

“They do not want to comply with the warranty!” The influence of technical assistance on consumer satisfaction

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the influence of technical assistance in the satisfaction of consumers of a steel industry. The results indicate that flaws in operations management of technical assistance lead to customer dissatisfaction. The main factors were found non-compliance with delivery dates and product warranty.

Keywords: Service Operations; Technical Assistance; Warranty; Satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

The improvement of service delivery in line with the expectations of users, has become something very important for strategic decisions in organizations, in the face of rapid change, technological advances and competitiveness, these are configured as key factors for decision making management. Following this same thought, the services "are economic activities that create value and provide benefits to customers in specific times and places, as a result of the realization of a desired change in, or the recipient's name service" (Lovelock and Wright, 2001, Zuñiga and Urdan, 2001).

The service sector, for example, today is a very important area for the market, for companies that make use of it as a source of competitive advantage and especially for customers, which

depending on the performance of such assistance, it is or not a faithful consumer, in view of the perceived quality of service provided (Oliveira et al. 2014).

In this sense, the perceived quality on technical assistance services can impact the company's image both positively and negatively, positively where performed a quality service where the service meets customer expectations, trying to know your opinion on the service running, thus the customer is satisfied with the quality of service and care (Kotler and Keller, 2006). But when the perceived quality has flaws, in the view of Zeithaml and Bitner (2006), these same generate feelings and customer negative reactions, and may cause them to tell these bad experiences to other customers or even seek to report on organ consumer protection, their negative experience, causing the company to stay with their dirty image in the market, to have these types of reports, made by the consumers themselves. Thus, failures generate dissatisfaction, and satisfaction is, in most cases, the main factor that leads to profitability in companies (Corrêa and Caon, 2002, Lovelock and Wirtz, 2006).

In addition, segment services in technical assistance provided by a steel industry has no publications of reports and surveys that portray this fact. Much of what is available as knowledge is based on scientific empirical investigations, relating to quality and customer satisfaction services. Because of this gap, it is necessary to increase knowledge about the technical assistance service management, with greater focus on perceptions of the guarantees offered in this area. This, because most of the studies found no way related to warranty with specific approaches to technical assistance, but rather deal with the issue relating them with tangible products (Parasuraman et al. 1985).

Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the length of the guarantee given by the service industry to its customers, and timing them established in the negotiation act, this article aims to provide answers to the following research problem: What is the importance of technical assistance provided by the company at the time of negotiation and acquisition of services?

Faced with this problem, the study challenges us to know how the area of services, particularly technical assistance, influences customer satisfaction, when it provides a good service, comply with the deadlines for the provision of service, and offer good product warranty. It is worth noting that this research sought to explore and expand the horizons of the influence of technical assistance on consumer satisfaction of a steel industry in the city of Teresina. Such a study is relevant to the organization by providing a tool to increase customer satisfaction.

In addition to this introductory section, the paper is structured as follows: first presents a theoretical framework on the collateral in the context of service delivery, then, there is the research methodology, and then there are the results and discussions, finally, comes to conclusion with the exposure of the main constraints, managerial contributions and future research suggestions.

THEORETICAL BASIS

By purchasing a product or service the client wishes to both expected to have products guaranteed to have a very important requirement to overcome the requirements imposed so as to meet with quality service, which in fact calls for some points to failure of the product, which actually need to replace the components that are being discarded during the life of the product (Mello 2012). Concomitant to this Tschohl and Franzmeier (1996) defines quality of service as

something that is offered to the consumer, being the technical assistance offered by the company at the time of negotiation and sale closing, these types of service rendered is not just another sales tool, but somehow, it also means that the organization can use to thus be able to gain competitive advantage long-term.

For Walter (2006) author, currently the quality has become a clear requirement of the client, but in organizations mainly small still do not have the custom of adopting a systematic policy to implementation of quality programs in business, what It causes little differentiation and competitive advantage to these same, however it is considered a possible cause of the this information or not understanding the technical language about the quality principles.

Whenever the customer has an interaction with the organization, being in person or through the intermediary of a means of communication, so there is a meeting services, the same will serve as a reference for the consumer to assess the quality of services that were provided by the company or organization. Thus, each of these meetings is to the organization an opportunity to impress your client, or let them down by poor performance Govender and Ramroop (2013). In this context, Las Casas (2000) emphasizes providing quality in services is the result of a sequence of routines, such as market research, competition and customers, trying to find a way that differentiates them from the others in quality term offered both products , as in the services offered, to establish a culture and also an important point, develop training employees seeking better service to consumers, creating an organizational climate with the internal marketing, disclose the plan and to establish control mechanisms.

It is based on client assessment, therefore, that a company identifies its failures and seeks to work on their attributes, directing its efforts to the corresponding activities with the aim of improving services. This is where the quality tools become useful Moreira (2002). In this sense, Warwar (2006) warns that if they can not prioritize some aspects of the strategic operation of services without their having had some kind of research with customers because they are the evaluators of their quality. So for Gandara et al. (2013) it is essential that service companies refer their clients to wishes of these consumers.

When organizations go to see the continuous improvement of quality of products and services offered as a differentiation tool from other competitors, they will give a jump to be competitive in the market Tontini and Silveira, 2007. Therefore, for these authors, continuously improve the quality both the product and service should be the focus of any business as a way to differentiate themselves and achieve their goals. Govender and Ramroop (2013) add that improve the quality of services offered is an enterprise that can bring significant results for all organizations.

Still, for Las Casas (2000), the quality in the service sector is related to satisfaction, since the individual satisfied consider the service and quality, is the solution of a problem, either by answering a need or any other expectation. Mohammad and Alhamadani (2011) while researching the quality of services, found that is an important antecedent of customer satisfaction. Therefore, these authors show that the managers and decision makers need to seek the improvement of the quality elements of services, which can bring significant managerial contributions.

Rocha e Silva (2006) argue that it is necessary to take into account the importance of quality in service delivery. The concept of quality in organizations first came to product companies and only some time later, this concern also transferred up to service companies. Hoffman and Bateson (2003, p.387), the failures of the service delivery system are directly linked to the core

of the company's service, where they may arise from unavailable services, extraordinarily slow services or even other faults of basic services.

The way an organization manages the service recovery creates a platform to strengthen or weaken the client relationship (Grönroos 2003). If the consumer has the perception that the company is committed to solving your problem or are trying to fulfill it in the best way, this in relation to it will be positive. Otherwise it will be bad view in order not to provide good care.

One benefit of guarantee, according to Hoffman and Bateson (2006), is to facilitate some aspects of the organization, such as: strengthening customer loyalty, gain market share and force the company to improve its overall quality of service. In addition, because of the security ensure that the service will be carried out according to what has been defined previously, you get another benefit: customer confidence.

By warranty, the customer will be sure that the service offered by the company will be provided as promised by it. Thus, it can be said that the guarantee is a means of providing confidence to the client. So the company has to know that reliability is a quality dimension that is very important for consumers (Bateson and Hoffman 2001, Lovelock 2001). Thus, it can be inferred that the guarantee is a key factor in bringing about the desired quality. And from that, you can understand the relevance of the warranty offer in providing a service. The guarantee is a form of disaster recovery, and this, in turn, aims to maintain and ensure quality of service. Quality is one of the factors responsible for customer satisfaction, and satisfaction, for the most part, causes fidelity.

METHOD

The methodological steps in this study seek to follow the research strategies with qualitative approach (Roberts 2012). The choice of this, it was necessary to understand the motivations and behaviors of consumers and is therefore used an interview in depth, which has been an approximation of analysis methods for the object of study in order to expand the concomitant research horizons responses found, possibilities that can guide further research on the subject of the importance of technical assistance service quality to customer satisfaction.

Thus, among the various qualitative techniques, the case study was approached this empirical research thus comprising a comprehensive process that involves from the plan's logic, with specific procedures for data collection and analysis (Yin 2001). The case analyzed in this study is a steel industry in the state of Piauí in northeastern Brazil. For ethical reasons, the company name was preserved, however it became identified as Metalínio industry.

The choice of a steel industry is due to the fact that the authors of it, work advising the same, thus the need arose to see some sink on the warranty and technical support services that company because it was perceived in the reports the interviews with the customers fault that service delivery, which caused great dissatisfaction of their clients.

Thus, while the study objectives was classified as exploratory, because it is a topic that is not so investigated within the context of the steel industry. According to the theoretical framework discussed the results from an analysis of data of this nature, provide benefits to investigate and contribute to the area of social science.

To develop the study were interviewed by means of links with 83 clients of the organization, where to analyze the lines of the subject, we used the Spigle methodology (1994), which is to

read all the interviews in order to get different aspects and like the answers, so it was necessary to use to compare data, and then they were made categories efficiently.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An important point to note is the lack of firm commitment from the perspective of the services offered within the time limits, so an element cited by respondents as dissatisfaction factor the delay in deliveries that operates on a route system that does not allow a time specific to the customer service causing them great displeasure for not having a feedback from employees. The company has no way to solve this serious problem, and the same in certain cases, according to respondents, prefer to give priority to other larger orders, leaving the background to the smaller orders at the time of delivery of products.

[...] "And the business is delivery only delivery even if takes too long then ... have to improve it there, [...], if not better then the customers will Away" (Client 9).

[...] "Now the delivery is bad, bad, bad, bad, takes too long, one thing that is within Teresina takes too long, and the counter I bought there, the drawer is already falling does not even 6 months and the drawer is already falling "(client 64).

"Why is this when I made the purchase of three goods there, he promised to come leave, and one month later I was back look, why they came not help, and the following is not a friend of ours who knows the inside would not complain to pick up the goods, they said it was because ... for me they did not say that, but for my friend said it was little merchandise and coming not leave here so that was bad, and I was disappointed, and if you can I do not buy more in these companies "(client 28).

The discontent of the client in this case, in respect of the delivery is so great that it describes his disappointment to the organization, with the employee that this situation did not provide feedback to the consumer making him very unhappy, and attendants who like the same cited rolled not transferring the call to a responsible able to solve his problem.

"Look I say I bought several times and I have nothing to complain did not understand, but is this the last time I bought then I bought on a Thursday and the guy who met me there said he'd give me the Monday! fair, earlier this week, so I called him Monday, Tuesday, called Wednesday and he never once gave me a position understood, then asked to speak to manager why I was going to usher in the post and was depending on these materials, these counters then I called and did not pass to anyone responsible I called not know how many times, and once I esculhambei everyone because of that understood, ah well the girls who answered me, she wrapped me and did not pass to anyone and I spent well more about 10 days to receive the goods. [...]" (Client 67).

Assistance was another variable mentioned amid the interviews, when asked the reason for the score of the company. From the analysis of this same report it is noticed that the assistance shown helpful in some part to customers as mentioned in the following argument:

[...] "I made a purchase and has a problem and they sent the piece straight at me, you can fill out the form with all that is great so I sign underneath saw" (client 80).

Among the many interviews was the occurrence of cases where the lack of efficient service provoked feelings of dissatisfaction, negative marking the company's image. The consumer purchase the product, he immediately thinks of after-sales services that the organization can offer, this case is identified in the following lines.

"I think of a company that is uncompromising, understood, uncompromising, has no commitment to the customer, and the reason ... And another thing ... And the reason of them and they think there is no other to replace it several times I I have spoken with the driver, I only buy ... Why so far they have not knocked on my door someone as close as a ... the company Metalínio of you the more I have no joy in buying this company understood! "(Client 4)

As you can see the consumer is not ready to pay a service of technical assistance, discounting sometimes something that is not adequately where the same inhibits direct that are customers themselves. For both the client comes to him say that "the customer comes first" highlighting a very strong value, then setting an essential component for the extension of the business.

[...] "Assistance, so ... I've had some problems there, I buy because it's a need for that ... is a company near the Piauí in Piauí, to say ... I buy more easy, but I've had some shopping ... problem with the assistance ... that sometimes the client it to me're in 1st place, do not know if ... I've had on the tour and I ... the last time until the girl there treated me well, tried to solve all the way right, again I spoke to the owner himself and he did not like a ... no, I kept buying out of necessity right, but I tell you here that there ... if I had another company the size of it, I would buy the other company "(Client 5).

CONCLUSION

When it comes to service, it is certain that quality is the key point in the process of service delivery from start to finish. Quality is key in reducing failure probabilities in the dimensions that can be controlled by the company. However, there are other factors that can not be controlled by the company, with that in many cases are failures in service delivery. The main factors that were found during the interview was non-compliance with delivery dates and product warranty.

Most consumers have the perception of the importance of offering the service guarantees made by the company, and the company must have the same perception of this duty they have to offer to these consumers. This observation is reinforced by research which show that service guarantee can have a positive as well as negative effects, and this effect has an impact on customer satisfaction.

In addition, it was revealed, to interview some customers who have not had good experiences with service guarantees, the feeling of frustration can make the customer not to repurchase the company's service. Based on these issues, the company that offers guarantees and technical assistance to develop policies and practices that allow such in alignment service to its base of corporate strategies, so that there is commitment from everyone (including senior management) with a guaranteed and especially with the quality.

Through this research can provide information to managers of various organizations, have highlighted some important points related to warranty services, technical assistance and delivery mainly to companies or claim to have the guarantee of services. With the satisfaction survey became evident an opportunity to raise the company's image in view of its customers, as the same may remedy the shortcomings highlighted by the results. From this it becomes feasible to draw up a standard procedure in the event of failure, to then improve customer relationships, business transparency, excellence and sequentially customer satisfaction.

Finally, it emphasizes the importance of front-line service provider, the previous service and after the service. The guarantee, failures and recovery itself constitute themselves as subjects of skills and training and can become allies of the company in the pursuit of customer satisfaction.

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