

Consumers In Fast Growing Economies Have Highest Customer Contact Expectations

Contributed by Avaya
Monday, 13 July 2015
Last Updated Monday, 13 July 2015

“Autonomous Customers” are happy to self-serve, but expect instant and excellent service through multiple channels when needed, survey discovers.

85 per cent of people believe it should be easier to contact organisations

Only 1 in 5 consumers have their issue resolved by their first interaction with an organisation

88 per cent of consumers would be more loyal to organisations that are easier to deal with

Consumers in fast growing economies - such as India and China – are setting the standard for customer contact. They are leading the way in expecting to communicate with organisations in a number of different ways, and to switch between communication channels as their conversation progresses.

“Organisations should always offer different channels to meet my needs”:

91 per cent China

89 per cent UAE

88 per cent Spain

87 per cent India

86 per cent Indonesia

84 per cent Singapore

82 per cent USA

79 per cent UK

69 per cent Germany

58 per cent Belgium

The findings are revealed in a new global report commissioned by BT and Avaya: “Autonomous Customer 2015: On hold for Intelligent Customer Service.” In its fifth year, the independent report covers 10 countries and is based on the responses of 5,500 consumers.

The phrase “Autonomous Customer” describes consumers that access online information to research and investigate buying decisions. They use websites and mobile apps to “self-serve,” preferring to stay in control and interact with organisations on their own terms.

Globally, seventy per cent of those contacting organisations through social media expect a response within fifteen minutes, with two thirds expecting their social media comments and queries to be answered through the same platform.

Consumers in India (88 per cent), UAE (87 per cent) and Indonesia (80 per cent) are far more likely to turn to Facebook for service than in the UK (53 per cent), Belgium (48 per cent) or Germany (40 per cent).

Similarly video-chat is a common expectation in India (81 per cent), China (78 per cent) and Indonesia (74 per cent) compared to the UK (52 per cent), Germany (45 per cent) and Belgium (40 per cent).

“Organisations have to align themselves with rapidly changing consumer expectations,” says Dr Nicola Millard, head of customer insight and futures, BT Global Services. “Transactional websites and mobile apps - along with social media - put organisations in the position of having to support customers 24/7. The digital world lives ‘in the moment’ and puts consumers in control. Customer service has to follow suit.”

Crucially, customers want to be able to move seamlessly from channel to channel when it suits them. Most in demand is

being able to communicate with customer support while online (71 per cent), typically web-chat. Also popular is the ability to switch from social media to the telephone (63 per cent) and the ability to move from webchat to telephone (62 per cent). Only one in three feel organisations currently make it easy to switch between channels.

“Autonomous customers invest time and effort to make a purchase decision. When they hit an issue they can’t resolve, they want an answer from the organisation there and then,” says Garry Veale, president, Europe, Avaya.

Expectations are high. Three quarters of consumers expect a customer service agent to be instantly aware of their details and history, across all channels.

There are rich rewards for organisations that strike the right customer service balance, as autonomous customers are shown to buy more from organisations that are easy to deal with; leading to repeat spend and brand loyalty.

"I buy more from organisations that make it easier":

90 per cent China
84 per cent India
83 per cent UAE
82 per cent USA
81 per cent Singapore
79 per cent Indonesia
73 per cent UK
72 per cent Belgium
68 per cent Germany
50 per cent Spain