

Internal Customer Service: Measurement strategies

Insights and recommendations improving internal customer survey

Abstract

Author(s)	Publication type	Completion year
Sanni Asikainen	Thesis, UAS	2024
	Number of pages	
	35 + 5	
Title of the thesis		
Internal Customer service: Measurement strategies		
Case: Company X, Finland		
Degree, Field of Study		
Bachelor of Business Administration, International Business		
Abstract		
<p>The purpose of this thesis is to improve and analyse the internal customer service survey of Company X's financial services department. The aim is to get familiar with customer satisfaction measurement strategies in order to improve and gather data concerning Company X's customer service in the financial services department.</p> <p>Theoretical framework oversees different ways of measuring internal customer service satisfaction and ways to put this theoretical information into use. Theoretical framework also defines the concept of internal customer service and its importance within an organization. The purpose of the theoretical part is to provide a comprehensive understanding that'll support the analysis of the survey data and inform development of recommendations for improvement in the empirical research part.</p> <p>Empirical research analyses an internal customer service survey conducted within Company X financial services. This research identifies key challenges and offers solutions while exploring different methods for measuring customer satisfaction. Based on the insights gained from this empirical research, suggestions for a new survey is designed and implemented.</p>		
Keywords		
Internal customer, customer service, measuring, survey, data		

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1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Organizations are facing tough times with economic uncertainty, rapid changes, increasing customer demands and intense competition. These pressures drive a trend where businesses are focusing now more on their customers to stay competitive and survive. These organizations are desperately surging improvement initiatives to improve their quality, service and internal processes. Balancing the focus on both internal and external customers results into organizational effectiveness and success. (Govende 2013.)

Since the business environment leans more towards a market-oriented approach, companies are increasingly focusing on understanding and meeting customer needs. Therefore, understanding customer satisfaction, measuring and enhancing CS becomes even more urgent need. (Ngo 2015.)

Researching customer satisfaction and talking about internal customers is important because it directly impacts the internal workflow, service delivery for external customers, better collaboration within the company and increased productivity. Companies that meet customer expectations are more likely to retain their clientele and attract new ones. When internal customers' needs are met, they are better equipped to perform their role, resulting in smoother operations and fewer inefficiencies.

When researching the type of customer service an organisation can provide, it's important to understand the distinction between internal and external customers and their importances. In short external customers are customers who pay to use the service or product the organization offers, internal customers however are customers with and within a relationship with the organization. External customers can be different suppliers, shareholders, shoppers, and clients. Internal customers are the organizations employees, owners and representatives. (Musumali 2019.)

The importance of external customers comes from their direct influence on the organization's success and effectiveness.

When internal customers receive support, information and resources they need, they can fulfil their roles more effectively, resulting in improved customer experiences and increased loyalty. (CQI 2023.)

Focusing on internal customers the organization can form a steady foundation upon which external customer satisfaction is built. Internal customers being the organizations employees, departments and different teams are responsible for delivering the product or service to external customers, if this service or provided product does not meet the customers' expectations this could lead to damage for the organisation.

Findings from this research will be crucial to anyone involved in the organisation's operational success. Managers, HR, team leaders, and employees themselves are directly impacted by the outcomes. Managers will benefit from insights that help them streamline internal processes, reduce inefficiencies, and enhance communication between departments. By understanding the internal customer satisfaction landscape, they can implement strategic improvements that not only boost productivity but also foster a positive work environment, contributing to the company's long-term goals.

For HR department, the research will offer valuable data on employee engagement and internal support structures. This information will enable HR professionals to design targeted programs that improve employee satisfaction, retention, and overall well-being, ensuring that internal customers feel valued and empowered to perform their roles effectively.

Team leaders will gain a clearer understanding of how their teams interact with other departments, allowing them to identify areas for improvement in collaboration and communication. These insights will help them address potential bottlenecks, resolve conflicts, and ensure their teams are well-equipped to contribute to organizational success.

Employees as the organization's internal customers, will experience the most direct benefits from the findings. The research will highlight areas where employees may need better support, resources, or communication to perform their tasks efficiently. When employees' needs are met, job satisfaction increases, fostering a more positive, engaged, and productive work environment.

1.2 Thesis objectives, research questions and limitations

The objective of this thesis is to get familiar with customer service measurements in the context of internal customers. Regarding the survey development suggestions, the aim is to identify key areas for improvement and implement strategies that enhance the overall effectiveness and reliability of the survey. The purpose is to provide insight into the evolving world of customer service, better understand customer responses to the survey, and identify areas where the survey can improve.

Main research question:

- How can company X's internal customer service survey be improved to better identify areas for improvement?

Sub-research question:

- What are the most effective measurement strategies for assessing internal customer service?
- How can metrics be applied to assess the effectiveness of internal customer service?
- What criteria should organizations use to select appropriate measurement tools for internal customer service?

Regarding the survey development suggestions, the aim is to identify key areas for improvement and implement strategies that enhance the overall effectiveness and reliability of the survey. Theory part is to support the changes made into the already existing customer satisfaction survey and give company X ideas how they can further optimize the survey to gather more accurate and actionable insights. These improvements may include refining questions phrasing, adjusting survey timing, and include more advanced data analysis techniques to ensure that customer feedback is reliable and representative.

This thesis is limited by the focus on company X's internal customer service in the financial department and their internal customers. This research focuses on internal customers in the public sector and does not deal with internal customers in private sectors nor external customer service. Consequently, the recommendations and insights from this research may not be applied to private sector organizations or to interactions with external customers.

This research is limited by its methodological approach, primarily utilizing online resources, such as existing literature and case studies for its theory section. While these sources provide valuable insights, they may not fully capture the real-time development of the rapidly evolving topic of customer service.

Empirical research is based on a single internal customer survey within company X, which would limit the generalizability of the findings. Specific contexts and unique characteristics of company X and the financial department might influence the results, making them less applicable to other organizations, even within public sector.

Since the field of customer service develops rapidly, the nature of customer service measurements means that the recommendations made in this research could become outdated quickly as new methodologies and technologies arise. Continuous monitoring and updating

of customer service strategies and survey tools are necessary to maintain their relevance and effectiveness.

1.3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this thesis on internal customer service intel's key components that provide a firm understanding of the definition, importance, and relationship between internal and external customer service. This framework incorporates relevant theories, models, and customer satisfaction theories that explain the process through which internal customer service influences overall organizational effectiveness and customer satisfaction and quality.

The introduction part the theoretical framework addresses the concept of internal customer service, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of its definitions, importance, and role within organizations. This section is crucial for understanding the research and what internal customer service covers. By covering these topics, it can be determined that the current stage of internal customer service and its significance in an organisation.

When covering the basics of what internal customer service entails customer service measurement and different strategies for measuring customer service are also addressed. This section focuses on theories on customer service measuring, different models and customer satisfaction theories. Understanding how customer service can be measured is vital for evaluating the current practices in internal customer service and for formulating development proposals based on this information. This section aims to provide insight into the key service quality models, such as SERVQUAL model, which offer frameworks for assessing the quality of internal customer service.

When talking about measuring something, what to do with the data needs to also be discussed. That's why theoretical framework also addresses data collection techniques such as survey, interviews, and sampling methods, which are important for gathering representative data. The use of statistical analysis techniques, combined with software tools, will allow for a comprehensive evaluation of service performance within the organization. Knowing about data collection and analysis are essential for ensuring the accuracy of the research findings and for developing informed decisions based on the data collected.

Empirical research is a multi-method approach that aims to obtain a comprehensive view of the current state of internal customer service provided and customer satisfaction. From this information the purpose is to build a comprehensive survey. An employee survey conducted within the organization is used as a base to improve and make similar survey for the next time. The framework serves as the foundation for analysing internal customer service

practises and will guide the empirical research – helping to identify opportunities for improving the internal service survey.

1.4 Thesis structure

Figure 1 shows the overview of the thesis structure. Chapter 1 introduces the research topic. In the introduction part the research introduces research background, the objectives of the thesis, the research questions and any limitations encountered in the thesis research. In chapter 2 theoretical framework, five topics are discussed, Foundation of internal customers, Customer service measurement, Measurement strategies for internal customer service, Data collection as well as analysing techniques.

Empirical research part focuses on Company X, detailing the survey design, sample, data collection, and analysis methods used in the research. This chapter presents the survey results from the initial survey and the new contacted survey based on results from the initial survey. This chapter will also highlight key findings from internal customer service measurements and discusses the implementation of these findings in the development of the new surveys.

The final chapter summaries key findings from the research and discusses its contribution to the field of internal customer service. Suggestions are also made for the future research and final thoughts on the significance of the thesis topic.

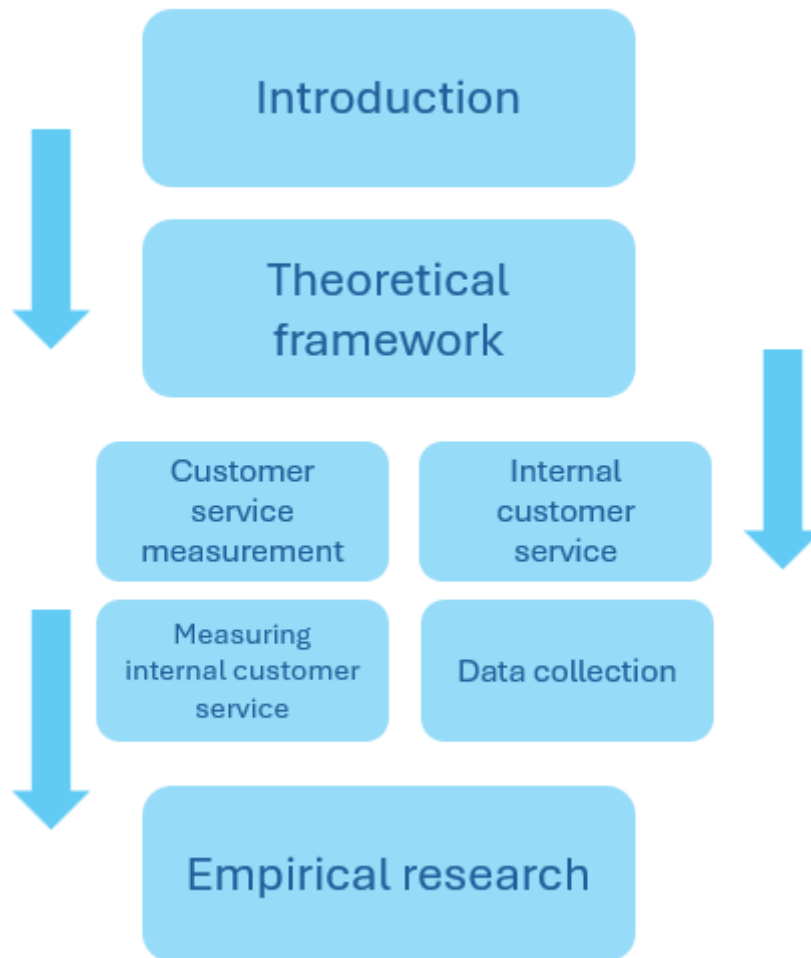


Figure 1. Thesis structure

2 Customer service measurement

2.1 Measurement theories relevant to customer service

Measuring things like customer service can be challenging due to its subjective nature and it being intangible. Unlike tangible goods, customer service lacks physical quality. Because customer service revolves around human interaction, expectations and experiences measuring becomes difficult. Internal customer service presents a unique set of challenges because the customer base is people around you and they have diverse roles making their expectations and needs more complicated. Measurement tools such as surveys, feedback forms, and service level agreements (SLAs) are one of the better ways to measure customer service internally and get a better picture how customer service is perceived.

SLAs are contract between a service provider and a customer that defines the service to be provided and the level of performance to be expected. SLAs are usually used between vendors and external customers however SLAs can be used internally between departments and teams. (Goodwin 2024.)

Not all employees are keen on giving feedback openly to and about their managers, employer or coworkers thus surveys are a good way to get this information anonymously. Surveys open a door for open feedback and an opportunity for perceptions and impressions of internal service. Since departments are considered customers of one another, the internal customer satisfaction survey closely mirrors the external customer satisfaction survey. The same principles apply, and similar questions can be used for both. (CheckMarket.)

How customer satisfaction can be measures mathematically is by using equation; $(\text{Number of satisfied customers [those who answered with 4s/satisfied and 5s/ very satisfied]} / \text{Number of survey responses}) \times 100$ to get the percentage of satisfied customers. When measuring customer satisfaction this way 4s and 5s or satisfied and very satisfied are used due to the two being the most accurate predictor of customer retention. (Qualitrics.)

First contact resolution rate can also be used in measuring internal customer service. The first contact resolution rate measures how many cases require only one contact from the customer. This can be measured by calculating the $(\text{number of incidents resolved on the first contact} / \text{total number of incidents})$. By calculating this it'll give out the rare of which first contacts are resolved. (Qualitrics.)

After getting tangible data from surveys, agreements, and more this feedback can be used to benchmark internal customer satisfaction. Benchmark suggestions and try to identify trends related to performance.

2.2 Service quality model (SERVQUAL)

Service quality is a measurement on how the organization delivers its service compared to expectations. Customers may have certain expectations and how the organization delivers their service fulfils those expectations. Organization with high service quality fulfils customer expectations fully or exceeds them. (Indeed Editorial team 2024a.)

How service quality can be measured is by using different models. Such models can be SERVQUAL model (Figure 2.). There are many ways and different models on how service quality can be measured but the most used are GAPS and SERVQUAL models (Editorial staff 2023.). Measuring service quality helps organizations gather more data over time and make more based informed decisions.

SERVQUAL includes five dimensions that acts as essential for assessing customer service quality: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. Reliability refers to how accurate and dependably the company product or service performs and responsiveness on how willing employees are to help with customer issues. Assurance refers to the knowledge and helpfulness of employees and empathy on the level of care and attention they provide to each customer. (Qualtrics 2020.) Tangibles include the staff, material, manuals and information systems involved in the service. (Esch & Weaven 2024.)

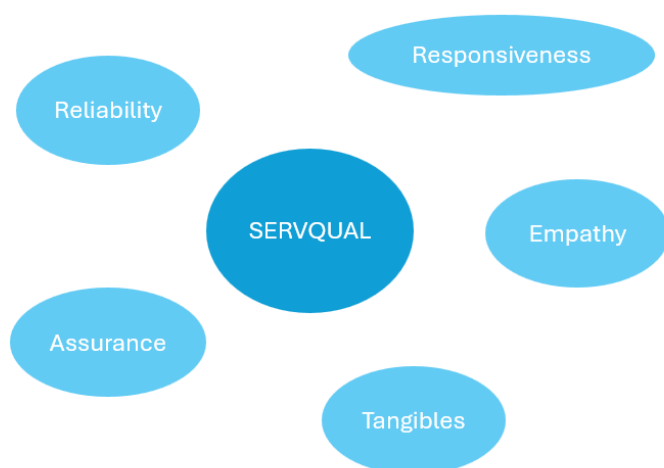


Figure 2. SERVQUAL model

Ideally SERVQUAL is used and measured through a questionnaire and surveys. However, SERVQUAL is a long survey that consists of 22+22 questions spread to each of the dimensions. The questionnaire is split into two sections, the first section asks customers their expectations if the ideal service benchmarking customer expectations. The second section asks customers about the service quality delivery of specific company in our field. In the

first section specific firms are not used but in the second section is. This is done because it gives us a direct comparison to competitors. (Marketing study guide 2023.)

The questions in the survey in both sections are the same but a specific firm is added to the questions, for example question in section one can be “___are dependable and provide up-to-date information” and in section two the same question is used but with a specific company “XYZ Company is dependable and provides up-to-date information”. (Mishra 2020.)

While SERVQUAL is usually used to evaluate external customer satisfaction, it can also be used for internal customer service measurement. For internal customers who rely on internal departments for support, resources, and service understanding expectations versus actual experiences can provide critical insights into the performance of customer service.

When SERVQUAL is applied to internal customers, the survey may remain in two sections, however instead of benchmarking expectations against external competitors, it benchmarks internal departments or teams against each other or an established internal service standard. The first section, focused on expectations, asks internal customers about their ideal standards of support and service delivery within the organization, setting a baseline for quality expectations across departments. The second section assesses the perceived service quality delivered by specific internal service providers, allowing the company to identify and address any gaps between departments or roles. By conducting a SERVQUAL survey the company can highlight differences between expectations and perceived service quality.

A SERVQUAL survey could look something like this (table 2.);

Table 2. SERVQUAL survey (Mishra 2020.)

	Expectation Survey	Perception Survey	E	P	Gap
Tangibility	Excellent _____ will have modern looking equipment	"XYZ company" has modern looking equipment			
	The physical facilities at Excellent _____ will be visually appealing	"XYZ company"'s physical facilities are visually appealing			
	Employees at Excellent _____ will be neat appearing	ABC hotle's reception desk employees are neat appearing			
	Materials associated with the service (such as welcome, no smoking statements) will be visually appealing at an Excellent _____	Materials associated with the service (such as welcome, no smoking statements) are visually appealing at "XYZ company"			
Reliability	When Excellent _____ promise to do something by a certain time, they do	When "XYZ company" promises to do something by a certain time, it does so			
	When a customer has a problem, excellent _____ hotels will show a sincere interest in solving it	When you have a problem, "XYZ company" shows a sincere interest in solving it			
	Excellent _____ will perform the service right the first time	"XYZ company" performs the service right the first time			
	Excellent _____ will provide the service at the time they promise to do so	"XYZ company" provides its service at the time it promises to do so			
	Excellent _____ will insist on error free records	"XYZ company" insists on error free records			
Responsiveness	Employees of Excellent _____ will tell customers exactly when services will be performed	Employees in "XYZ company" tell you exactly when services will be performed			
	Employees of Excellent _____ will give prompt service to customers	Employees in "XYZ company" give you prompt service			
	Employees of Excellent _____ will always be willing to help customers	Employees in "XYZ company" are always willing to help you			
	Employees of Excellent _____ will never be too busy to respond to customers' requests	Employees in "XYZ company" are never too busy to respond to your request			
Assurance	The behavior of employees in Excellent _____ will instill confidence in customers	The behavior of employees in "XYZ company" instills confidence in you			
	Customers of Excellent _____ will feel safe in transactions	You feel safe in your transactions with "XYZ company"			
	Employees of Excellent _____ will be consistently courteous with customers	Employees in "XYZ company" area consistently courteous with you			
	Employees of Excellent _____ will have the knowledge to answer customers' questions	Employees in "XYZ company" have the knowledge to answer your questions			
Empathy	Excellent _____ will give customers individual attention	"XYZ company" gives you individual attention			
	Excellent _____ will have operating hours convenient to all their customers	"XYZ company" has operating hours convenient to all its customers			
	Excellent _____ have employees who give customers personal attention	"XYZ company" has employees who give you personal attention			
	Excellent _____ will have their customer's best interests at heart	"XYZ company" has your best interest at heart			
	The employees of excellent _____ will understand the specific needs of their customers	The employees of "XYZ company" understand your specific needs			
Total					

Under "E" and "P" the customer would rate each statement how much they agree with it. or example, in "Excellent _____ will have modern-looking equipment," rate how strongly you expect modern equipment to be part of excellent service. After completing both collum's, the gap can be calculated by subtracting the Perception score (P) from the Expectation score (E) for each other. If the result is positive, it means the expectations are higher than perceptions and if zero or negative the company meets or exceeds expectations. (Mishra 2020.)

Because SERVQUAL can be a long survey to answer, SERVPERF can also be used. SERVPERF is a variant of the SERVQUAL scale however, the SERVPERF is half of the length and only focuses on performance. Whereas SERVQUAL focuses on both expectations and performance SERVPERF is a performance only scale and focuses on the performance of service. (Hlungwane.)

2.3 Customer satisfaction theories

There are multiple theories that contribute to the concept of customer satisfaction. Some of these include Contrast Theory, Comparison Level Theory, Value Percept Theory, Attribution Theory, and Equity Theory. (Rana 2024.) While these theories are commonly applied to external customers, they are also relevant for internal customers because they help in understanding how internal employees perceive and evaluate the services they receive from within the organization.

Contrast Theory is a theory that explains how customers react when there is a difference between their expectations and their experience with the service provided or product received. Instead of simply adjusting their expectations to match reality, customers tend to exaggerate the gap. If the service or product falls even slightly short of what was promised, customers are likely to perceive the experience as much worse than it actually was. If companies set high expectations for their service/product customers have higher expectations and when a customer experience is only slightly less than what was promised the service/product can be rejected as unsatisfied. On the other hand if the company sets moderate expectations but over-delivers, the positive can lead to even greater level of satisfaction. (Vlaicu 2014.)

Comparison Level Theory is used to explain how satisfaction is evaluated after a product has been consumed. Instead of evaluating the product or service after it has been consumed/used the comparison level theory is used to explain how customers assess satisfaction based on a comparison to their past experiences or pre-established standards. The comparison level theory suggests that people evaluate satisfaction based on their past experiences and what they have learned to expect from similar services/products. (Rana 2024.)

Value percept theory explains customer satisfaction with two factors. Those factors are Actual value and Ideal value. The theory argues that what the consumer is expecting from the product may not correspond to what is desired and valued. Satisfaction is determined by how well the product or service aligns with what the customer considers ideal. (Rana 2024.) If the actual value of the product closely matches or exceeds the customer's ideal expectations, satisfaction is high. However, if there is a significant gap between what the customer values and what they receive, dissatisfaction is shown.

Attribution theory is used in dissatisfaction/ complaining behaviour models more than in satisfaction model. This theory argues that people seek to understand the reasons behind the outcomes they experience, especially when those outcomes are negative. (McLeod

2023a.) These reasons may include the product itself, the service, the price, and even the person who sold the product. (Rana 2024.)

In the context of internal customer service this may mean that employees, as internal customers, try to identify and understand the causes of any negative service experiences they encounter within the organization. When something goes wrong, such as delayed support from an internal department or incomplete information, employees will attribute the problem to specific factors.

Equity theory is the idea that consistency is needed between expectations and experiences in order to have a positive customer experience. (Rana 2023.) It focuses on fairness, integrity or proper judgements that individuals receive. The assumption is that if consumers perceive that they are being treated fairly compared to others or in relation to their contributions, they will feel satisfied. (Bartleby.) If a customer feels that they have received fair value or treatment in exchange for what they have contributed, they are likely to have a positive experience. However, if there is a perceived imbalance, where the customer believes they are giving more than they are getting in return dissatisfaction may arise.

3 Internal customer service

3.1 Foundation of internal customer service

Internal customer service refers to for example employees who *receive inputs, goods or services from suppliers within the company* (Govender 2013.). Internal customers service is the service that the company provides to its employees. IT desk and services for example provide internal customer service.

With internal customers (table 1.) the focus is on building a strong, collaborative relationship between departments and teams to ensure that the internal flow of information, resources and support is seamless. Emphasis is put on meeting the needs and expectations of employees to ensure their satisfaction. By ensuring this companies may improve internal operations and foster more positive and collaborative work environment.

Table 1. internal vs. external (Khachina 2023.)

	Internal customer service	External customer service
Recipient of service	The support and assistance is provided specifically to employees.	The support is provided to individuals outside the organization, such as customers, vendors, suppliers, or stakeholders.
Focus	Focuses on meeting the needs and expectations of employees and ensuring their satisfaction.	Revolves around customer satisfaction and maintaining lasting relationships.
Communication	Involves interactions among different teams or departments.	Involves interactions with organization's clients or partners.
Metrics	Track employee-related metrics, such as their satisfaction, productivity, inter-departmental collaboration, and internal customer service efficiency.	Track customer-related metrics such as their satisfaction, loyalty, efficiency at using products, retention, and churn rates.

Internal customers communication happens primarily within the organization, among different departments and teams. With external customers company's clients, partners, and

stakeholders are involved. The focus in external customers is customer satisfaction and building lasting relationships with the clients. Building these relationships with external customers contributes into the company's success and reputation.

Employees who serve the role of internal customers have the critical role of fulfilling the needs of both internal and external customer. Their efficiency is in direct impact to the overall success of the company. By addressing the needs of internal customers, they help overall operations, improve communication, and ensure that the organization functions smoothly. When internal customers get the support and are satisfied with their work resources, they are better equipped to perform ultimately leading to increased productivity, and overall customer satisfaction with external customers as well as internal. (Khachina 2023.)

The pillars of internal customer service refer to the most important elements that are required to ensure effective organizational functioning. Similar to external customer service where providing friendly, efficient, and high-quality service is essential for success, the same principles apply internally. Considering that internal customers such as coworkers, employees, and managers are necessary to the organization's success, they should be treated with the same level of care and respect as external customers. (Study.com.) Therefore, the key elements of customer service remain consistent regardless of whether the customer is internal or external.

In internal customer service the key elements that make the service work are similar if not the same as in regular customer service. These key elements include communication, reliability, empathy, and time. (Wren, H & Writer, S 2024.) Although customer service is not universal and every customer has unique needs these things are often brought up when discussing about key elements in customer service.

Why communication is so important in customer service is it enables professionals to build relationships and bonds with their customers. It also facilitates understanding customer needs therefore enhancing customer satisfaction especially in the long term. (Glion 2023.) According to the dimensional research customer service and business result, a survey of customer service from mid-size companies from the 1046 individuals 62% of B2B customers and 42% of B2C customers would return after a good customer service experience. (Dimensional research 2013.) Although this research shows customer buying habits, the results can also be applied for customer satisfaction because the principle of good customer service remain consistent across both B2B and B2C setting. In another research correlation between communication and customer satisfaction was measured resulting in a positive

and significant correlation. This indicated that effective communication plays a key role in enhancing customer satisfaction. (Walelign 2019.)

B2B and B2C both influence customers directly by how they perceive the service they received. Communication is critical not only for immediate customer satisfaction but also for long-term relationships. In both B2B and B2C settings, clear and effective communication helps service professionals understand their customers' needs, address their concerns, and offer personalized solutions.

Reliability is one of the pillars in trustworthy customer service. It builds confidence and sense of security; it also builds up expectations for the customers meaning that customer service needs to be consistent to keep up trust and reliability. Customer service being reliable customers would not have the need to worry and follow up with the same problem. When talking about internal customers creating loyal customers is also cheaper. (Roy 2024.) In a situation where a customer can contact customer service knowing that the service they are providing is reliable mitigates mistakes made if the customer had not contacted customer service.

Empathy plays a critical role in customers re-contacting, similarly to communication and reliability – empathy will enhance the relationship bond customer service has with their customers. (Saufter 2024.) According to a Harvard study to maximize customer value the best way to do so is to move beyond basic customer service and connect with the customer in an emotional level. Emotionally connected customers according to this study are shown to be twice as valuable as highly satisfied customers. This is because they use the service more frequently, exhibit less price sensitivity, pay closer attention to communication, and are more likely to follow advice and recommendations. (Zorfas, A & Leemon, D 2016.)

Providing customer service response time is a crucial element to ensure customer satisfaction. Response time and time of resolution shows attentiveness, reliability, and commitment to addressing customer needs. Time also in this context means how customer service representatives spend their time. (Bubhlani 2024.) Time management is crucial skill in customer service and knowing how to manage one's time helps to handle multiple tasks, request, and deliver good service to the customer. Effective time management however can be more beneficial when there are more variables. Setting SMART goals can help in this. SMART goals stand for Special, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. SMART goals are designed to improve focus, enhance motivation, allocate resources, and track performance clearly. (Esoftskills.)

From these key pillars it can be seen that creating a trustworthy, long lasting, and mutually beneficial relationship with the customers is the key to maintaining their loyalty and fostering

stronger collaborative environment within the organization. This will ultimately enhance the overall internal customer satisfaction and organizational efficiency.

As discussed, the pillars of internal customer service can be concluded that internal and external customer service share key elements that apply to both. The distinction between the two is not as clear as one might think and the differences and similarities are often overstated. Internal and external customers while do share the common goal of satisfaction, they share different expectations, there is difference in communication and interactions. (Tainual.) In a way internal and external customers can be differentiated by two words, formality and familiarity. Internal customer, such as coworkers, typically are more familiar and operate as such leading to more informal and direct communication. On the other hand, external customers expect more formal interactions and are generally less familiar with the organization. (Solomon 2018.) Formality and familiarity serve as a way to differentiate the relationship dynamics between internal and external customers. While internal customer service relies heavily on collaboration, the ease of communication helps resolve issues more efficiently, external customer service requires more professional approach and boundaries.

4 Measuring internal customer service

4.1 Qualitative vs. Quantitative approaches

Designing effective surveys is crucial for obtaining meaningful and actionable feedback in internal customer service assessments. A well-structured survey not only ensures the collection of high-quality data but also enhances response rates and the reliability of the findings.

Even with surveys there are many different types of surveys and each of them provide their own unique advantages and limitations. Online surveys are widely used due to convenience, cost-effectiveness, and their ability to reach a large sample size. Online surveys are ideas for quantitative research models and especially useful for rapid data collection. (Bhat.)

Optimizing such survey is an important part of the survey due to the nature of the online survey. Those who receive the survey can easily put it off and not answer. While online surveys can reach a large number of people it also means that more people are not going to answer if it's inconvenient to them in any way.

While designing the survey, the company has to know what questions they want an answer to and if those answers need to be precise or broader. Providing a quantitative baseline for the survey to compare results easier can be one way to optimize such survey. (CheckMarket.)

While surveys can answer multiple questions at once, the optimising of the survey comes more difficult. When the survey is conducted a purpose for that survey is identified. To make a survey and optimize its design the purpose needs to be precise. Choosing one purpose for the survey helps with the optimising of the design because it allows the researcher to focus on collecting only the most relevant information. Although a survey is typically designed to address a primary purpose, surveys are inherently multipurpose in nature. It is important to identify these additional purposes to ensure that the survey design effectively satisfies each objective. Thus, if more knowledge is wanted the more complex the survey design becomes. The number of purposes increases and finding optimal options and solutions becomes harder and lengthens the survey. (Gonzalez & Eltinge 2010.)

A crucial element in optimizing online survey is selecting the right mix of question types. For example, closed-ended questions with rating scales, can provide a clear, quantifiable measure of satisfaction levels. These quantitative questions make it easier to track trends over time and identify areas needing improvement.

When measuring internal customer service, selecting the right research methods is critical to obtaining meaningful and actionable insights. Figure 3 shows how qualitative and quantitative methods address the same topics while remaining distinct methods. Qualitative and quantitative approaches are each unique with their own advantages and limitations. When deciding between the two specific objectives of the measurement process and wanted end result should be considered.

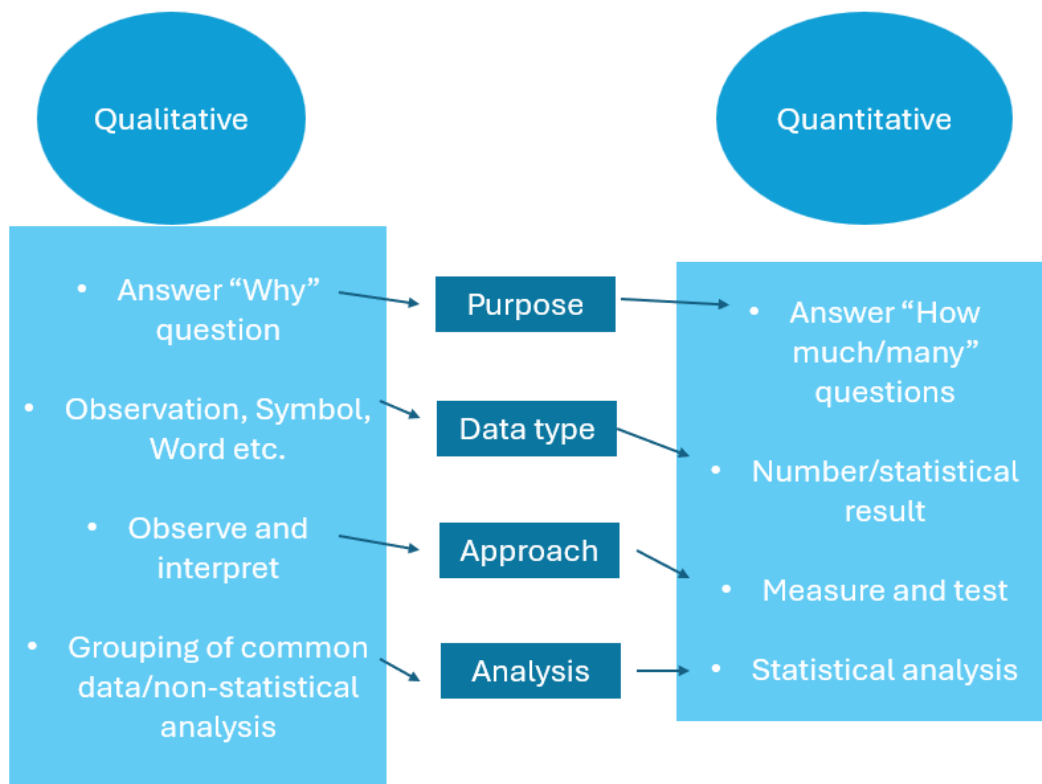


Figure 3. Qualitative and quantitative (adapted from McLeod 2023b.)

Qualitative and quantitative approaches answer different types of research questions and serve distinct purposes in the measurement process. Quantitative research is a structured and evidence-based study that uses statistical, mathematical, or computational methods to gather and interpret numerical data. (Dehalwar & Sharma 2024.). Quantitative research relies on objective measurements. Conducting research using qualitative method questions such as *how many* and *how much* can be used. Qualitative research uses structured tools such as surveys and questionnaires to gather the needed information. With quantitative method of research measuring results and data can be analyzed with mathematical models and it's easier to identify patterns, correlations, and trends in the data. Generalizability is much easier if the sample for the research is bigger and usually when quantitative approaches are used the sample size of the research is much bigger. Because quantitative

approaches use numerical data and statistical analysis, they allow for replication of the study whereas in qualitative approaches the data may vary from study to study.

Qualitative research approaches focus on exploring and understanding the complexities of human experiences, behaviours, and social phenomena through non-numerical data. (Dehalwar & Sharma 2024.) Qualitative approaches provide an opportunity to delve deeper into a subject. Qualitative approaches answer question *why*. Using this approach, techniques such as interviews, focus groups, and open-ended questions in surveys can be used. The purpose of qualitative research approach is to capture emotion, motivation, and perspectives of those who are part of the sample. Unlike quantitative research the sample size for qualitative research is smaller, allowing detailed analysis on individual cases. (Dehalwar & Sharma 2024.)

Because the difference in generalizability in the two methods varies, surveys and questionnaires can have differences even when applied to the same topic. For instance, quantitative surveys focus on collecting data that can be quantified, often using closed-ended questions with predefined answer choices, making it easier to compare responses across a large sample. On the other hand, qualitative questionnaires may use open-ended questions, allowing respondents to share detailed and nuanced insights, which provide depth but are more challenging to standardize or replicate. (Almeida et al. 2017.)

Both of these approaches come with their own limitations. Because qualitative research method is focused on exploring in-depth insights and understanding complex human experiences, it may effect on the bias when interpreting answers. The findings are typically context-specific and not easily applicable to broader populations making generalizability harder, also making concise and precise conclusion from this data can be difficult. These combined with how time-consuming qualitative research with methods such as interviews and observations, can make qualitative research less efficient compared to more streamlined approaches. (Almeida et al. 2017.)

On the other hand, quantitative research method is designed to collect and analyze numerical data, offering the advantage of objectivity and statistical reliability. However, quantitative research methods can be rigid and lack the flexibility needed to explore new or emerging themes that might arise during the study. There is not a direct cause and effect, and result may lack validity. (Almeida et al. 2017.)

While both of these approaches provide valuable information it's important to first know what type of information the company is looking for before using these methods. Choosing the appropriate research approach depends on the specific goals and needs of the company and what they are wanting to get out of the research. If the objective is to gather

detailed insights into employee experiences and perceptions, qualitative methods would be more suitable. These methods help uncover the "why" behind employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction, offering a deeper understanding that can inform more targeted improvements in internal customer service. However, if the company goal is to measure employee satisfaction levels across a large workforce, such as different departments, and identify clear trends or correlations, a quantitative approach would be more effective. Quantitative methods allow for the collection of measurable data that can be easily analysed and compared, providing a broad overview of service performance and satisfaction metrics.

4.2 Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators (KPIs) are used to measure values that assess a company's overall performance over long term. They are mainly used to evaluate the company's strategy, financial, and operational successes. KPIs also help track progress or measure accomplishments against specific benchmarks or previous performance. (Twin 2024.) In measuring customer satisfaction KPIs play a crucial role in evaluating how well a company meets the expectations and needs of its customers.

There is five KPIs for measuring customer satisfaction. They are satisfaction rate, Net promoter score (NPS), customer satisfaction score (CSAT), customer effort score (CES), and Intention to purchase again. These five KPIs are essential for understanding how satisfied customers are with a company's products or services. Satisfaction rate measures how satisfied the customer is with the overall service/product. This can be measured on a scale of 1 to 10. NPS metric measures customer loyalty and engagement asking how likely they are to recommend the service/product they received. This can also be measured on a scale of 1 to 10. CSAT measures customer satisfaction but focusing on customer loyalty. CSAT looks the overall satisfaction among customers asking directly about their experiences. CES looks how much effort customers have to make to contact/interact with the company. Such efforts can be customers need to look at help topics online, using internal platforms for information, etc, and then asking how easy and how fast tasks related to their effort was. Intention to purchase again is a measurement whether the customers are likely to purchase/use their service/product again based on previous interactions such as repeat orders, referrals, and transactions. (Melbado.)

Some KPIs in customer service could be customer satisfaction score, customer retention rate, monthly support ticket submissions, average resolution time, and cost per resolution. (Henningan 2024.)

Taking into account these five KPIs, by systematically tracking these metrics, companies can better understand customer perceptions and work proactively to enhance their services or products.

5 Data collection

5.1 Methods for collecting data

As talked before surveys, interviews, and focus groups can be a good way to collect data on internal customer service. Each method provides unique insights and benefits that contribute to a well-rounded understanding of employee satisfaction and service quality.

Each method for collecting data has its own specific variable that is made to aim into something specific. When choosing how the company wants to collect data it's important to know what is required for the study. Data collection methods are divided into two main categories, primary data collection and secondary data collection. Figure 4 shows a list of what kinds of data can be used with each method.

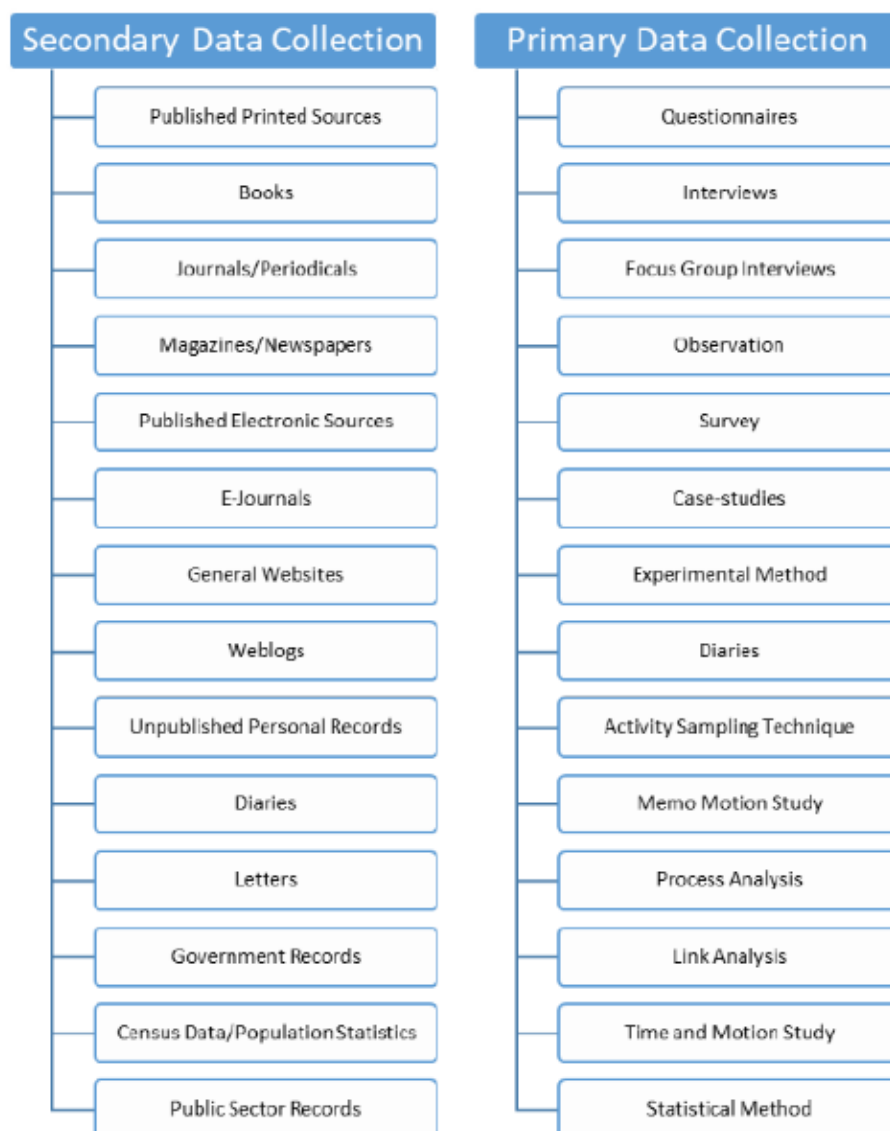


Figure 4. Secondary and Primary data. (Taherdoost 2021.)

In short primary data collection means raw data gathered from the source directly, such as surveys and interviews. Primary data is specific and collecting primary data can be time consuming. The best ways to collect primary data is utilising surveys and questionnaires, interviews, and making observations and experiments. The downside of primary data collection is the cost and time collecting this type of data takes, also sample size is usually smaller and has limited generalizability. Similar to qualitative approach biases can arise unintentionally. To collect primary data, it's best to define objectives, choose right methods, ensure ethical compliance, and document the process. (Hassan 2024a.)

Secondary data on the other hand is information that can be collected, processed, and published by someone else. Secondary data is not data that can be collected by the researcher themselves firsthand. Since secondary data uses pre-existing data common methods to analyse this data are descriptive analysis, method where the data is summarized by using mean, standard deviation, and range of data. Inferential analysis, method involves drawing conclusions about a population based on the sample data. Content analysis, this is done by analysing textual or visual data to identify patterns and themes. Time-series analysis, identifying trends and patterns over time from the data. Lastly meta-analysis, this is used to combine data from multiple studies to make conclusions about the topic of research. Secondary data unlike primary data takes less time to collect, is wide-ranging and can be generalized, it's less expensive to conduct. However secondary data lacks the control, this makes it less reliable when it comes to appropriate methods and measures, the data can be collected using bias sampling methods and the data may be incomplete or inaccurate. Because of these point secondary data needs to be carefully evaluated to ensure the data is appropriate for the research and its questions and objectives. (Hassan 2024b.)

5.2 Statistical analysis techniques

Statistical analysis techniques can help researchers to answer research questions in more depth. By applying different analysis techniques companies can uncover patterns, relationships, and trends within their data. There is three main type of statistical analysis. Descriptive statistical analysis, in a simple, using numbers to describe the qualities of a data set. Using this technique mean, median, standard deviation, and frequency distribution can be seen. It helps researchers gain a clear overview of the data and identify more trends from the data. (Indeed editorial team 2024b.)

Like concluded in the last topic inferential statistical analysis is used *to draw conclusion about a larger population-based on findings from a sample group within it*. To conduct inferential statistical analysis, researchers use a sample to make estimates about the broader

population's parameters. This may also include hypothesis testing to estimate a confidence interval to support or disprove generalization. (Indeed editorial team 2024b.)

Associational statistical analysis is used as a tool to make predictions and find causations. This is used to find relationships between multiple variables. To actually measure association, a wide range of coefficients of variation, including correlation and regression analysis is used. (Indeed editorial team 2024b.)

5.3 Tools and software's for data analysis

While knowing what type of techniques may be best for your research it's also important to know what tools you can and should use to get the needed information. To understand those trends and other findings from your data, and to draw conclusions, such as statistical software, and data visualization platforms can greatly enhance the research process.

Data analytics and visualization of data is important to illustrate patterns, trends, and relationships that may not be immediately evident from raw data alone. Using these tools can help present complex findings in a more comprehensible and visually engaging way, making it easier to communicate insights to stakeholders and facilitate decision-making. (Srivastava 2023.)

MS Excel being one of the most popular tools for data analytics helps with building models and helps you run regression analysis, statistical analysis and hypothesis testing (Hanak 2020.). Excel provides the basic data visualization capabilities (Srivastava 2023.). Other software's for data visualization are QlikView, Power BI and Tableau. These tools offer advanced features that allow users to create interactive and dynamic visual representations of data. Programming libraries such as Matplotlib, ggplot2, and D3.js are also valuable tools for creating custom data visualizations. With each program and software there is their own strengths and weaknesses. Researchers should choose the best one based on user's specific requirements. (Srivastava 2023.)

SPSS is also widely used statistical software that provides a range of advanced analytical techniques. SPSS comes with build-in tools for data manipulations allowing the user to carry out advanced analytics, including factor analysis, hypothesis testing, various types of regression analyses, cluster analysis and more. For SPSS you need a licence however, PSPP is a open-source tool similar to SPSS. (Hanak 2020.)

6 Empirical research

6.1 Company X

Company X is an organization located in southern Finland, next to Helsinki. Company X plays a key role in the economic, technological, and infrastructural development of its area. They have more than 10,000 employees all together and offers multiple different career paths. Company X's financial services department is in charge of the company's finance and also offer customer service for its employees concerning finance questions. This customer service usually includes dealing with the company's internal systems regarding orders, invoicing and more.

Company X's financial services customer support offer internal customers a service that is designed to facilitate smooth financial operations. Customers can get assistance with financial queries, managing invoices and orders, processing transactions, and guidance on the company's internal financial systems.

6.2 Survey design

A survey was conducted in the beginning of 2024. This survey was sent to respondent via email whom 272 answered. This survey resulted in a response rate of approximately 52.7%. The survey was conducted by using webropol applications and by sending a link to the survey through email. This email was sent to chosen focus group, which consisted of internal customers within the company. These internal customers were customers who recently interacted with the company's customer service. The selection of this group was based on their role and responsibilities within the company, ensuring that the feedback reflects a wide range of experiences and interactions with the company's customer service.

The survey aimed to gather insights into internal customer service usage within company X. The survey focused on areas such as communication efficiency, problem resolution, and overall satisfaction with the service provided by internal customer service team. Additionally, the survey included an open answer section where identifying potential gaps in service delivery, this allowed sharing challenges, needs, and suggestions for potential development and improvement. This gave the survey qualitative feedback and provided a deeper insight into issues that may arise in the structured questionnaire, offering more comprehensive understanding of the quality of customer service.

The survey had 4 structured questions and an open-answer question. These questions are as follows:

- What topics have you been in contact with financial services?
- How did you contact financial customer service?
- Did you get the needed help?
- Were you happy with the customer service provided?

The results of the survey were made into a PowerPoint and presented for the whole financial service team. The questions were designed to give clear, measurable insights into the key aspects of the internal customer service experience. The responses provided data on the types of issues internal customers commonly face, the communication channels they prefer, effectiveness of the support provided, and their overall satisfaction with the service provided. These metrics serve as crucial indicators for evaluation and show the current performance of the financial customer service team and identify areas where improvements can be made. To provide a more holistic view of the customer service environment within the company an open-answer was combined into the questionnaire to allow respondents to expand their experience, offer more detailed feedback. These offered the respondents to bring up more underlying issues not covered by the structured questions.

6.2.1 Sample

The survey was sent to internal customers within company X. 272 responded. These respondents were selected based on recent activity with the financial services customer service. The sample was selected so to ensure that the information and feedback gathered was relevant and up to date.

The participants represented a range of roles within different departments within company X. Participants were primarily employees who engaged with the financial services customer support to handle tasks like invoicing and financial queries. The selection was focused on employees with responsibilities that involved regular interaction with internal financial systems. These respondents' results were critical to understanding and identifying the service performance and its impact on day-to-day financial operations.

6.2.2 Data collection process

The data for the first survey was collected by the financial services team during the second quarter of the year through an online survey application distributed to the sample of the survey. Responses were gathered anonymously to ensure honest feedback, and the collection of the data then analysed to identify satisfaction levels and areas for improvement.

6.3 First survey results

Overall, the first survey results show that 94.8% of respondents did get the needed help from customer service, and only 5,2% did not. The result showed that 44% of customers were “highly satisfied”, 50% “satisfied” and only 6% reported dissatisfaction (Figure 5.). This indicates that the majority of internal customers has a positive experience with the financial service team.

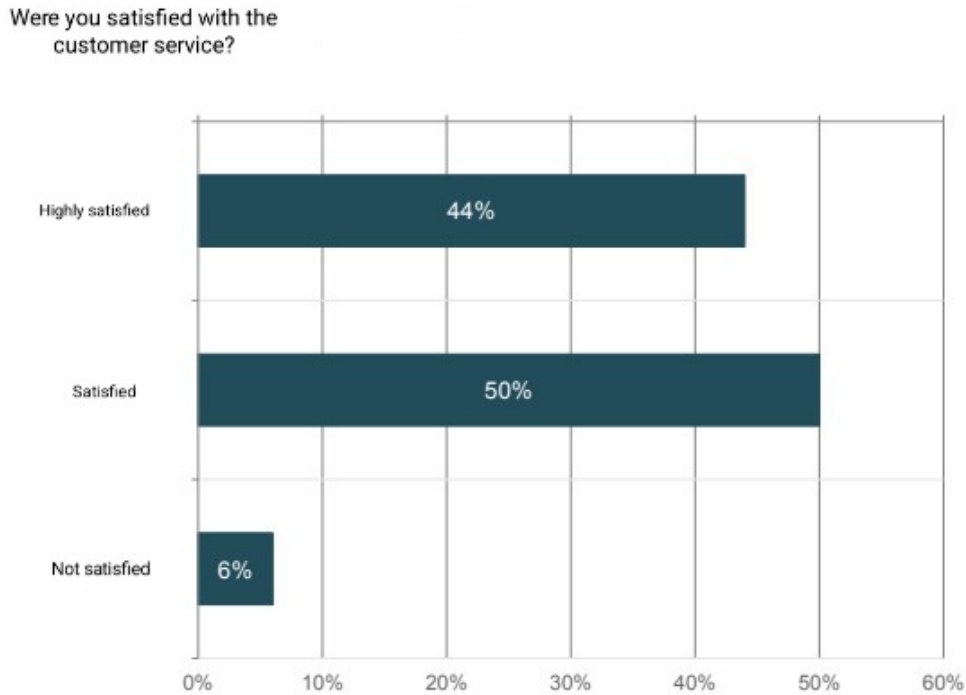


Figure 5. Satisfaction precents

Key trends emerged from the data. The use of the ticketing system for communication is prominent with 92.5% of respondents preferring the ticketing system and the main communication platform. Phone and chat were significantly lower in preference at 18% and 32.7% respectively (Table 3.). The overall satisfaction with response time and the effectiveness of problem-solving also stood out as a positive trend.

Table 3. First survey contacting

How have you contacted customer support? What channel did you use? (You may choose multiple)

	n	Procent
Ticketing system	246	92,5%
Phone	48	18,0%
Chat	87	32,7%

Answer: 256, chosen answer: 381

Despite the high satisfaction with the ticketing system, it is important to understand why preferences for phone and chat communication remain significantly lower. These methods may be perceived as less efficient or unsuitable for internal customers who favor documented, trackable communication through tickets. Gaining deeper insights into these preferences can help the team balance resources more effectively across various communication platforms.

The survey also highlights high satisfaction with response times and problem-solving effectiveness, indicating that the financial service team has implemented efficient processes for promptly addressing inquiries and resolving issues. Maintaining these standards will be essential to sustain the current levels of customer satisfaction.

Key performance areas include communication, response times, and problem-solving efficiency. Many respondents praised the service, particularly the ticketing system and chat support, and noted the friendliness and professionalism of the customer service team. However, challenges remain, such as occasional delays in response, difficulties in understanding financial processes, and a lack of clarity in instructions provided.

While the survey focuses on internal customer service, occasional users expressed a desire for a simpler, more user-friendly system. Those who do not interact with the system regularly found internal processes complicated and requested improvements to enhance usability.

6.4 Design and implementation for a new survey

Suggestions for the new survey has been designed with targeted improvements to capture more detailed feedback. In addition to measuring overall satisfaction, the new survey should include specific sections for evaluating response times, clarity of communication, and user experiences with internal systems. Clearer, more direct questions should be added to better understand the challenges occasional users face. The response options should be expanded to allow for more qualitative feedback, enabling more deeper analysis of the results.

The primary objective of the new survey if suggestions are implemented is to gather detailed data on areas that customers find challenging, unsatisfactory or satisfactory in their interactions with the customer support. The survey would aim to identify inefficiencies in service delivery, such as slow response times, unclear communication, or difficulties navigating internal IT-systems, topics that the first initial survey brought up. By focusing on these key points, the survey seeks to provide actionable insights into how the internal customer service experience can be improved, as well as what aspects of the service customers are happy with and value the most.

Positive feedback will be crucial in understanding the strengths of the current customer support team and system. By analysing the data, the organization will be able to prioritize improvements, streamline processes, and implement targeted training for support staff, ultimately leading to a more efficient and customer-centric internal service model.

The survey also seeks to assess how internal customers' needs have evolved since the previous survey and identify new trends in customer expectations. Additional data will be collected on how users interact with various service channels (e.g., ticketing system, chat, phone) and their satisfaction with each.

The results will help inform strategies for simplifying processes, improving response times, and making internal systems more user-friendly. These changes should lead to higher overall satisfaction and a more efficient service experience.

To maximise answers survey could be sent in a specific time. According to a blog written by Ian Luck there is not a day that stand out when you should send your survey email, however according to him email open rates are most successful between 2 pm and 8 pm. (Luck 2022.) Other articles say that Monday is the best day to send out an email and between 12 and 3 pm (Williams 2024.).

6.5 Second survey results

The internal customer service satisfaction survey conducted in Fall 2024 received a total of 168 responses. Respondents were asked about their experiences with the Financial Services department, covering various aspects of service quality and communication methods.

Participants came from different organizational divisions, 43.7% were from the Growth and Learning division, 25.1% from the Urban Environment division, 19.8% from Corporate Administration, and 11.4% from the Vitality division. These diverse responses helped provide a comprehensive view of customer satisfaction across various units.

The survey revealed that most respondents (69.0%) reached out to Financial Services to resolve specific problems. Common issues included processing purchase invoices (42.3%), order placement (34.5%), and sales invoicing (14.3%). Communication methods varied, with 60.5% using the ticketing system, 24.5% preferring email, 8.4% utilizing chat, and 6.6% using phone calls (Figure 6.).

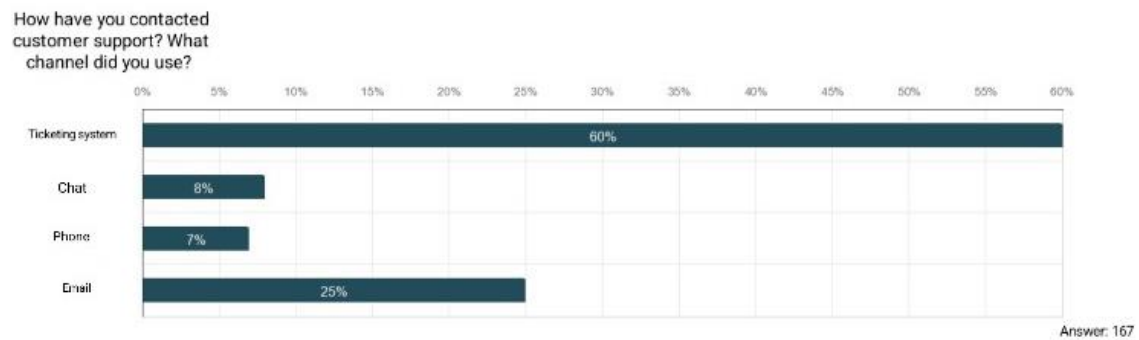


Figure 6. Second survey contacting

When asked to rate their overall satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5, the majority rated the service positively, with a mean score of 4.3 and a median of 4. Respondents praised the friendliness and professionalism of the service staff but highlighted areas for improvement, such as the complexity of system instructions and the efficiency of communication methods.

This survey stood out for its comprehensive collection of open-ended responses. Compared to previous iterations, it provided significantly more opportunities for participants to elaborate on their experiences and suggest improvements. As a result, the survey captured a richer array of qualitative feedback, revealing not only satisfaction levels but also detailed insights into the specific challenges and expectations of respondents. This depth of commentary will be invaluable in identifying targeted areas for service enhancement.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Summary of key findings and recommendations

Summarising the key findings from the surveys. The most frequent reason for contacting financial services customer support was purchase invoices in both surveys, with a significant number of respondents indicating this as a primary concern. Ordering was consistently mentioned as an interaction area, highlighting its importance in both datasets of the surveys. The ticketing system was a dominant contact channel, used by over 60% of respondents in both datasets. This system appears effective but has areas for improvement, especially in its accessibility and user-friendliness. Usage of the chat service is growing, but there are complaints about the chat's limitations, such as prematurely closing conversations. Phone contact is seen as preferable for complex issues but isn't always available. High satisfaction rates in both surveys, with most respondents indicating positive experiences with timely, friendly, and efficient service. Respondents appreciate the knowledgeable and helpful staff but note inconsistencies in handling complex problems and delays in providing comprehensive solutions.

Some of the key issues were in system usability, response time and communication improvements. The ordering system receives criticism for its complexity and unclear instructions. Respondents struggle with understanding technical terms and require more straightforward, accessible guidance. Suggestions include clearer, more intuitive user instructions and the ability to streamline processes. Users have requested better integration of communication tools, such as using MS teams for real-time support. The need for personalized, interactive help options is also emphasized, especially for urgent or complicated tasks.

In the surveys many respondents praised the friendliness and competence of the service team, highlighting successful resolutions and efficient handling of straightforward inquiries.

Original survey had 272 respondents, the survey yielded a higher total volume of data points, including multiple answers per respondent for certain questions. For instance, the question about the reason for contacting financial services customer support had a total of 516 responses, indicating a detailed set of insights across different categories. Despite having fewer respondents (168), the new survey gathered valuable insights. For example, multiple-choice questions had a substantial amount of data, but the overall range and variety of responses were less compared to the original survey. The number of answers to specific questions, such as the type of contact or feedback about service quality, was notably lower. However, the new survey highlighted the depth of qualitative feedback received. Respondents provided detailed comments and suggestions, highlighting both the effectiveness of

current customer support and potential areas for improvement. The survey showcased a high percentage of satisfaction among participants, with most respondents reporting that their issues were resolved efficiently and that they felt understood by customer support. This level of positive engagement suggested a strong foundation of trust between the financial services team and its clients. The inclusion of open-ended responses also added valuable context to the quantitative data, illustrating the personal experiences of users. These insights provided a clearer understanding of customer expectations and emphasized the importance of maintaining high service quality.

The original survey revealed high overall satisfaction but also highlighted key areas for improvement, such as response delays, communication clarity, and the complexity of internal systems. The new survey is expected to reinforce these findings while providing deeper insights into how occasional users experience internal customer service. These combined results will give a fuller picture of the service's strengths and areas that require attention.

Based on the findings from the initial survey, key recommendations have been identified for the design and execution of the new survey. To focus on key areas for improvement on the survey, the surveys questions are categorised into specific groups as follows:

- Service quality and satisfaction
- Communication and responsiveness
- System usability
- Customer satisfaction
- Improvement and suggestions
- Additional questions

The new survey should emphasize gathering detailed information on areas where internal customer service has been reported to be less effective. This includes specific questions on response time, clarity of communication, and ease of use of systems. To implement these focuses, questions like the following could be included:

Service quality and satisfaction

- How would you rate the overall quality of the internal customer service you received?
(Options: Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor)
- Did the service meet your expectations in terms of professionalism and effectiveness? (Options: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never)

- Were your needs fully addressed during your initial interaction with the support? (Options: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never)

Communication and responsiveness

- Has communication been clear enough? (Options: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never)
- Did you feel that your concerns were understood by the customer support team? (Options: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never)
- Any specific challenges you face when interacting with the customer support? (Open ended)

System usability

- Did you encounter any technical issues while seeking support? (Options: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never)
- How would you rate the overall user experience when interacting with the customer service system? (Options: Very easy, Easy, Neutral, Difficult, Very difficult)

Customer satisfaction

- Have you received enough information when you have contacted customer service? (Options: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never)
- How often does the service you receive meet your expectations? (Options: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never)

Improvement and suggestions

- Have you received help from elsewhere, which is why you have not contacted customer support? (Yes, No. Open answer: who?)
- Have you experienced delay in receiving support or service, and if so, where? (Options: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never)

Original questions from the first survey should be included in the new survey but give the respondents more options to pinpoint even more specific answer. For every question there should also be an open answer option to maximise the data and give the respondents an opportunity to expand their answer. In questions such as *did you get the needed help for customer service* may have more to answer than just yes or no. By giving respondents opportunities to expand their answers in each of the questions, answers can be categorized even more and pinpoint key topics and issues.

7.2 Answers to the research questions

To address the central research question, it was important to first explore the sub-questions. The first sub-question was answered through the theoretical framework, which outlined effective strategies for measuring internal customer service. The second sub-question was explored by combining insights from the theoretical framework with the findings from the empirical research, focusing on how metrics can assess the effectiveness of internal customer service. The third sub-question was clarified by examining both theoretical concepts and real-world examples of selecting appropriate measurement tools. Once the sub-questions were addressed, the main research question was answered, offering a comprehensive understanding of the best measurement strategies for internal customer service.

How can company X's internal customer service survey be improved to better identify areas for improvement?

Company X's internal customer service survey can be enhanced by incorporating specific, clear, and targeted questions to capture detailed feedback. Improvements should focus on measuring response times, clarity of communication, and the usability of internal systems. Including open-ended questions will allow respondents to elaborate on their experiences and highlight any underlying issues not covered by structured questions. Expanding response options to allow more qualitative feedback can yield deeper insights into service challenges and strengths. Optimizing survey timing (e.g., sending it during high engagement periods) can also help boost response rates and the quality of feedback.

What are the most effective measurement strategies for assessing internal customer service?

Effective measurement strategies for internal customer service include using a blend of quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative approaches, such as surveys with rating scales, provide measurable data that can track trends over time. Qualitative approaches, including open-ended survey questions and interviews, allow for a deeper understanding of employee experiences and motivations. Utilizing models like SERVQUAL or its simplified variant SERVPERF can offer insights into service quality dimensions such as reliability, empathy, and responsiveness. Integrating metrics such as customer satisfaction scores (CSAT), Net Promoter Score (NPS), and Customer Effort Score (CES) can also give comprehensive views of service effectiveness.

How can metrics be applied to assess the effectiveness of internal customer service?

Metrics can be applied by analysing key performance indicators (KPIs) like CSAT for direct feedback on satisfaction, CES for evaluating the ease of interaction, and NPS to gauge loyalty and likelihood of recommendations. Tracking these metrics over time helps identify trends and inform improvements. For example, calculating the first contact resolution rate or monitoring average response times can highlight areas where efficiency needs enhancement. The data can then be used to benchmark performance and guide strategic decisions for process optimization

What criteria should organizations use to select appropriate measurement tools for internal customer service?

Organizations should select measurement tools based on criteria such as ease of use, the ability to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, and adaptability to internal processes. Tools should offer flexibility for customization to meet the unique needs of different departments and support anonymity to encourage honest feedback. Choosing tools that provide integration with data analysis platforms ensures seamless evaluation and actionable insights. Additionally, incorporating tools that align with customer service theories (e.g., SERVQUAL) can ensure a comprehensive assessment of service quality dimensions

7.3 Validity and reliability

In assessing the validity and reliability of the methods and findings in this study, it is crucial to ensure that the conclusions drawn are both credible and dependable. Validity was maintained throughout the study by employing comprehensive data collection techniques and aligning the survey design with established theoretical frameworks. The sources I utilized in the project significantly impact its reliability. The sources I utilized in the project significantly impact its reliability by providing a foundation of well-established and peer-reviewed information. The credibility of these sources ensures that the theoretical background and survey questions are based on current and authoritative knowledge in the field of internal customer service.

7.4 For future research

Building on the findings and limitations of this study, several pathways for future research are proposed to deepen the understanding and enhance the strategies for measuring and improving internal customer service. Expanding research to include comparative analyses between different departments or teams could uncover unique service challenges specific to particular areas of an organization. This comparison would help tailor strategies more effectively and ensure a comprehensive approach to improving internal service. Given the

rapid advancement in technology, further studies should explore the use of AI and data analytics in monitoring and enhancing internal customer service. AI-driven tools, such as natural language processing (NLP), could be employed to analyze open-ended feedback from surveys and identify recurring themes or concerns more efficiently. These future research areas will support the ongoing development of strategies that not only improve internal customer satisfaction but also contribute to overall organizational efficiency.

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