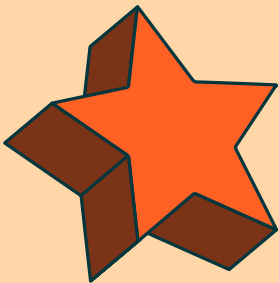# Retail

Retailers understand that the success of their business depends on the success of their customer service teams. Even so, inflexible systems and a lack of data visibility may be holding them back.

To jumpstart growth in this new business reality, retailers need only look to their own customers. Customer service has emerged as a key differentiator between companies, a top consideration for customers and a profit-generating force in its own right. Some 61% of customers globally say they now have higher customer service standards after this past year's crisis. And an equal number would now defect to a competitor after just one bad customer experience.

Delivering exceptional customer service can mean the difference between standing out or falling behind, but retailers have to move quickly to avoid common traps that may derail their growth plans:

Customer service isn't wowing customers

Although 62% of retailers gave themselves high marks for the quality of their service, what they're offering is lagging behind what customers expect. In fact, 54% of consumers report that customer service feels like an afterthought for most of the businesses they buy from. That's a problem for those looking to impress customers and keep them coming back.

Solution: Focus on reducing customer effort, delivering speedier resolutions and boosting the quality of every customer service interaction.

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Leadership is all talk, but it's the doing that counts

Going all in on customer service requires buy-in at the top. But whilst 76% of retail leaders agree that customer service is a critical business priority, a surprising 44% report that it's still not owned by the C-suite. What's more, only 18% report viewing customer service metrics on a daily basis.

Solution: Infuse a customer service–first mindset across the company with active engagement from leadership.

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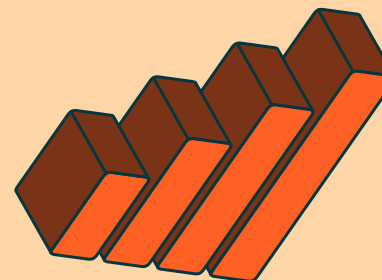
Current investments aren't enough to support a standout team

Customer engagement is on the rise, with 26% of retailers expecting a budget increase of at least 25% over the next two years. But budget expectations are falling short of predicted demand, with only 31% of retailers strongly agreeing that they're adequately investing in support initiatives.

Solution: Go beyond CSAT and track the metrics needed to make the business case for customer service.

31% of retailers strongly agreeing that they're adequately investing in support initiatives.

Agents are burnt out and feel undervalued

Agents' roles have become more important and strategic. In fact, 83% of retail business leaders agree that they play a vital role in customer retention. But just a third of retail agents feel empowered to do their jobs well. It's a slippery slope: unhappy agents can quickly turn into dissatisfied customers.

Solution: Take care of your agents by giving them the training, tools and flexibility they need to deliver better experiences for customers.
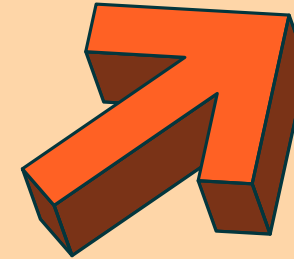
Disjointed systems confuse customers and halt growth

When agents have to juggle multiple tools, it's incredibly difficult to capture a single view of the customer. It's a missed opportunity – as 90% of customers are willing to spend more for personalised experiences, but just 34% of retail agents say they're very effective at finding the information needed to meet those expectations. To get there, 30% of retailers say they'll need to design and implement new work processes or risk more frustration for everyone involved.

Solution: Connect agents to the information they need to resolve issues more efficiently and grow the business.

83% of retail business leaders agree that agents play a vital role in customer retention.

90% of customers are willing to spend more for personalised experiences.

Don't let these common customer service traps hold you back. Benchmark your performance against your peers and see how high-performing companies deliver best-in-class service every time.