

VOC 1-2-3 :: Strategies for a successful Voice of the Customer program



With increasing competition to retain customers, build brand loyalty, and attract new business, companies of all types are seeking ways to sharpen their focus on the customer experience. Success often relies on having a deep understanding of your customers across every touch point –and that involves listening. That’s where an effective **Voice of the Customer (VOC) program** can add real value, delivering insights to help you **improve customer experience** and meet key business objectives.

To build and run a successful VOC program, your approach will evolve along the way, so think about it in three strategic phases: getting a great start, building momentum, and then expanding the potential.

1 Phase 1: Plan for success

- **Create a Strategic Roadmap:** Whether you’re a large financial institution, a retailer, or a utility company, you’ll gain greater value at potentially lower cost if your VOC program starts with a clear game plan.
- **Gain a holistic view of the customer experience:** To really understand and improve your customer’s experience, it’s important to develop a complete picture of their relationship with your business. For well-rounded insights, be sure to monitor numerous touch points —capturing both structured data (e.g., surveys and transaction data) and unstructured data (e.g., call center transcripts and customer support email feedback). And don’t forget to track social media, where customers often vent about, or praise, their service experiences. Analyzing both structured and unstructured data provides a richer, more nuanced view of the customer experience. Additionally, it’s a good idea to **map the customer experience lifecycle** (such as pre-sales vs. servicing) to better understand where and how to make improvements.

If there’s no clear change, there’s no ROI. That’s why you need to map out what you want to change and how you’ll measure it.



- **Be prepared to take action to drive improvements:** To ensure you can act on insights gained through VOC analytics, build buy-in for customer experience changes by recruiting champions, influencers, and executives across numerous lines of business. To build the business case, start with small, measurable, pilot efforts. As an example, VOC analytics helped a Top 50 bank uncover numerous customer complaints about being required to make wire transfers in person at banking locations. In response, the bank began offering wire services online, and developed metrics to track the impact of the change.



2 Phase 2: Optimize your efforts

- **Discover more by letting the data speak:** You'll gain more value from your VOC efforts by listening to what customers are really saying. By using [text analytics](#) to let themes emerge, you unlock the true value of your data. With a more complete picture, you can prioritize targeted improvements that will produce the biggest wins.
- **Increase the relevance of insights with unique business context:** Your company likely has a wealth of customer comments from surveys, call centers, email and in-store feedback, and social media—so how do you make the most of it? Find out what's really driving the comments by engaging team members from various lines of business who understand the issues and can provide important context to help classify customer comments. Root-cause analysis can also help you focus on making changes that will mean the most to customers.
- **Measure the effectiveness of your actions:** To confirm the business value of your VOC efforts, you should consistently track the impact of any improvements you make. Define metrics and leverage analytics dashboards to create progress reports you can share with business leaders across the company.

3 Phase 3: Take it to the next level

- **Think bigger by multi-purposing customer insights:** Increase the power of your VOC program by leveraging insights to make improvements in multiple areas. For example, after analyzing millions of customer comments, you might identify key pain points that enable you to triage customers into different support strategies that help strengthen relationships. Expand your perspective to include [feedback from frontline employees](#) and other partners who play a role in shaping the customer experience. This added insight can help you define strategies for new product offerings, training, or other resources that appeal to customers and grow your business.
- **Increase revenue potential through customer insights:** Customer listening can identify more than just the problems; it's a great way to learn what people value most about your business. From there you can use [predictive modeling](#) to classify customer segments most likely to respond to certain promotions, and deliver targeted marketing. You can also leverage VOC analytics to "crowd source" for ideas on how to attract more business. In particular, social media analytics may uncover insights about what people want that you don't already offer.
- **Build more power into CRM with insights from VOC:** Boost the value of your Customer Relationship Management program by systematically tracking feedback as part of your customer profiles. By integrating comments from multiple touch points into CRM, you can better understand their emotional connection to your brand. It also helps you identify customers who consistently provide positive feedback so you can explore cross-sell or up-sell opportunities, and even engage them to become brand advocates.

To gain the most from your Voice of the Customer program, focus on creative strategies and advanced analytics that help you maximize the value of customer insights. You can use what you learn about customers to drive measurable change across your organization to improve customer experience, strengthen engagement and brand loyalty, and increase the flow of new business.

Let's Talk

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