Computer Studies	13	6.5
Customs Administration	12	6
Criminology	15	7.5
Engineering	12	6
Hospitality Management	26	13
Marine Engineering	24	12
Marine Transportation	39	19.5
Nursing	4	2
Teacher Education	23	11.5
Total	200	100
Age		
20-24	160	80
25-29	25	12.5
30-34	13	6.5
35-39	2	1
Total	200	100
Year of Graduation		
2004	1	0.5

2007	1	0.5
2008	3	1.5
2010	4	2
2011	2	1
2012	3	1.5
2013	3	1.5
2014	3	1.5
2015	11	5.5
2016	22	11
2017	147	73.5
Total	200	100

Table 3. Profile of the respondents in 2018 (n=200)

Department	Frequency	Percentage
Business & Accountancy	30	15
Computer Studies	19	9.5
Customs Administration	7	3.5
Criminology	10	5
Engineering	8	4
Hospitality Management	12	6
Marine Engineering	19	9.5
Marine Transportation	23	11.5
Nursing	4	2
Teacher Education	68	34
Total	200	100
Age		
20-24	135	67.5
25-29	38	19
30-34	21	10.5
35-39	4	2
40-44	2	1

Total	200	100
Year of Graduation		
2008	2	1
2009	2	1
2010	3	1.5
2011	1	0.5
2012	4	2
2013	2	1
2014	3	1.5
2015	10	5
2016	22	11
2017	36	18
2018	115	57.5
Total	200	100

Table 4. Customer-driven operations of the office for 2016 (n=200)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Appearance and user-friendliness of the application forms.	4.08	Very Good
2. Payment procedure at Palawan Express.	3.86	Very Good
3. Comfort and personalized service in the office.	4.00	Very Good
4. Waiting and processing time for the release of alumni ID.	3.76	Very Good
5. Cleanliness and orderliness of the office.	4.22	Excellent
6. Quality of alumni ID released to graduates.	4.12	Very Good

7. Attitude of the office staff.	4.19	Very Good
8. Appearance and content of the UCLMAA website, www.uclmaa.com	4.02	Very Good
9. Appearance and content of the UCLMAA Facebook page, www.facebook.com/uclmaa	3.98	Very Good
10. Appearance and content of the UCLMAA Facebook group, www.facebook.com/groups/uclmaa	4.00	Very Good
Grand Mean	4.02	Very Good

Table 5. Customer-driven operations of the office for 2017 (n=200)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Appearance and user-friendliness of the application forms.	4.28	Excellent
2. Payment procedure at Palawan Express.	4.10	Very Good
3. Comfort and personalized service in the office.	4.24	Excellent
4. Waiting and processing time for the release of alumni ID.	4.01	Very Good
5. Cleanliness and orderliness of the office.	4.36	Excellent
6. Quality of alumni ID released to graduates.	4.30	Excellent
7. Attitude of the office staff.	4.34	Excellent
8. Appearance and content of the UCLMAA website, www.uclmaa.com	4.14	Very Good
9. Appearance and content of the UCLMAA Facebook page, www.facebook.com/uclmaa	4.08	Very Good
10. Appearance and content of the UCLMAA Facebook group, www.facebook.com/groups/uclmaa	4.13	Very Good
Grand Mean	4.20	Excellent

Table 6. Customer-driven operations of the office for 2018 (n=200)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Appearance and user-friendliness of the application forms.	4.34	Excellent
2. Payment procedure at Palawan Express.	4.13	Very Good
3. Comfort and personalized service in the office.	4.26	Excellent
4. Waiting and processing time for the release of alumni ID.	4.06	Very Good
5. Cleanliness and orderliness of the office.	4.4	Excellent
6. Quality of alumni ID released to graduates.	4.37	Excellent
7. Attitude of the office staff.	4.5	Excellent
8. Appearance and content of the UCLMAA website, www.uclmaa.com	4.2	Excellent
9. Appearance and content of the UCLMAA Facebook page, www.facebook.com/uclmaa	4.16	Very Good
10. Appearance and content of the UCLMAA Facebook group, www.facebook.com/groups/uclmaa	4.22	Excellent
Grand Mean	4.26	Excellent

According to Go & Go, the results of customer feedback may be used for benchmarking and improves the existing system of the organization. It allows the organization to learn the key attributes of the product and service that are most important to the customer.

feedback also allows companies to learn key attributes in the product or service design that are most important to customers. It also gives companies a chance to recover in case of service failure. Rewarding employees who did well in customer service reinforces its mission of customer satisfaction, that the company values its customers and thus makes their customers happy. Giving rewards communicates the company's commitment to maintaining happy and affirmed employees (2010).

Table 7 presents the positive and negative comments of the respondents in the last three years. Respondents have written on the survey form that they find the processing of the alumni ID fast, they like the attitude of the staff, and the office is clean and organized.

The survey also reveals that the top negative comments were: releasing time of the ID is 1-2 months; use of Palawan Express ® as external cashier; and that the alumni ID is not recognized by the guards.

Customer satisfaction depends on a product's perceived performance in delivering value relative to a buyer's expectations. If performance exceeds expectations, the buyer is delighted, certainly, a worthy goal of a company. Smart companies aim to delight customers by promising only what they can deliver, then delivering more than they promise. The aim of successful companies today is total customer satisfaction. Customer delight creates an emotional affinity for a product or service, not just a rational preference, and this creates high customer loyalty. Quality has a direct impact on product and service performance (Ac-ac, 2009).

Table 7. Positive and negative comments of the respondents, 2016-2018 (multiple response)

Positive comments	Frequency
Processing time to apply for ID was fast	106
Friendly staff	40
Clean and organized office	6
Location of the office	2
Quality of the ID	2
Conducted homecomings	1
Website was informative	1
Negative comments	Frequency
Releasing time of ID, 1-2 months	15
Palawan Express as cashier	8
Alumni ID not recognized by guards	3
Should open from 12 noon to 2 pm	3
Number of office staff	2
Staff members do not smile	2
Update the UCLMAA website	2
Staff members do not greet	1
Text message should be sent if ID is available	1
Conduct more activities sponsored by association	1
Computer with internet for website browsing	1
Update the Facebook Page	1

The offering will be successful if it delivers value and satisfaction to the target buyer. The buyer chooses between different offerings based on which she perceives to deliver the most value. Value reflects the sum of the perceived tangible and

intangible benefits and costs to customers. It's primarily a combination of quality, service and price, called the "customer value triad." Value increases with quality and service and decreases with price, although other factors can also play an important role in our perceptions of value. Value is a central marketing concept. We can think of marketing as the identification, creation, communication, delivery, and monitoring of customer value. Satisfaction reflects a person's judgments of a product's perceived performance (or outcome) in relationship to expectations. If the performance falls short of expectations, the customer is dissatisfied and disappointed. If it matches expectations, the customer is satisfied. If it exceeds them, the customer is delighted (Kotler & Keller, 2009).

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the graduates perceived the operations of the association as very good in 2016 and has excellent service in 2017 and 2018.

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