16 Tips for Building a Powerful VoC Program in 2016
A positive customer experience can improve customer retention, attract new customers, increase revenues, and improve employee engagement.

To enjoy such benefits, however, your company’s customer experience initiatives must be organized and supported by a well-planned Voice of the Customer (VoC) program. With that in mind, we’ve put together 16 expert VoC tips that will help drive your company’s VoC program toward success in the year ahead.
VoC matters to your revenue

- In 2016 89% of companies expect to compete mostly on the basis of customer experience.
- 74% of consumers have spent more due to good customer service.
- U.S. brands lose approximately $41 billion each year due to poor customer service.

Define and Design

A successful VoC program starts with planning.

1. Align your VoC program with your company’s overall business goals.

Establish clear objectives and success criteria for your VoC program based on your business goals. Be sure to design a program that will deliver both tactical and strategic benefits.

2. Plan for the future of your VoC program now.

Most VoC programs start out small. Over time, however, you should expect that your program will mature and grow. What will your grown-up VoC program look like? Plan ahead so you will be prepared when the time comes to scale your program to satisfy ever-evolving company goals.

3. Choose KPI metrics that provide the right information for your unique business needs.

When it comes to metrics - one size does not fit all! The most successful VoC programs often implement a combination of metrics based on departments, goals, feedback channels, and/or brand standards.
4. **Choose the right technology to support your VoC efforts.**

Choose a flexible, scalable, reliable, and stable software solution that can accommodate omni-channel data collection, analysis, and reporting. Look for a one-stop, feature-rich solution to gain maximum value and insight from all your feedback and research projects.

5. **Get help from a VoC expert.**

Implementing a truly successful VoC program can be challenging. Don't risk failure by trying to do it alone. Partner with highly trained and experienced experts to guide you through the process. They can help you achieve the results your company needs from a VoC program.
Listen

Listen to all of your stakeholders via every channel.

VoC matters to your customers

- 60% of consumers have higher expectations for customer service now than they did just one year ago.

- 97% of global consumers say that customer service is very important or somewhat important in their choice of and loyalty to a brand.

- 76% of consumers say they view customer service as the true test of how much a company values them.

6. Collect data at every touchpoint to build a holistic picture of your customers’ experience.

To really understand your customer, you must have a complete view of all of their interactions with your company. It is important to provide your customers with an opportunity to provide feedback at every touchpoint.

7. Plan for mobile.

A strong mobile VoC strategy will facilitate in-the-moment customer feedback with technologies like beacon and location triggered surveys. It will also make it easier for your customers to respond to your feedback requests, increasing customer participation and improving the quality of your data.

8. Let your customers “speak” freely.

There is a lot of value in allowing a customer to go “off script” with open-ended questions and unstructured text answers. You may discover new product ideas or uncover previously hidden problems. A text analytics solution can automate the analysis of customers’ text responses, categorizing text and determining their sentiment. This automation can save you hours of effort while providing extremely valuable insights.

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9. Listen to what your customers and the wider marker are saying about your company.

Social media sites, like Twitter and Facebook, as well as forums, discussion boards, and blogs contain discussions that can provide a rich source of insight into product design, performance, competitive intelligence, and more. Social analytics can help you capture this unsolicited feedback by crawling and filtering a wide range of social media sources.

10. Never forget the impact of employee engagement on your customer experience.

An engaged workforce is at the heart of an engaged customer base. A Voice of the Employee (VoE) program including engagement, onboarding, and exit surveys is your sure-fire route to increasing employee engagement – and that means reduced churn, lower costs, and a strong corporate culture.

11. Get the boots-on-the-ground perspective on the customer experience.

Surveying your employees about their day-to-day interactions with customers is also a great way to gain insight into events and trends impacting your business. Bring together the Voice of the Employee and the Voice of the Customer to uncover insights that will generate significant return in investment.
Analyze structured and unstructured data to get a holistic view of your customer experience.

VoC matters to your employees

- Companies with great customer experience have 2X as many engaged employees as customer experience laggards.
- Customer experience helps to drive employee engagement through a shared sense of purpose.

12. Break down data silos that negatively impact your customer experience.

Collect, aggregate, and analyze customer, employee, research data, alongside contextual data from your internal business systems – such as financial or CRM systems. Organize all this information into a single, smart hub that facilitates advanced analysis and holistic reporting across ALL your customer data.

13. Leverage reporting and analysis to understand what customers are saying. Then, dive deeper.

While high-level metrics and reporting are enlightening, metrics alone may not go deep enough. Dive into customer, employee, and market feedback to identify trends, key drivers, and deeper issues that impact the company.
A successful VoC program is all about taking action.

14. Take action on customer, employee, and market feedback quickly.

A VoC program is only valuable if you take action to improve the customer experience. At a tactical level, you must quickly respond to dissatisfied customers, but it doesn’t stop there. Be sure that you are resolving key drivers of dissatisfaction at a strategic level, too.

15. Use your VoC program to identify new areas of opportunity.

You can find opportunities for innovation in almost all stakeholder interactions, such as how your customers find, select, purchase, and actually use your products and services. VoC programs are a powerful way to collect information to feed innovation and drive operational efficiencies.

16. Engage your entire organization in your customer experience efforts.

Share VoC findings throughout your organization using role-based dashboards and/or customer experience “portals”. In this way, you can break down data/information silos that undermine your customer experience efforts.
The Voice of the Customer

The Voice of the Customer is extremely important to the modern business. Not only does it represent the most valuable arbiter of future financial performance for an organization, but if nurtured appropriately, it can also provide an unrivalled source of innovative ideas that will help you deliver the outstanding experiences that customers demand.

By implementing these 16 tips you will be able to build a powerful Voice of the Customer program that delivers tangible return on investment for years to come. Even with these tips, we know that setting up a successful VoC program is tough. Rest assured, Confirmit can help! Our team of highly trained VoC experts is ready and waiting to guide you through the entire process to make sure that you achieve results your company needs from a VoC program.

Sources:
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Confirmit helps businesses operationalize feedback to drive change throughout their organizations using the world’s most secure, reliable and scalable solutions for Voice of the Customer, Employee Engagement and Market Research programs. Confirmit’s solutions enable companies to run feedback and research programs that increase revenue, reduce costs and promote culture change.

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