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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN MOBILE REPAIR SHOP CONTEXT

– Case study: Digiman

BACHELOR'S THESIS | ABSTRACT

TURKU UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN MOBILE REPAIR SHOP CONTEXT

- Case study: Digiman

Digiman is a well-established company in Tampere region with five locations in addition to three other locations around Finland. It operates in mobile device repair and accessory business. The company has never conducted any research into customer satisfaction. Consequently, the purpose of the research is to find out what is important for the customers, and to identify the service areas that require improvement. Price, swiftness, staff, service practices, among other things, all affect customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers are the basis for just about any company.

During the research key service aspects were identified based on literature review and based on author's experience as a salesperson in store. After a handful of customers were interviewed to gain deeper insight into customers minds. Whereas the interview gave qualitative results, survey was launched after, to yield quantitative results. Among other things, most important service aspects, service performance, areas of improvement, and effortlessness were surveyed.

The research found out that effortlessness, swiftness, and 'good service' are important regarding the company's services in general. When it comes to repair services, professionalism was found out to be a deciding factor in addition to swiftness and price. Customers of the company found the most room for improvement in swiftness, product selection, and price.

In a nutshell, this thesis gives answers to what is important when operating in mobile repair business. The results can also be applied in lesser extent to companies repairing any consumer electronics. The thesis was conducted in cooperation with Digiman Oy.

KEYWORDS:

Customer satisfaction, mobile phone repair, customer service, mobile phone accessories

Markus Manner

ASIAKASTYYTYVÄISYYDEN MERKITYS PUHELINKORJAUS YRITYKSESSÄ

- Tutkimus: Digiman

Digiman on yritys, joka on vakiinnuttanut asemansa Tampereen seudulla viidellä liiketilalla. Yrityksellä on myös toimipisteet kolmessa muussa kaupungissa. Yrityksen palveluihin kuuluvat mobiililaitteiden korjaus ja tarvikkeiden myynti. Digiman ei ole aikaisemmin tehnyt tutkimusta asiakastyytyväisyydestä nähdäkseen. Muun muassa hinnat, nopeus ja henkilökunnan toimintatavat vaikuttavat asiakkaiden tyytyväisyyteen. Tyytyväiset asiakkaat ovat kuitenkin liiketoiminnan perusta. Tämän seurauksena asiakastyytyväisyystutkimus on tärkeä. Tutkimuksen tarkoitus on selvittää mikä asiakkaille on tärkeää ja millä palvelun osaalueilla on kehitettävää.

Tutkimus lähti liikkeelle palvelun tärkeimpien näkökulmien selvittämisestä kirjallisuuskatsauksen ja liikkeessä saadun suullisen palautteen kautta. Asiakashaastattelut seurasivat tätä vaihetta. Haastattelujen ollessa kvalitatiivisia, kyselytutkimus oli kvantitatiivinen. Tutkimus kartoitti muun muassa, palvelun tärkeimmät osa-alueet, palvelun toimintakyvyn, kehitysalueet ja palvelun helppouden tason.

Asiakkaiden mielestä tärkeimpiä yleispalvelun osa-alueita olivat helppous, nopeus ja 'hyvä palvelu'. Huoltopalveluiden yhteydessä henkilökunnan ammattitaito oli tärkeää nopeuden ja palvelun laadun lisäksi. Eniten kehittämisen varaa asiakkaiden mielestä oli palvelun nopeudessa, tuotevalikoimassa ja hinnoissa.

Lyhyesti sanottuna, tämä opinnäytetyö pohtii, mikä on tärkeää Digimanin ja muiden puhelinkorjauspalveluiden tarjoajille. Tulokset ovat parhaiten hyödynnettävissä kännykkähuoltoyrityksiin, mutta myös vähemmissä määrin muihin kuluttajaelektroniikkaa korjaaviin firmoihin. Opinnäytetyö luotiin yhdessä Digiman Oy:n kanssa.

ASIASANAT:

Asiakas tyytyväisyys, matkapuhelimen korjaus, asiakaspalvelu, matkapuhelintarvikkeet

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B2B	Business to Business
B2C	Business to consumer
OEM	Original equipment manufacturer

1 INTRODUCTION

Digiman is a Finnish phone repair shop. The company also offers a wide variety of mobile phone accessories and related products. Additionally, the services extend beyond repair, and accessories through other services, usage tips, and minor troubleshooting. This results in Digiman being the 'one-stop shop' when it comes to mobile phones, apart from retailing mobile phones. Digiman is also official Samsung and Huawei mobile device repair shop. The company is based in Tampere but also operates in Raisio, Kuopio, and Jyväskylä. All the Digiman outlets are based in local shopping malls. The company was established in 2000, and has strong market position in Tampere region where it runs five locations. One of the cornerstone strategies of the company is to offer best possible service face-to-face. Therefore, it is vital for the company to acquire primary data on customer satisfaction.

Consumers are increasingly dependent on mobile phones, and the devices are taking ever more central part in their lives. Therefore, the customer satisfaction is extremely important, and according to the author's observations at work, any delays and mishaps in the service are likely to cause relatively strong dissatisfaction. On the other hand, fast and reliable service often results in greatly satisfied customers. Now, in the era of digital life, company reputation is increasingly fragile as dissatisfied customers may easier than ever spread the negative impression (Jones; Temperley; & Anderson, 2010).

Prior research has been conducted on relationship between customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and profitability (Hallowell, 1996). The research found out the three factors indeed are related to one another while causality was not found. All in all, the ideal situation is to reduce the dissatisfaction as close to absolute zero as possible while simultaneously maintaining high satisfaction among the satisfied customers.

The author of the thesis works in the Raisio store. Hence, the availability of primary data is plentiful. Satisfaction levels were mainly measured through a survey. Prior to the survey a small group of customers were interviewed to gain further insight into what makes customer's return, and how first-time customers perceive the store and service. Having conducted the interviews, sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and most important aspects of the service, were identified. Following the findings of both interview and survey, and verbal feedback in store, suggestions on how to improve the service was given based on customer feedback.

The feedback in store is generally strongly positive or strongly negative. The impression is that the customers are either highly satisfied, neutral due to the nature of transaction, or strongly negative. It is believed that this is the case due to the importance of the mobile phones in our everyday lives as mentioned before.

The most central framework for the thesis is Treacy's and Wiersema's value disciplines that confirms the customer service centrality of the company. According to the framework, Digiman employs the customer intimacy approach. Another important research concerning this thesis is the research conducted by Kristin Scott of Minnesota State University and Scott Weaver of Point University. The research (2014) explains the reasons why consumers choose to repair consumer electronics such as smartphones. Finally, a research by Customer Contact Council explains why effortlessness and swiftness are central values to any customer service focused company (Dixon;Freeman;& Toman, 2010).

The research naturally started with literature review where key frameworks were identified, as mentioned above. Interviews followed the identification of frameworks. Interviews were more qualitative than quantitative. Based on interviews, and general feedback, survey was launched in-store. Surveying included the pilot phase after which the survey was improved based on feedback and observations. After the aforementioned steps, conclusions were drawn based on all the data collected. The scope of the research is mainly limited to service the company offers. Another minor topic that is discussed is product selection. The bottom line of the research is to find out current satisfaction levels and how to eliminate the strongly dissatisfied customers.

The research questions of the research proposal are:

1. Identify the three most significant reasons what causes satisfaction and dissatisfaction in current customers.
2. Identify the three most important aspects of the service for the customer and what makes them repeat customers.
3. Based on the findings, identify three key aspects that need improving in Digiman's case

The general objective of this research is to improve Digiman's services, customer satisfaction, all of which would ideally result in higher returns. While it is highly important to measure the customer satisfaction levels in Digiman, in reality it is important for just about any company (Caruana, 2002) . According to Caruana, customer satisfaction

results in loyal customers which in turn translates into repeat purchases creating bedrock for any business. Still, for a customer service focused company like Digiman, high satisfaction levels are even more important. The company has not previously conducted any research into the customer satisfaction, and hence the importance of the topic of this research.

2 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND REASONS TO REPAIR

The current situation in phone repair industry in Finland is rather competitive. While many consumers still choose to buy a new phone when the old one starts to malfunction, mobile repair shops, and second-hand mobile market, have begun to grow in numbers due to the growing prices of mobile devices (Titcomb, 2017). In addition to Digiman, other major repair shops include Fonum, Mobile Clinic, iTapsa, Puhelinhuolto MobilaElectronics, Smarthuolto, and MyTrendyPhone, among other smaller, local shops around Finland. The focus of this research is on customer satisfaction.

2.1 Customer Satisfaction and its Definitions

Tse and Wilton (1988) define customer satisfaction as perceived difference between the expectations prior to the service, and the perceived received service after the consumption.

However, there is lack of consensus in customer satisfaction definition, according to Giese & Cote, which causes problems for customer satisfaction research such as this thesis. It is tough to choose appropriate translation, and operationalizing it. Also, problems may stem from the fact that interpreting, and comparing results will be difficult due to different definitions used in different researches. (Giese & Cote, 2000)

Furthermore, Mohr (1982) argues that four constructs can be identified that define the satisfaction level of the customers. The four constructs are expectations, performance, disconfirmation, and satisfaction.

According to Mohr, expectations mean anticipated performance of service provider, and performance means the perceived received service. In other words, performance stands for how the customer reviews the received service. The other two are not explained as simply. Disconfirmation takes place when the customer has certain expectation of product and service, and these expectations are not met. Therefore, disconfirmation is merely a negative effect. Finally, according to Caruana (2002), satisfaction has different renditions in customer satisfaction context. In other words, there is not one widely used definition of customer satisfaction.

On the other hand, Giese and Cote (2000), argue that customer satisfaction constitutes of three attributes:

1. A summary of affective responses
2. Focus: The response is tied to a specific focus, varying customer by customer. In other words, customer can be satisfied either in the product, purchase choice itself or in the consumption of the product or service. In the context of this research, all the three focuses are important, and hence, all of them are considered.
3. Time: The response takes place at specific time, and varies by product & service, and is usually shorter in duration.

Giese's and Cote's define customer satisfaction as a summary of responses in different intensities and time frames in relation to the most crucial aspects of product and service consumption.

The above examples of customer satisfaction definition portray the difficulty revolving around academic research of customer satisfaction and its definition. For this thesis, the following definition of customer satisfaction in the repair shop context has been deemed most fit:

“Customer satisfaction is the combination of anticipated performance, and the received perceived service. It differs from customer to customer due to differences in expectations, focuses, and perceptions. The satisfaction is determined by the affective response which is the result of aforementioned aspects.”

2.2 Ingredients of customer satisfaction and loyalty

In previous chapters, it was concluded that customer satisfaction leads to loyal customers. According to (Dixon;Freeman;& Toman, 2010), effortlessness and swiftness are the major factors contributing towards satisfaction and more specifically, loyal customers. The research found out that by thinking ahead and eliminating the next problem the customer may face even before he or she realizes it, makes a great difference. When considering customer satisfaction, the major focus is on loyal customers because, customer retention is relative effortless and cheaper in comparison to customer acquisition (Gallo, 2014). Additionally, loyal customers also bring in more revenue, and help promote the business through word of mouth (Reichheld, 2003).

Another factor that affects the customer satisfaction is the service environment, usually the store location. It is the stage where the service is often performed. According to Reimer & Kuehn (2005), the environment is the first aspect of the service that is evaluated by the customer. By making a strong first impression, company's customer relationships are formed easier and sales increased (Queensland Government, 2016). Furthermore, the environment is an important resource that allows the company to channel and direct customer perceptions in desired ways (Lusch & Vargo, 2015). According to Reimer & Kuehn, the environment where the service is assembled and delivered in combination with tangible elements, is called servicescape. Elements of servicescape include mainly appearance, equipment, signage and layout. Hence, it is a physical environment. The scape shapes the customer's emotional and physical responses to the service.

According to environmental psychology, there are two types of environments based on information processing and stimulation. First of the two types is high load environment. These spaces are complex, unorganized, unfamiliar and possibly even crowded. The other environment type is low load which means that the space is the opposite: simple, organized, familiar and low in crowd. Business type that is low load, requires the high load environment that is more stimulating for better performance whereas businesses offering services that are complex and difficult, benefit from low load environments. (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974)

While 'good service' is often in the middle of attention when it comes to customer satisfaction and loyalty, according to Pine & Gilmore (1998) the 'next step' after the service is experience. They argue that the stage of economy has progressed from commodity (such as raw materials), to good (such as furniture), to service (such as installation), to the emerging 'experience' economy (see figure 1). According to their findings, consumers now desire experiences, not just the service. The experience economy means that the services are staged as memorable experiences. While 'experiences' are most applicable to entertainment business, other businesses have found application for experience staging.

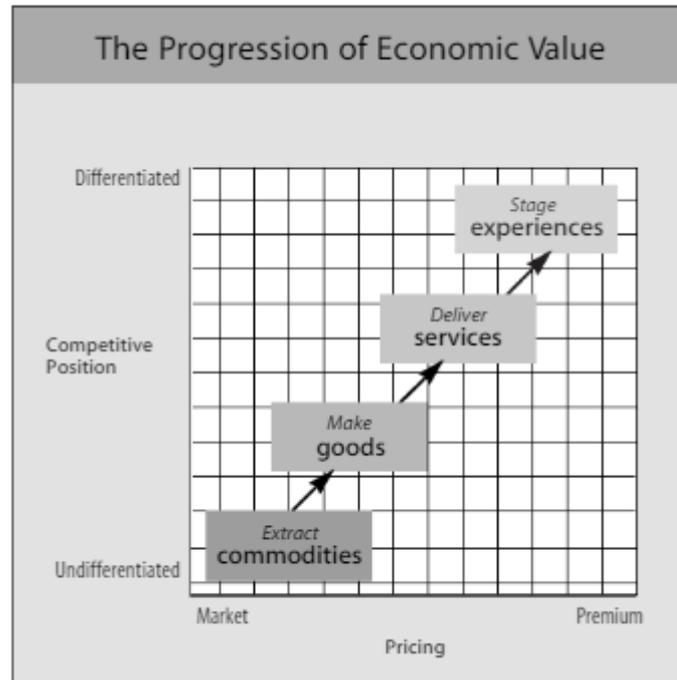


Figure 1. The four stages of economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1998)

Pine & Gilmore identified five central experience-design principles. The principles are experience theming, harmonizing impressions with positive cues, eliminating negative cues, and mixing in memorabilia. Arguably, it is hard to apply the experience-design principles *directly* to a mobile repair shop context. However, Pine & Gilmore explained in their article how Intel chairman had declared that rather than just producing and selling computers, the Intel business includes the delivery of information and interactive experiences that the computers allow. Previously it was established that smartphones are replacing computers. Hence, smartphones deliver the same experience as computers, and arguably more due to their portability. If a smartphone malfunctions, the delivery of the experience decreases or ceases completely. Consequently, a mobile repair shop, such as Digiman, executes the continuity of that experience by repairing the phone. A phone repair shop acts as a party that resumes the experience.

2.3 Customer satisfaction and Digiman: Customer Intimacy Approach

Referring to Treacy's & Wiersema's model of value disciplines (see figure 2), Digiman has chosen customer intimacy approach, or in other words, "best total solution", to stand out from the rest of the competition. Customer intimacy includes tailor made solutions

according to specific customer needs, and it requires increased flexibility. According to the model, a company should choose one of the approaches when conducting business to deliver superior value. Each approach enhances different customer value.

While customer intimacy was explained above, product leadership stands for the best total product. To attain product leadership, the company needs to produce leading-edge products. Operational excellence on the other hand means offering reliable products and services at affordable prices. In addition to affordable prices, operational excellence often requires minimal difficulty and inconvenience in production and delivery of the product (Treacy & Wiersema, 1993).

Digiman's approach is the most applicable to customer intimacy. According to Treacy and Wiersema (1993), a company that chooses this approach continually strives to improve products and services to meet customer wants and needs, and is willing to spend resources in the process to build customer loyalty for long term.

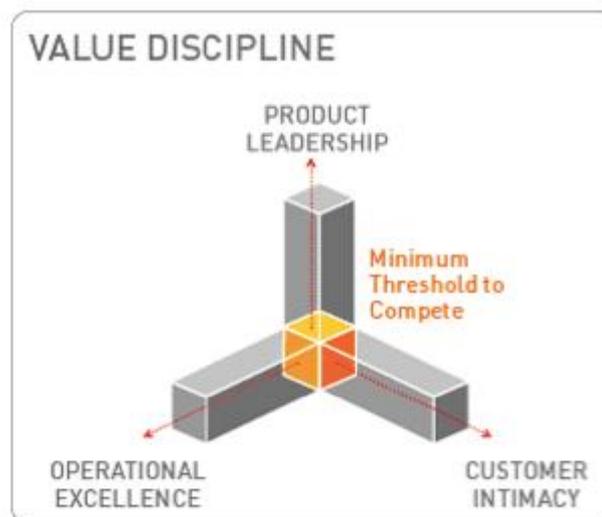


Figure 2. Value disciplines by Treacy & Wiersema (Leeman, 2010)

On the other hand, Downes & Nunes (2014, ss. 19-21) argue that modern companies should increasingly try to compete in all three disciplines simultaneously. In simpler terms this means that the company would ideally be better and more affordable while simultaneously offering the best service. Digiman has experimented with this approach by attempting to keep the high customer intimacy, by simultaneously offering competitive prices in certain product and service categories, and by offering the high-quality repair services. Still, it is not feasible to compete with prices in all product categories. For

instance, according to author's experience, the company has offered competitive prices in Samsung screen replacements while providing original high-quality parts, and the great service the company normally offers. This way Digiman competes in each value discipline but only in certain service category: Samsung screen replacements. On the other hand, for instance, the company does not have access to original Apple spare parts nor does the company offer the most affordable iPhone repairs. Thus, the focus remains in customer intimacy.

2.4 Motivation to repair

Before examining the company, itself, it is required to inspect the reasons why people choose to repair their mobile phones. Naturally, many consumers still end up buying a new phone over using repair services. Scott and Weaver (2014) have conducted research on this very question. According to their research three factors have significant influence on the propensity to repair.

The first factor is market. The perceived inconvenience has the most influence regarding this factor. In other words, the propensity to repair increases if the repair process becomes more effortless (Scott & Weaver, 2014). In mobile repair shop context, this would mean, for instance, that it is as effortless, or more effortless, to have the phone repaired than to buy a new one.

The second factor is product. The cost of repair relative to new item has the greatest influence in this category. In simpler terms, if repairing is comparably cheaper than buying a new product, the propensity to repair increases. Another factor in this category that increases the propensity to repair is product attachment that is often emotional.

The final category is 'consumer' where two related and influential variables exist: stewardship and innovativeness (Scott & Weaver, 2014). Stewardship occurs when the consumer sees value and potential in the product. Innovativeness in turn stands for the extent to which the consumer finds new uses for product. An example of stewardship would be when phone screen shatters, and the consumer understand that the phone retains value and decides to have the phone repaired. On the other hand, innovativeness in mobile repair shop context could mean that consumer has his or her phone fixed and passes it on to a family member. Below (figure 3) is a graph to visualize a situation ideal to Digiman where the consumer decides to repair the product over buying a new one.

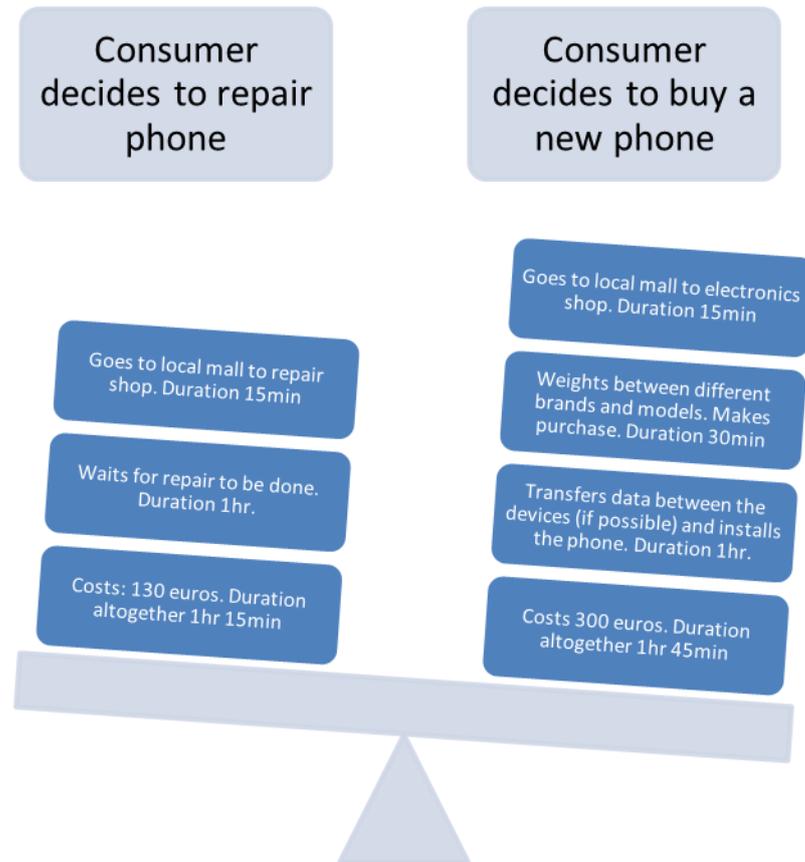


Figure 3. Illusive visualization of a situation (example) where consumer repairs the product, and a situation where he or she buys a new one.

Naturally, phone repair also has downsides compared to buying a new one. First, older phone (repaired one) assumedly becomes obsolete sooner than a new one, and new ones usually have improved features. Sometimes repaired phones also begin malfunctioning sooner than new phones adding up to costs through additional repair requests. Social implications also exist where newer flagship models are also seen, as status symbols (Triggs, 2016). In addition, the repair always does not end up being the most effortless solution to the customer. Sometimes repairs fail and the customer needs to visit the shop twice reducing the effortlessness in comparison to buying a new phone.

2.5 Customer intimacy approach: Digiman

The customer intimacy approach can be seen in practice through various policies Digiman currently utilizes (see figure 4). Below, each of the points are further explained in Digiman's context.



Figure 4. Aspects of service contributing towards high customer intimacy at Digiman

Consumers increasingly handle their everyday operations with their smartphones. Whatever was done using computers and other devices over a decade ago, can now also be completed using smartphones. One example of this is paying bills. In 2015 roughly 50% of smartphone users were already making mobile payments (Rubin, 2015). Hence, according various sources, smartphones are slowly killing PCs (Arthur, 2011; Elgan, 2017). These sources are expert opinions but hold at least some truth: where computer was needed to carry out a certain task 15 years ago, with smartphone the consumer can now execute the same task. Therefore, according to author's assumption, it is important for Digiman's customers that the phone service doesn't take too long, albeit the company offers phones for lend for the duration of the service should the repair take longer. Also, people are nowadays connected to each other around the clock and the smartphone is the most important medium there (Howard, 2014; Steinbrecher, 2014) increasing the importance of fast service. According to a research by Duve-Rioux, Schmitt & Leclerc (1989) customers do not like waiting and waiting may cause strong reaction in consumers.

While younger generation tends to be rather tech savvy, older customers, from time to time need help with basic functions of the phone. As discussed before in 2.2, by solving the current and future problems, increase in effortlessness is evident. While Digiman is a specialized shop, thoroughness is required. The article discussed in 2.2 argues that

current and future problem elimination requires the least amount of company resources and leads to the most optimal 'customer satisfaction versus resource allocation' proportion.

Customers are highly satisfied when they receive additional help free of charge (The Economist, June issue, 2012). Oftentimes customers enter the store asking for minor tips and help, and most of the times, if solving the problem requires minimum amount of effort, the service is provided for free. These encounters also prove good opportunities to sell accessories and additional services, and to improve company reputation. Furthermore, company websites often hold information free of charge, which customers can also use to diagnose and solve problems themselves. For instance, the Digiman website includes databanks on symptoms of faulty phone battery. Hence the customer can visit the site to search for information on smartphone malfunction, and determine required action.

According to an article by Coastline Marketing Group (Fisk, 2015), customers nowadays expect direct and personalized communication. Fisk also argues that consumer retention will increase through enhanced customer communication. On the other hand, according to various sources, (Fisk, 2015; Verdin, n.d.), it is important that customer can choose their preferred channel. That is why multichannel strategy is important or even self-evident. In practice, Digiman's communication channels include traditional text messaging, e-mail and call options, in addition to live chat.

Very little has been researched about customer satisfaction in high tech industry in general. A B2B research was spotted on the topic but very little was applicable because most of the Digiman business is B2C. Worth to mention is that the research (Hirsch, 2011) found that customer satisfaction is positively related to loyalty. However, many researches exist in domestic telecommunication and mobile phone retail markets, which is not sufficiently relevant to this research.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

First, secondary data was collected regarding general definitions and frameworks of customer satisfaction. Also, because the availability of secondary data on customer satisfaction in mobile repair and high-tech context was limited, mainly primary data was relied on. Primary data on customer satisfaction of Digiman's customers was collected conducting both face-to-face interviews, and anonymous survey. Also, more vague data from the previous working experience in the outlet was used arguing that having worked there for almost a year, author's knowledge of the customers is sufficient to support findings that are in line with verbal feedback received.

Mixed method was applied in the research as both qualitative and quantitative data were collected (Davies, 2007) where most of the qualitative data was obtained through the interviews and quantitative counterpart from the survey.

For face-to-face interviews, eight customers were interviewed in store after purchase. The number had to be kept low due to difficulty of analyzing large quantities of qualitative data (Davies, 2007, s. 139). The interview and its results were used to draft the survey. Customers were interviewed after the delivery of the service, and thus their ability to answer the questions and express themselves was increased in accuracy. The interviews were structured having certain set of questions (Davies, 2007, s. 155). For the interview structure and questions, see appendix 2.

Survey was formulated based on previous parts of the research, namely literature review and interviews. This way the results of the surveys will increase in quality when the questions are more relevant (Davies, 2007). The surveys were filled in store during service encounters. See appendix 1 for survey.

Before the actual survey was launched, a pilot survey was ran. The initial survey was too long. It was three pages long compared to the launched survey's two pages. Although the difference between the surveys was just one question, the psychological effect of having to face the three pages long survey was far greater. It was observed that the customers filling the three pages long version expressed greater hesitance, and frankly speaking, agony. After all, the two pages long version was fitted in one sheet of paper whereas the three pages long version was two sheets of paper. The initial survey included a question about the importance of certain factors when buying mobile phone

accessories. It was deleted in favor of similar question which was left in the official version surveying the customers about the importance of certain factors when buying repair services. The decision between the two questions was made based on the fact that repair service sales are more important than mobile accessory sales according to the company strategy.

Having collected sufficient amount of responses, the author inserted each response to the online survey service Webropol to be able to analyze the findings effortlessly.

3.1 Means and sampling

Interviewees were approached in store with a small reward for participation, such as a 10 euros discount in-store. The interviews were conducted over two weeks' time span, where every 5th person buying repair services or data transfer services were asked to participate thus using stratified random sampling (Davies, 2007, pp. 51-69). This strategy was applied when the store situation allowed that. In other words, the interviews would not be conducted if the store was too crowded.

The survey was conducted in similar manner using probability sampling method (Davies, 2007, pp. 70-80) where roughly every 5th customer was asked to fill in the questionnaire during a one-month period. The answerers were rewarded with a 10% discount on their purchase. Also, the data collection would be halted if the store was too crowded as the location is quite small and there was only one desk to fill the surveys in. No data was collected on the sample size and response rates because the author had to carry on his work assignments simultaneously with the data collection, and this would have resulted in work disturbance.

The data collected throughout the research is linearly interrelated. The theory naturally includes secondary data which supports the interview drafting. Data collected through interviews is primary data, and supports the survey drafting. Finally, using data from literature review, interviews, and surveys, conclusions were later drawn, forming the final research results.

3.2 Reliability and validity

Both interviews and surveys were conducted anonymously. Naturally, interviews include the direct human interaction which will always reduce reliability of the interview data (Davies, 2007, pp. 151-164): "Everything is understood and interpreted through the eyes, ears and brain of analyst from a specific social context". As mentioned before, the survey questions were tested on the pilot group first, thus improving the reliability and validity of the answers. For example, the wording and bolding of the second last question was changed based on pilot group feedback to make it easier to understand it.

The fact that discounts were given out to respondents increased the response rates which is a positive effect and invaluable to gather enough responses but it had an unmeasurable negative effect as some customers were observed to fill the survey rather hastily just in order to access the discount. Still, the proper response rates were maintained as the customers filled the surveys close to the shop employees increasing the social stigma. In other words, fewer respondents would dare to fill the survey sloppily due to the presence of the shop assistant.

4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Interview analysis

The interview was analyzed first as it took place before survey. In total, eight customers were interviewed. Their ages spanned from 19 to 60. Seven out of eight respondents were employed. Only people who bought repair and other services were interviewed although some of them also bought accessories. Five of the respondents were first time shoppers. The data that can be extracted from the interview results cannot be generalized as well as the survey data as quota size was small but the advantages over quantitative survey results include the fact that the interviewees are able to talk at length rather than just answer pre-planned questions. Hence the material is in some way closer to reality (Davies, 2007, pp. 140-150). Davies also argues that the feelings and experiences are present when interviewing. In this chapter, please refer to Appendix 2.

Two of the interviewees had discovered Digiman through Google search while other two had heard about it from a friend. One found out about Digiman in another store and the rest three noticed the store passing by. The customer that heard about the store in another store (Gigantti) stated that she visited Gigantti in search of on-site repair services. Now, this presents a fundamental problem facing all repair shops. Even though phone repair shops have existed for long, Digiman for one has been established year 2000, some consumers do not even know that repair shops exist. The other interviewee said that he saw the store on his way to Telia store to buy a new phone. He popped in to ask if it is possible to repair the phone and how much would it cost. He expressed that the price was deciding factor for him: it was more affordable to have the phone fixed than buying a new one which is in line with findings discussed in 2.4. He was happy that he noticed the store and got away cheaper than he expected.

One interviewee searching for repair services in wrong location (it is mention worthy that consumers can have their phones fixed *through* retailers but it often takes a long time and is handled by totally different company), and another one just barely realizing that it is possible to fix the phone, hints that all the repair shops need to step up their marketing on fundamental level.

Each interview cannot be analyzed separately but here are to most significant takeaways from the interviews when it comes to certain service aspects.

- 6/8 respondents said that price was among the top three most important factors when buying accessories but only 3/8 said so when it came to repair services. The company was rated on a wide scale from having poor prices to having great prices. Still, for example, one respondent rated the company prices poor but decided to have her phone repaired over at Digiman due to the fact that it was the lowest price she could find for her phone model's screen replacement. She stated that she wanted to fix her phone because it had important photos from her travels stuck inside the device.
- 4/8 respondents said that quality was among the top three most important factors when buying accessories and 3/8 said so when it came to repair services. Quality was rated from '4' or '5' on a scale of 1-5.
- 5/8 respondents said that staff qualities were among the top three most important factors when buying accessories and 4/8 valued them when it came to repair services. The staff was rated highly receiving only '4s' and '5s' on a scale of 1-5.
- 6/8 valued swiftness and 4/8 effortlessnes when it came to repair services. Most of the interviewees were highly satisfied with the speed, only one was left dissatisfied. In her case the phone had to be shipped to Tampere due to temporary service arrangements that currently concerns Huawei devices. Effortlessness of using Digiman services was rated highly receiving only '5s'.

Interviewees generally agreed that the company had met their expectations well. Only one customer scored company '3' in this category. The very customer was the one that had had her phone shipped to Tampere. Also, she was not satisfied with her protector glass which had been refunded for her, and her phone wallet case had worn out faster than she expected. Still, the same customer said she would shop again because she thought that the staff was friendly and it was easy and comfortable to come to the store. Two other interviewees agreed that it was comfortable to shop in Digiman, and that the staff was abnormally friendly. Four out of eight interviewees concluded that they returned or would return because of the good service. Three of the respondents simply said that they would return if the need for repair services or case covers arises again.

The three youngest of the interviewees (aged 19, 25, and 32) said that the company is pricey. One wished for student discount and the other two just general decrease in prices. This goes in line with the findings of IRi Consumer Survey (IRi, 2017), that millennials are indeed the most price conscious shoppers. One of the respondents hoped that the company would inform potential customers better (like himself) because he

almost bought a new phone. By repairing it, he saved money. The rest of the interviewees could think of anything to improve.

Price matters as expected but in considerably lesser extend when it comes to repair service purchases. Other aspects that are found important include product and service quality, and staff qualities in both categories. Most important aspects are swiftness and effortlessness, when it comes to repair services. Many of the returning customer said that they returned for good service they received last time which is in line with verbal feedback in store. Below are a few takeaways from the interview:

- *“I have visited the shop 3 times before. Once for phone case. Second time you attempted to repair my tablet but deemed it unrepairable due to broken main circuit board. Third time was when I bought microSD card for my phone and you moved the photos from my phone into the card. I really liked the service so I kept returning.”*
- *“I was on my way to Telia store to buy a new phone. I noticed Digiman on my way there and popped in to check out the price to fix the phone. Turns out it was cheaper to get my phone fixed rather than buy a new one. Thus, I saved money which led to the decision to have the phone fixed.”*
- *“The staff is laidback. Keep it that way.”*

The company scored highly in most categories. Generally speaking, the weakest scores company got regarding pricing, product selection, and in one case regarding swiftness and product quality. It must be kept in mind that interview results were more quantitative, and hence generalized data regarding company rating and important service aspects are discovered through survey.

4.2 Survey Analysis

In total 131 people responded on the survey. According to SurveyMonkey (Graglia, n.d.), a popular survey platform, the number of respondents left the survey with an error rate of $\pm 10\%$. Age division of the respondents was quite even. Over half of the respondents were employed followed by smaller groups of students and retired (see figure 5). Nearly all the respondents found the shopping experience at Digiman effortless. On average, the company scored well in all eight categories (see figure 6). Strongest of the categories were staff qualities and effortlessness whereas the company scored lowest in additional

service category, product features and pricing. When it comes to service aspects regarding repair services, the respondents thought that professionalism and swiftness were clearly the most important factors whereas the least important factors were additional services and shop location (see figure 7). In section 2.2, the importance of experiences to the consumers was discussed. Digiman enables resuming of the experience the smartphone delivers. This further enforces the importance of staff professionalism to the customer. In other words, when staff is professional, the device is repaired quickly and thoroughly, the customer is able to resume the experience the smartphone offers. The company met customer expectations well, only two respondents could not decide if the expectations were met or not.

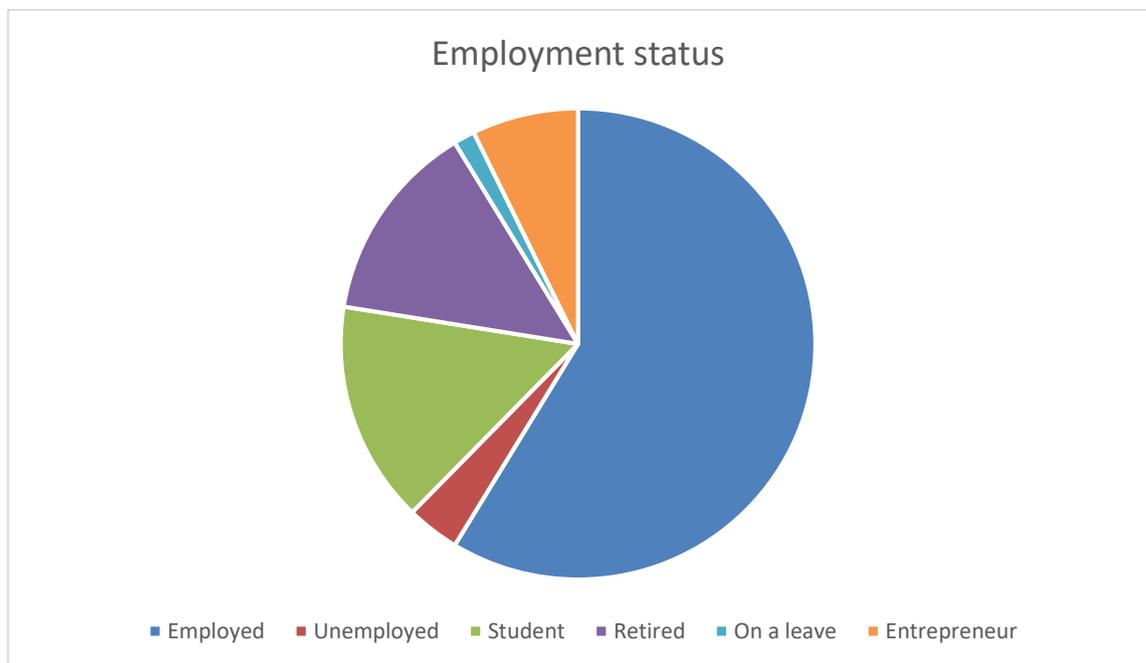


Figure 5. Employment status of the survey respondents

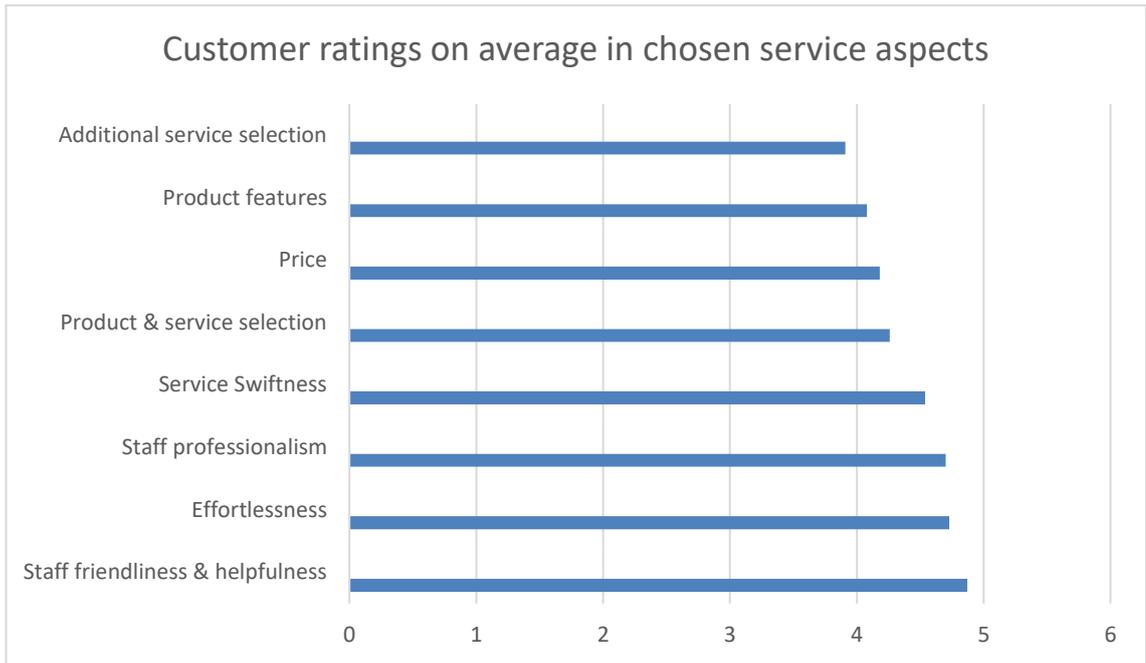


Figure 6. Customer rating in chosen service aspects (survey)

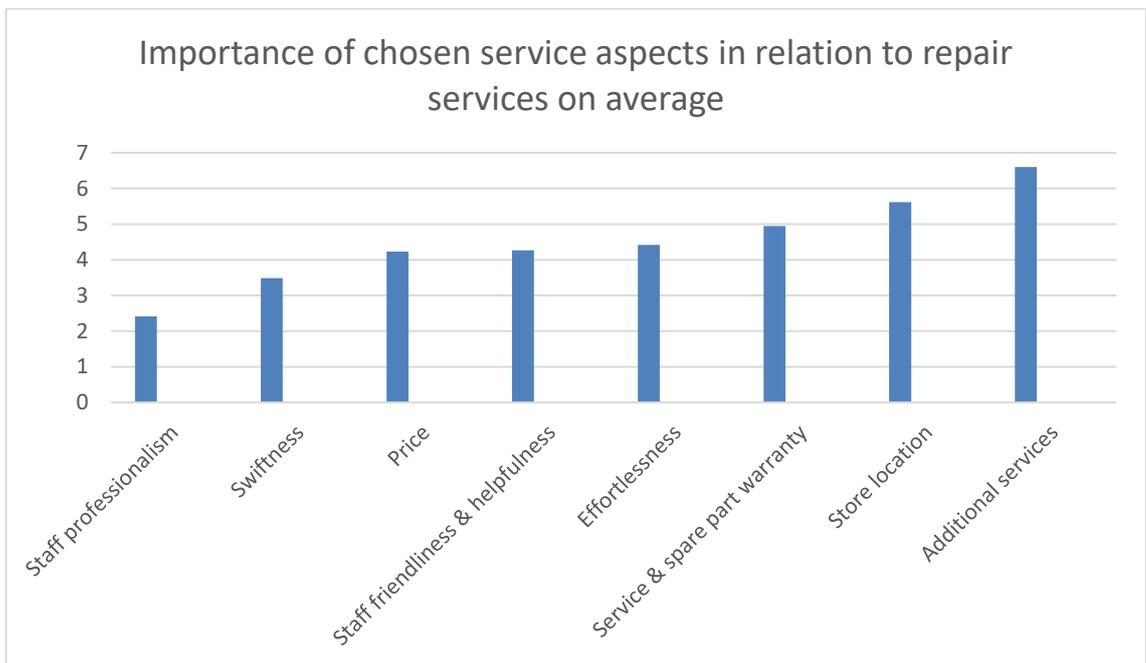


Figure 7. Importance of chosen service aspects in relation to repair services on average. The lower the score, the more important it was rated.

4.3 Age groups

The survey included five age groups (see appendix 1). The responses were analyzed in three age groups (under 35, 36-55, over 55) making it easier to draw conclusion. In this chapter please refer to Tables 1, 2 and 3.

The division between the three age groups was made based on popular demographic division: millennials (here under 35) (Cambridge University Press, 2018), generation X (here 36-55) (Watson, 2014) and baby boomers (here +55) (Investopedia, n.d.).

Overall, between millennials, generation X and baby boomers, the millennials rated the company, or the service they received, highest in all categories while expectations of each group were met equally well. Only exception was that the baby boomers gave staff friendliness higher score than millennials (average of 4,88 vs. 4,96). Also, generation X rated product features higher by statistically irrelevant margin of 0,07. While differences between generation X and baby boomers were smaller than the differences between millennials and the rest, generation X rated swiftness (4,59 vs 4,16), and product features (4,17 vs 3,88) considerably higher in comparison to baby boomers.

What is surprising is the fact that millennials rated the prices with highest grade which is not in line with interview findings. Also, according to the feedback in store, it felt that price was given too high a grade. However, this can be explained by the fact that negative experience and feedback tends to draw our attention easier than positive counterparts forming subconscious negative bias (Windmann & Krüger, 1998). Therefore, the survey findings can be considered feasible. Naturally, the survey yields more reliable results compared to interview as response amount is considerably higher. Regardless of the abovementioned differences between the groups, the age groups have rather homogenous perceptions of the received service. Needs and wants differ from generation to generation (Underwood, 2012; Lewis, 2015) and because each customer group rated their received service similarly, this leads us to assumption that the company is well able to adapt to the needs and wants of each customer group.

	Really poorly	Poorly	Neutrally / cannot decide	Well	Really well	Yhteensä	Keskiarvo
Staff professionalism	0	0	0	14	38	52	4,73
	0%	0%	0%	26,92%	73,08%		
Service swiftness	0	2	2	7	41	52	4,67
	0%	3,85%	3,85%	13,46%	78,84%		
Product selection / repair service selection	0	1	8	18	25	52	4,29
	0%	1,92%	15,38%	34,62%	48,08%		
Product features	0	1	15	14	22	52	4,1
	0%	1,92%	28,85%	26,92%	42,31%		
Effortlessness	0	0	0	13	39	52	4,75
	0%	0%	0%	25%	75%		
Product / service price	0	0	7	18	27	52	4,38
	0%	0%	13,46%	34,62%	51,92%		
Additional service selection	0	0	20	10	22	52	4,04
	0%	0%	38,46%	19,23%	42,31%		
Staff friendliness & helpfulness	0	0	0	6	44	50	4,88
	0%	0%	0%	12%	88%		
Yhteensä	0	4	52	100	258	414	4,48

Table 1. Received perceived service of millennial customers.

	Really poorly	Poorly	Neutrally / cannot decide	Well	Really well	Yhteensä	Keskiarvo
Staff professionalism	0	0	1	16	37	54	4,67
	0%	0%	1,85%	29,63%	68,52%		
Service swiftness	0	0	5	12	37	54	4,59
	0%	0%	9,26%	22,22%	68,52%		
Product selection / repair service selection	0	1	5	27	21	54	4,26
	0%	1,85%	9,26%	50%	38,89%		
Product features	0	1	12	18	23	54	4,17
	0%	1,85%	22,22%	33,34%	42,59%		
Effortlessness	0	0	3	10	41	54	4,7
	0%	0%	5,55%	18,52%	75,93%		
Product / service price	0	2	11	25	16	54	4,02
	0%	3,7%	20,37%	46,3%	29,63%		
Additional service selection	0	0	27	11	16	54	3,8
	0%	0%	50%	20,37%	29,63%		
Staff friendliness & helpfulness	0	0	0	10	43	53	4,81
	0%	0%	0%	18,87%	81,13%		
Yhteensä	0	4	64	129	234	431	4,38

Table 2. Received perceived service of generation X customers.

	Really poorly	Poorly	Neutrally / cannot decide	Well	Really well	Yhteensä	Keskiarvo
Staff professionalism	0	0	0	7	18	25	4,72
	0%	0%	0%	28%	72%		
Service swiftness	0	0	8	5	12	25	4,16
	0%	0%	32%	20%	48%		
Product selection / repair service selection	0	0	5	10	10	25	4,2
	0%	0%	20%	40%	40%		
Product features	0	0	10	8	7	25	3,88
	0%	0%	40%	32%	28%		
Effortlessness	0	0	0	7	18	25	4,72
	0%	0%	0%	28%	72%		
Product / service price	0	0	6	11	8	25	4,08
	0%	0%	24%	44%	32%		
Additional service selection	0	0	11	6	8	25	3,88
	0%	0%	44%	24%	32%		
Staff friendliness & helpfulness	0	0	0	1	24	25	4,96
	0%	0%	0%	4%	96%		
Yhteensä	0	0	40	55	105	200	4,33

Table 3. Received perceived service of baby boomers.

When looking at the needs and wants of each group regarding repair services, millennials rated the service aspects in the order presented in figure 8.

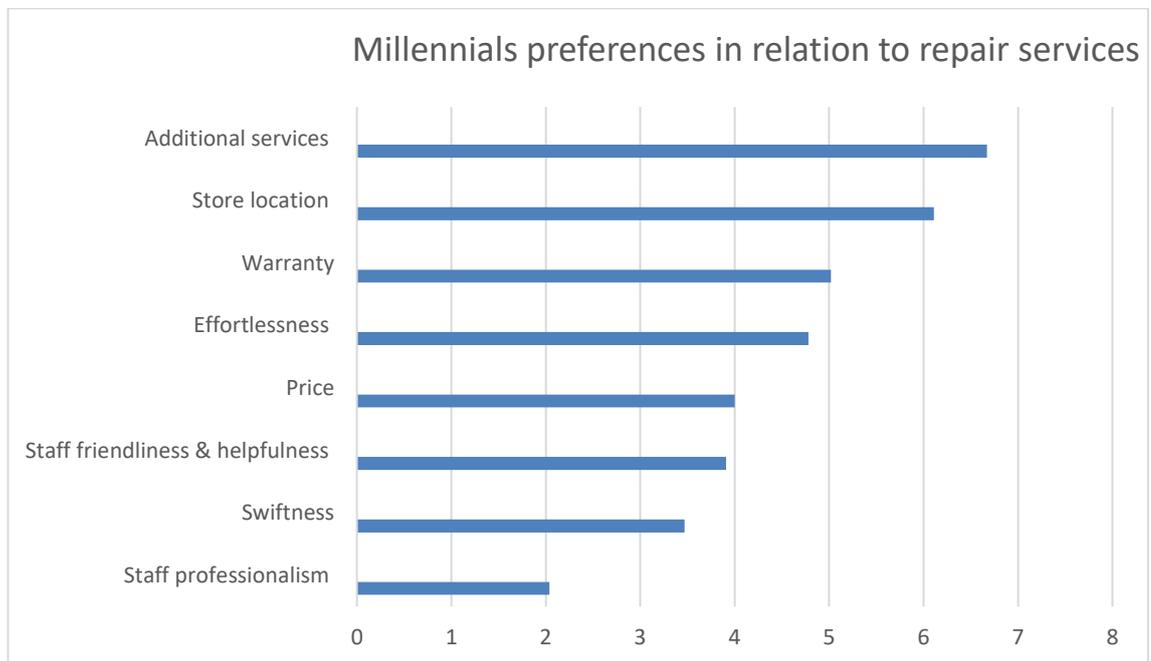


Figure 8. Millennials preferences in relation to repair services. The lower the score, the more important it was rated.

Generation X (see figure 9) agreed mostly with millennials but valued price and effortlessness over staff friendliness which in turn was the third most important factor for millennials. Other than that, millennials and generation X had quite similar views.

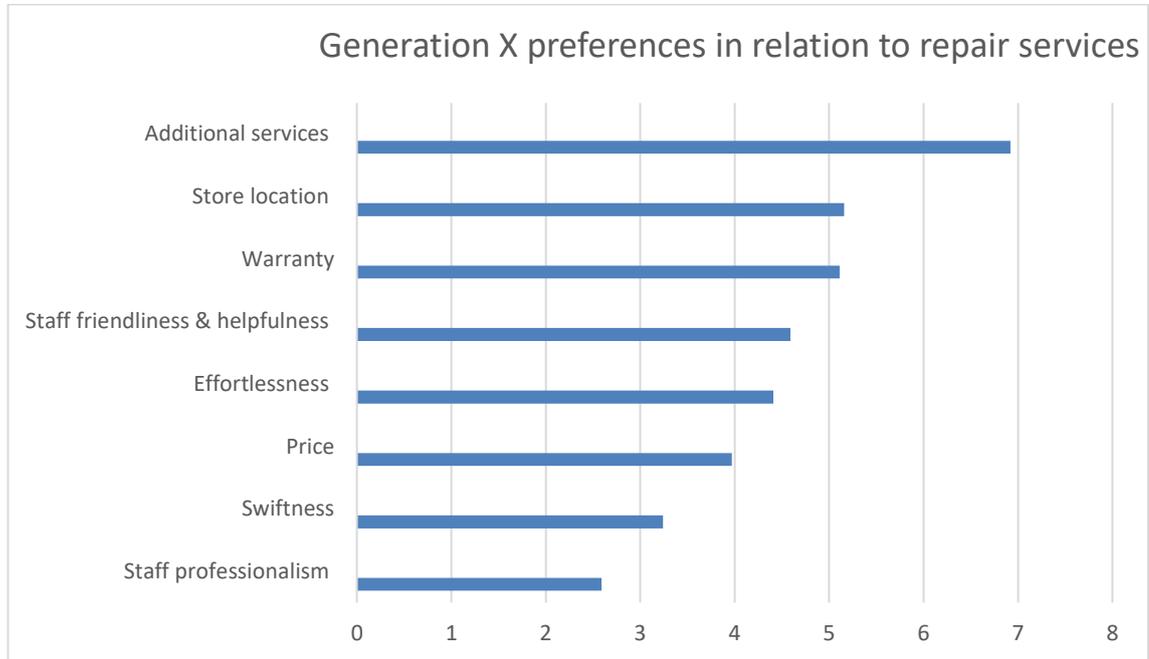


Figure 9. Generation X preferences in relation to repair services. The lower the score, the more important it was rated.

Finally, baby boomers (see figure 10) differed the most compared to the other age groups. All three groups valued staff professionalism the most but second most important factor for baby boomers was effortlessness. This means the baby boomers are most likely to value easy repair process: bring the device for service, receive it back the way it was without having to think about reinstallation and other factors that affect effortlessness. For example, in cases when a device is repaired under warranty, often it needs to be factory reset. Assumedly, in this case, baby boomers would highly value if the device was reinstalled again along with retrieved back up files. Baby boomers also valued price the least in comparison to other two groups.

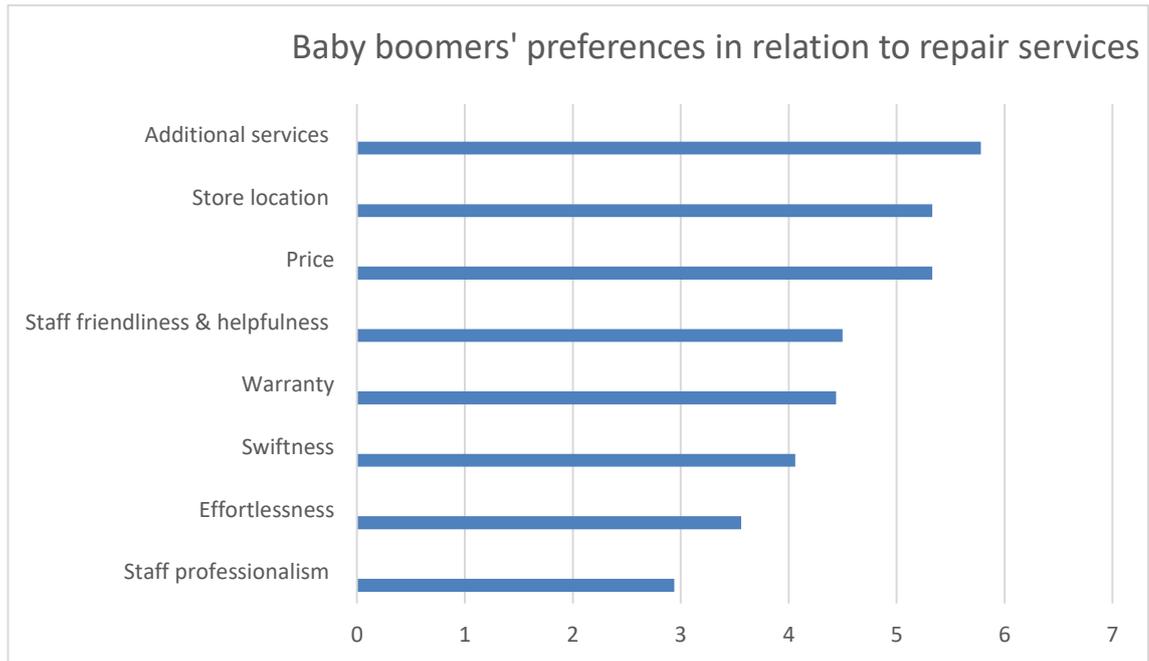


Figure 10. Baby boomers' preferences in relation to repair services. The lower the score, the more important it was rated.

4.4 Returning customers and first-time shoppers

Over half, 63%, of the respondents were first time shoppers, and the rest, 36% of them were first time in Digiman store location. Alone this parameter can be taken as a positive sign for Digiman: most customers show signs of customer loyalty by returning to the shop for mobile accessories and repair services. The amount of returning customers is in line with general results of the survey: offering great service translates into returning customers. However, the *extent of how loyal* exactly the customers are, is not known based on the survey.

When it comes to received perceived service, the two groups in question had similar experiences. The only two categories that had noticeable differences was product/service selection and features which are closely interrelated. Returning customers were happier with selection than first-time shoppers (see Table 4 and 5). This leads us to assumption that if the customer does not find what he or she is looking for in the first visit he is not as likely to return.

When surveyed how well did the company meet their expectations the answers were almost identical. The bottom-line between the two groups is that the company manages

to leave lasting, good expression on first time shoppers since responses were similar between the groups.

	Really poorly	Poorly	Neutrally / cannot decide	Well	Really well	Yhteensä	Keskiarvo
Staff professionalism	0	0	1	23	59	83	4,7
	0%	0%	1,21%	27,71%	71,08%		
Service swiftness	0	1	10	15	57	83	4,54
	0%	1,21%	12,05%	18,07%	68,67%		
Product selection / repair service selection	0	1	11	32	39	83	4,31
	0%	1,21%	13,25%	38,55%	46,99%		
Product features	0	2	18	25	38	83	4,19
	0%	2,41%	21,69%	30,12%	45,78%		
Effortlessness	0	0	0	20	63	83	4,76
	0%	0%	0%	24,1%	75,9%		
Product / service price	0	2	14	34	33	83	4,18
	0%	2,41%	16,87%	40,96%	39,76%		
Additional service selection	0	0	35	20	28	83	3,92
	0%	0%	42,17%	24,1%	33,73%		
Staff friendliness & helpfulness	0	0	0	10	71	81	4,88
	0%	0%	0%	12,35%	87,65%		
Yhteensä	0	6	89	179	388	662	4,43

Table 1. Returning customers' perceived received service

	Really poorly	Poorly	Neutrally / cannot decide	Well	Really well	Yhteensä	Keskiarvo
Staff professionalism	0	0	0	14	34	48	4,71
	0%	0%	0%	29,17%	70,83%		
Service swiftness	0	1	5	9	33	48	4,54
	0%	2,08%	10,42%	18,75%	68,75%		
Product selection / repair service selection	0	1	7	23	17	48	4,17
	0%	2,08%	14,58%	47,92%	35,42%		
Product features	0	0	19	15	14	48	3,9
	0%	0%	39,58%	31,25%	29,17%		
Effortlessness	0	0	3	10	35	48	4,67
	0%	0%	6,25%	20,83%	72,92%		
Product / service price	0	0	10	20	18	48	4,17
	0%	0%	20,83%	41,67%	37,5%		
Additional service selection	0	0	23	7	18	48	3,9
	0%	0%	47,92%	14,58%	37,5%		
Staff friendliness & helpfulness	0	0	0	7	40	47	4,85
	0%	0%	0%	14,89%	85,11%		
Yhteensä	0	2	67	105	209	383	4,36

Table 2. First time shoppers' perceived received service

4.5 Employment status (income) and its influence on perception, needs and wants

Respondents employment status was also inquired. Rather than directly inquiring about yearly income, employment status was chosen in place because author wanted to take a more streamlined approach to the question. Assumedly, if the customer is employed, he or she has more disposable income than one who is not. Naturally, inquiring yearly incomes would have yielded more accurate and similar data but dividing respondents into ones who earn income and ones who do not simplifies the data analysis. Therefore, when analyzing responses on employment status, employed and entrepreneurs were compared to students, retired, unemployed, and customers on a leave. Retired also may earn larger sums of money but to simplify the analyzing they were categorized in the lower earning group.

The two groups were homogenous when looking at customer satisfaction and service ratings. Employed (and entrepreneurs) rated company on average 4,43 while the rest rated the company 4,35. When inquiring about importance of specific service aspects, the two groups favored same issues. The only noticeable difference was that the unemployed group favored warranty and staff friendliness more than the employed while the employed favored swiftness and store location more than the unemployed.

4.6 Areas to improve

The last question in the survey inquired about possible improvements the company could implement. Roughly one third of the respondents answered this question. The responses were categorized into seven categories based on analysis (see figure 11). The answers ranged from detailed needs and wants to one-word answers.

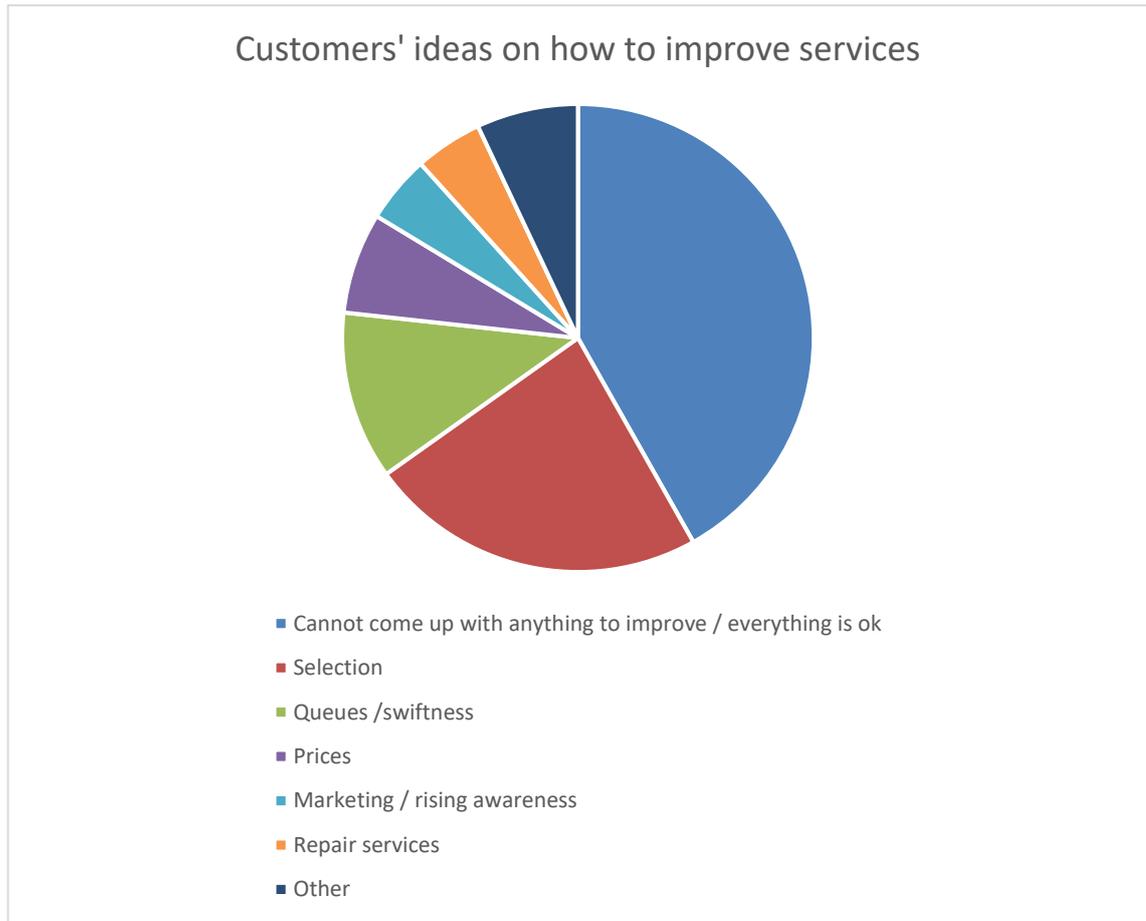


Figure 11. Customers' ideas on how to improve services

The most typical response was something along the lines that “everything is fine”, or “I cannot come up with anything to improve”. On the other hand, this can be taken as a positive sign but also leaves the doubt that did the respondent really channel effort into answering the question.

Most of the real improvement suggestions concerned selection. Responses in this section included specific phone models and specific accessory types but mostly regarded selection generally. The verbal feedback is similar in store. The customers often wish for more colorful and detailed phone case selection, for instance.

The second most attention was given to queue times and swiftness in general. According to the customers, queue times can be too long, and one comment was made regarding repair service times: respondent’s phone had been sent to Tampere main outlet for repair. Few comments, as expected, were made regarding prices in addition to few wishing for raising awareness of the shop: the fact that one-stop shop for mobile phone

related purchases and issues exists, is still unknown for many. Finally, one customer wished for new outlet in Turku city center, one for free coffee while repair service is on process, and one for 'frequent shopper bonus card'.

In section 2.2, the importance of service environment was discussed. While testing Digiman's customers' perception and preferences on the servicescape was not included in the scope of this thesis due to limitations regarding survey and interview length, it is essential to keep in mind that the environment influences the received perceived service and thus in customer satisfaction. Digiman's service offerings are arguably high load when it comes to offering repair services due to their technicality. Therefore, it is important that the servicescape is low load meaning that the store should be simple, organized, and familiar. Digiman already offers a low load environment by displaying the products in organized manner and including wide open space in the middle of the store (see picture 1). While product selection was criticized by some customers, it is also important to keep the selection low enough not to upset the low load servicescape.



Picture 1. Digiman customer service desk front in Raisio outlet

4.7 Suggestions on how to improve company's services and how to keep the customers satisfied

In this section, suggestions of improvement are given based on survey and interview results, verbal feedback in store, and literature review.

1. Stay consistent and keep making great first impressions. The customers are likely to return according to the survey.
2. Make the service and the encounter effortless for the customer. Think ahead: try to make it right in the first go. If for some reason the customer needs to visit the store twice for the same problem, customer may consider the first encounter as failed delivery of service. For example, if the device is being installed for the customer, make it completely ready to use! If the customer seems unsecure using the device, give him or her a few tips. Another example: when repairing the device, make sure everything works after the repair, do not just check the repaired faulty. According to the survey, effortlessness was highly valued, especially among elder customers which goes in line with Harvard Business Review's research discussed in 2.2.
3. Keep queues in check. If there are even few customers waiting for service, if possible stop what you are doing and serve the customer instead. Swiftness was highly valued when it came to repair services, and long queues was one of the service aspects requiring attention according to survey.
4. Think about establishing partnerships with new suppliers. Try to fill in the gap between 'cannot supply' and 'available to order'. Selection was one of the service aspects requiring attention according to customers. However, make sure to keep the servicescape low load as discussed in section 2.2 and 4.6.
5. Consider lowering price of select product categories. According to verbal feedback in store, the protector glasses are considered the most expensive product category Digiman offers. Keep repair prices below the value of the device if possible. When it is financially sensible to repair the devices, the customers are more likely to employ the repair services (see 2.4).
6. Act professional. Customers value professional staff the most when it comes to repair services according to the survey. After all, mobile phones are highly technical products so the staff must act accordingly! Professionalism also enhances the desirable customer experience as discussed in 2.2.

7. Repair devices as quickly as possible. Swiftiness is among the most important factors when it comes to repair services according to the survey. This goes in line with the findings of Customer Contact Council's research discussed in 2.2.

4.8 Criticism on interviewing and surveying

Looking back at the process, room for improvement was identified. Starting off with the interviews, the interview results could have been more fruitful. As an interviewer, the author should have stimulated more discussion. This could have been done by going off-script time to time and by encouraging the interviewees to express themselves (Davies, 2007, pp. 150-167). Also, by gently forcing the interviewee to elaborate his or her answer would have yielded deeper responses. During each interview, each question was asked but if the interviewee responded with only few words, the results were thin.

The survey had room for improvement also. First, as mentioned before, the survey was filled in physical format. This did not allow automatic shuffling of question 8 (see appendix 1) as online survey services often allow. Half way the survey response collection, it was noticed that the first option tended to be rated '1' demonstrating possible psychological bias. After that, the responses were flipped for the rest of the survey to even out the bias. Still, in the future, when conducting physical survey with questions where the respondent must place objects in an order, the answer options should be shuffled every 10th survey or so providing more valid results.

Also, question 7 (see appendix 1) tended to yield mostly 'good' and 'really good' responses. Naturally it is positive for the company that the customers think the company is doing well but somehow the question left a hint of doubt behind. For example, only two respondents said that the price was bad. This is in a minor conflict with the results of interview, survey question 10 and verbal feedback received in store. According to assumption, five options are rather standard when rating objects but perhaps the wording of the scale could have yielded results in line with general feedback about the price. After all, bad is a strong word, and the scale of question 10 could have been replaced with a scale such as 'Bad – Somewhat disappointing – Neutral – Satisfactory – Good', instead of 'Really bad – Bad – Neutral – Good – Really good'. Same wording could have been applied to question 9.

Finally, having observed the customers filling the survey, it was felt that some customers would fill it sloppily. This was of course sometimes spoken out to the customer, and respondents were asked to fill in each question to earn the discount apart from last question. When handing out the surveys customer was usually greeted with words such as:

'Hey, we are conducting a customer satisfaction survey. Would you like to fill it? If you do, you receive 10% discount at the register.'

- 'Yes!'

'Thank you. When you are done please hand it in when you check out.'

The proper response rates could have been improved by using more serious, professional wording, and telling a little more about the survey. The greeting could have been for instance:

'Hey, we are conducting a customer satisfaction survey. If you fill it, you receive a 10% discount. Would you like to fill it?'

- 'Yes!'

'Thank you. The survey is important, because we take customer satisfaction seriously and we would like to hear your opinion. Please answer all questions and fill it carefully. When you are done please hand it in when you check out.'

In conclusion, the criticism mainly included issues regarding interviewing and surveying.

5 CONCLUSION

The objective was to uncover the sources of satisfaction, the most important service aspects and the areas for improvement. In conclusion, majority of the Digiman's customers are satisfied according to the survey. The customers are rather homogenous group, where baby boomers differed the most from the rest.

However, as a remainder on what was discussed in section 2.1, definitions of customer satisfaction differ from research to research, and from consumer to consumer. Therefore, the results of any customer satisfaction survey are not unambiguous.

It is easy to say that based on interview results, survey results, and verbal feedback in store, good service is the major source of satisfaction. Here, 'good service' stands for staying consistent with each customer, being friendly and helpful. Also, good service means that the customers do not have to pay for minor tips and troubleshooting. Another source of satisfaction is effortlessness. This became clear through Customer Contact Council' research findings discussed in section 2.2. Effortlessness implies to make everything as easy as possible for the customer and thinking ahead what could the customer need next. This way the customer needs to invest minimum amount of effort while consuming the services. Finally, swiftness was rated high in importance. Swiftness also goes in line with interview results along with findings of Customer Contact Council's research.

The survey findings clearly indicate that professionalism and swiftness are the most important factors when it comes to repair services. Professionalism in repair shop context means that the staff acts accordingly, the repairs are executed carefully and thoroughly, and the communication is formal. This enhances the customer experience. Swiftness on the other hand requires that the repairs are performed on site, as soon as possible. It is essential that the repair is carried out within one or two hours if possible, according to verbal feedback in store. According to observations, many customers are turned away if the repair queue is too long or if the customer must leave the device in store overnight. Effortlessness matters most to baby boomers but younger generation values staff friendliness and price.

Based on survey and literature review findings, customers found most room for improvement in product features and selection, price, and swiftness. Customers seem

to have specific needs and wants when it comes to mobile phone accessories. According to feedback in store, desired products and features include specific types of screen protectors (full screen/borderless/plastic etc.), original covers from phone OEMs, cases that are thin/durable/colorful/transparent/certain brand/wallet type, and so on. Along with products, price at Digiman was among the lowest rated objects in survey. Verbal feedback in store supports this: as mentioned before, protector glasses are often considered expensive. Even though service swiftness was rated highly, swiftness was the second most mentioned issue requiring attention according to the survey results. This can assumedly be explained by the fact that lines do not form that easily during the off-season that the spring is (survey was conducted in spring), but when they do, lines cause more dissatisfaction than fast service causes satisfaction.

5.1 Suggestions for further research

It would be intriguing and useful to learn more about the most loyal customers: the ones that have visited the store more than ten times. One way to conduct such research would be in-depth interviews with those customers. Sit down with the customer, have a set of questions ready but more importantly talk with them and try to uncover the path they took to end up as a loyal customer. This way it could be possible to replicate the same process with other customers as well. According to observations, those customers exist.

Another area requiring further research is the competitive landscape of mobile repair shops. The interviewees were asked to name reasons why they chose Digiman over other repair shop, for example Fonum which operates in the same shopping center. Still, most of the answers included reasons such as 'just stumbled upon the store' or was given hint that Digiman exists by other party such as phone retailer or a friend. Proper competitive benchmarking was not executed due to the scope of the research. It would be important to know what are the strengths and weaknesses of Digiman compared to competitors. Ways to research competitors would include surveys and interviews concentrating on the topic but also a visit to competing shop would unveil a lot of competitor processes and style of service.

Service environment, or servicescape, was researched through literature review but due to limitations in scope of the thesis, customer preferences and opinions on Digiman's servicescape were not tested. Hence, room for future research was left when it comes to the store environment. While repair services benefit from low load environments, as

mentioned before, Digiman also sells accessories. For instance, typical phone case purchases do not require such low load environment but on the other hand could benefit from high load environment with wider product selection. This leaves a question open on how to properly balance between the requirements of repair services and accessory selection when it comes to the servicescape.

The acquisition of survey responses and interviewees was relatively effortless as the author had permissions to grant adaptive discounts based on purchase sizes. Also, the collection was done during work hours as a part of natural customer encounters. This way the company supported the process by virtually paying the author for the data collection. The next step for the research is to report the findings to the company. This way company can choose required action to further improve the customer experience.

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Appendix 1. Survey

Asiakastyytyväisyyskysely

Täytetyllä kyselylomakkeella saat 10% alennusta Wave-tuotteista (kertaostos)

Digiman haluaa aina parantaa palvelujaan. Työntekijämme Markus kirjoittaa opinnäytetyötään asiakastyytyväisyydestä Digimanilla. Vastaamalla tutkimukseen autat Digimania kehittämään palvelujaan sekä opinnäytetyön edistymistä.

1. Ikä

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Alle 25 vuotta | <input type="radio"/> 46-55 vuotta |
| <input type="radio"/> 25-35 vuotta | <input type="radio"/> yli 55 vuotta |
| <input type="radio"/> 36-45 vuotta | |

2. Työllisyystilanne

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Töissä käyvä (vakituinen/väliaikainen/pätkätyö) | <input type="radio"/> Eläkeläinen |
| <input type="radio"/> Työtön | <input type="radio"/> Vapaalla (äitiysloma/kotiäiti/varhaiseläke jne) |
| <input type="radio"/> Opiskelija | <input type="radio"/> Yrittäjä |

3. Mitä olet ostamassa/etsimässä?

- Puhelin/tablettitarvikkeita (esim. kotelo)
- Huoltopalveluita (esim. näytön vaihto)
- Muita palveluita (esim. yhteystietojen siirto)

4. Oletko aikaisemmin asioinut Digimanissa?

- Kyllä, olen
- En ole

5. Missä kuulit Digimanista ensimmäistä kertaa?

- Mainoksesta
 Ohi kulkiessa
- Hakukonehauulla (esim. Google)
 Toisessa liikkeessä (esim. Telia/Gigantti)
- Ystävältä / läheiseltä / tutulta
 Jossain muualla, missä?.....

6. Oliko Digimanissa asiointi helppoa?

- Kyllä
- En osaa sanoa
- Ei

7. Kuinka hyvin onnistuimme tänään seuraavissa asioissa?

	Erittäin huonosti	Huonosti	Neutraalisti / en osaa sanoa	Hyvin	Erittäin Hyvin
Henkilökunnan ammattitaito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Palvelun nopeus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tuotevalikoima / huoltopalveluvalikoima	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tuotteen ominaisuudet (jos ostit tarvikkeita)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ostoksenteon / palvelun helppous	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tuotteen / palvelun hinta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lisäpalvelutarjonta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Henkilökunnan ystävällisyys & avuliaisuus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jokin muu, mikä?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Numeroi **(1-8)** seuraavat asiat **tärkeysjärjestykseen** ostaessasi **korjauspalveluita**. Asteikossa 1 on tärkein ja 8 vähiten tärkeä. **Käytä kutakin numeroa kerran. Jollet ostanut korjauspalveluita, kuvittele itsesi tilanteeseen**, jossa ostat.

⋮	⌵	Henkilökunnan ystävällisyys & avuliaisuus
⋮	⌵	Liikkeen sijainti
⋮	⌵	Hinta
⋮	⌵	Huollattamisen helppous
⋮	⌵	Lisäpalvelut (esim. laitteen käyttöönotto, käyttövinkit)
⋮	⌵	Huollon & varaosien takuu
⋮	⌵	Nopeus
⋮	⌵	Henkilökunnan ammattitaito

9. Kuinka hyvin vastasimme odotuksiasi?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Erittäin hyvin | <input type="radio"/> Huonosti |
| <input type="radio"/> Hyvin | <input type="radio"/> Erittäin huonosti |
| <input type="radio"/> En osaa sanoa | |

10. Kerro 1-2 asiaa, jossa Digimanilla olisi kehittämisen varaa

Translation of the survey (only Finnish version was used):

Customer Satisfaction Survey: By filling the survey, you will receive a 10% discount on Wave-products

Digiman always wants to improve its services. Our employee Markus is conducting a thesis on customer satisfaction at Digiman. By filling in the survey you help Digiman improve its services and the progression of the thesis.

1. Age

- Under 25 years
- 25-35 years
- 36-45 years
- 46-55 years

Over 55 years

2. Employment status

- Employed
- Unemployed
- Student
- Retired
- On a leave
- Entrepreneur

3. What are you buying/looking for?

- Phone/tablet accessories
- Repair services
- Other services (such as data transfer)

4. Have you previously shopped in Digiman?

- Yes I have
- No I have not

5. Where/how did you hear about Digiman for the first time?

- On an advertisement
- Search engine search (such as Google)
- Friend/family
- Passing by
- In another store
- Somewhere else, where?

6. Was it effortless to shop in Digiman?

- Yes
- Cannot decide
- No

7. How well did we do today when it comes to following service aspects?

Really poorly Poorly Neutrally / cannot decide Well Really well

Staff professionalism	<input type="radio"/>				
Service swiftness	<input type="radio"/>				
Product selection / repair service selection	<input type="radio"/>				
Product features	<input type="radio"/>				
Effortlessness	<input type="radio"/>				
Product / service price	<input type="radio"/>				
Additional service selection	<input type="radio"/>				
Staff friendliness & helpfulness	<input type="radio"/>				

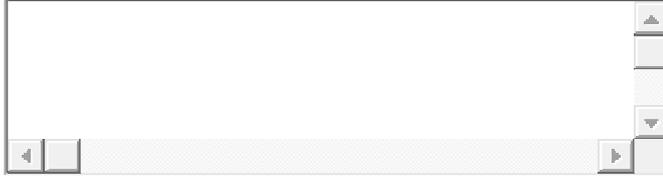
8. Number the following service aspects from 1 to 8 when buying repair services. On the scale, 1 is the most important aspect and 8 is the least important. Use each number once. If you did not buy repair services, imagine yourself in a situation where you did.

Staff professionalism	
Swiftness	
Service & replacement part warranty	
Additional services (such as device installation, usage tips)	
Effortlessness	
Price	
Store location	
Staff friendliness & helpfulness	

9. How well did we meet your expectations?

- Really well
- Well
- Cannot decide
- Poorly
- Really poorly

10. How could Digiman improve its services? List 1-2 things



Appendix 2. The interview

Alkusanat:

Digiman haastattelee asiakkaita asiakastyytyväisyyteen liittyen, ja haastatteluun menee noin 5-15 minuuttia. Haastatteluun osallistuja saa 50% alennuksen yhdestä vapaavalintaisesta Waven puhelinkuoresta/panssarilasista tai 10 euron alennuksen huollosta. Haluatko osallistua tutkimukseen?

Asiakas suostuu haastateltavaksi:

Ensinnäkin, haastattelu on täysin luottamuksellinen ja anonyymi. **TÄRKEINTÄ: Pyydän sinua olemaan myös niin rehellinen kuin mahdollista.** Kyselen sinulta muutaman kysymyksen, mutta pyydän sinua myös esittämään lisäkommentteja ja muuta palautetta firmaan/liikkeeseen liittyen. Sana on vapaa.

Haastattelu:

1. Haastateltavan ikä
2. Ammattiala
3. Asiakas ostaa: tarvikkeita / korjauspalveluita / muita palveluita (esim. yhteystietojen siirto)
4. Asiakas on: Ensimmäistä kertaa asiakkaana Digimansissa / on asioinut aikaisemmin Digimanissa (arviolta kuinka monesti?)
5. Missä kuulit Digimanista?
6. Listaa 3 tärkeintä asiaa ostaessasi tarvikkeita: hinta, ammattitaito/tuotetieto, laatu, valikoima, merkki/brändi, helppous, ominaisuudet, takuu, lisäpalvelut (asennus/käyttöönotto/käyttövinkit), henkilökunta (ystävällisyys, avuliaisuus jne), jokin muu
7. Arvioi meidät asteikolla yhdestä viiteen mainitsemissasi asioissa (1 – erittäin huono, 5 – erittäin hyvä)
8. Listaa 3 tärkeintä asiaa ostaessasi korjauspalveluita: hinta, ammattitaito/tuotetieto, nopeus, laatu, helppous, sijainti, takuu, maine, lisäpalvelut (asennus/käyttöönotto/käyttövinkit), henkilökunta (ystävällisyys, avuliaisuus jne) jokin muu (jolleit ostaa korjauspalveluita, kuvittele itsesi vastaavaan tilanteeseen)
9. Asteikolla yhdestä viiteen, arvioi meidät mainitsemissasi asioissa (1 – erittäin huono, 5 – erittäin hyvä)
10. Asteikolla yhdestä viiteen, kuinka hyvin vastasimme odotuksiasi?
11. Mitkä asiat saisivat sinut palaamaan / mitkä asiat saivat sinut palaamaan?
12. Miksi valitsit meidät? (etkä kilpailijaa kuten Fonum, iTapsa, Teknik Magasinet, Elisa, yms.)
13. Listaa 1-2 asiaa, jossa voisimme parantaa.

Interview translation (only Finnish version was used)

Preface:

Digiman interviews its customers regarding customer satisfaction. An interview takes about 5-15 minutes. Participant receives 50% discount on chosen Wave phone cover/screen protector or 10 euros discount on repair services.

Customer agrees to be interviewed:

First, the interview is completely confidential, and anonymous. **IMPORTANT: I ask you to be as honest as possible.** I'm going to ask you some questions, but if have any additional comments regarding the store/company, please let me know, we want to hear everything.

Interview:

1. Interviewees age
2. Industry (if employed)
3. Customer is buying: Accessories /repair services / other services (such as contact transfer between phones)
4. The customer: Is first time shopper / has used Digiman services before (approx. how many times?)
5. How did you find out about Digiman?
6. List 3 most important things when buying accessories: price, expertise, quality, selection, brand, effortlessness, product features, warranty, additional services (installation/usage tips), staff (friendliness, helpfulness), something else
7. On a scale from 1 to 5, rate us on those 3 aspects (1 - really bad, 5 – really good).
8. List 3 most important things when buying repair service: price, expertise, swiftness, service quality, effortlessness, location, warranty, reputation, additional services (installation/usage tips), something else (if not buying repair services, imagine yourself in situation buying the service)
9. On a scale from 1 to 5, rate us on those 3 aspects (1 - really bad, 5 – really good).
10. On a scale from 1 to 5, how well did we meet your expectations?
11. Which factors would make you/made you return?
12. Why did you choose us? (and not a competitor such as Fonum, iTapsa, Teknik Magasinet, Elisa, etc.)
13. List 1-2 things how could we improve