

## **Receipt Surveys vs. Mystery Shopping:**

### **Which one gives comprehensive insight into the customer experience?**

*Companies are facing new pressures to keep up with ever-intensifying customer expectations. Many businesses utilize receipt surveys but miss out on important consumer insights that can be provided from mystery shoppers.*

*Presented by Jancyn Evaluation Shops*

#### **Introduction:**

According to research from management consulting firm Accenture, customer switching costs businesses around the globe \$1 trillion each year. Why do customers switch? Sixty-one percent say they stop doing business with a company when they perceive it is no longer “relevant.” By contrast, 68 percent of customers will recommend businesses they see as relevant to family and friends

And how can you maintain your relevance? A recent *Forbes* article offers clarification: Perceptions of your brand are shaped by the way your company interacts with customers, keeps up with current product or service expectations and whether customers feel truly connected to what you’re doing. Managing a brand without considering what your customers want (or more importantly believe) about your brand could put you on a fast track to losing market share at best, vanishing into obscurity at worst.

#### **Register Receipt Survey Programs: Some Insights, but Many Shortcomings**

In the world of customer experience (CX), a register receipt survey is a type of post-interaction or transactional survey. Its purpose is to measure customer perceptions about a specific interaction. With transactional surveys, companies can gain some information about customer perceptions. They can track trends over time to measure the performance of customer-facing teams. Without question, a register receipt survey program can have value. Gathering any customer feedback is better than having no insight at all.

There are several factors that make register receipts less valuable as a standalone feedback gathering option:

- Decreased Response Rates Due to Survey Fatigue
- Diminished Ability to Ask In-Depth Questions
- Lag in Response Time Can Decrease Feedback Quality
- Customers Who Respond Often Have Had Outlier Experiences

What’s the takeaway? Receipt surveys typically offer a skewed perception of customer satisfaction. You may only hear from a subset of customers who feel compelled to raise their voice. This can distort your perception of how your sites and teams are performing.

#### **Mystery Shopping Programs: Powerful, Actionable, Third-Party Objective Look at the Customer Interaction**

With a mystery shopping program, companies can gain deep and meaningful insight into the customer experience using qualitative and quantitative data. Mystery shop report feedback is specific to the way employees are trained, calls are handled, stores are merchandised, compliance is adhered to and business goals are measured. Since its origins in the mid-20th century, mystery shopping has grown to a \$1.5 billion industry.

Today’s mystery shopping companies offer in-depth, statistically valid insights that help companies understand and improve the customer experience. And the types of organizations that rely on mystery shopping has expanded to include government agencies, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and many others.

Mystery shop providers maintain a large database of qualified independent contractor shoppers. That way, they can serve national chains by providing believable shoppers who are familiar with local markets. Mystery Shoppers must show integrity, have excellent writing skills, and have a knack for attention to detail. They must follow shop guidelines to a tee and many complete training courses offered through organizations such as the Mystery Shopping Professionals Association (MSPA). [www.mspa-americas.org](http://www.mspa-americas.org)

A few of the benefits of utilizing mystery shopper companies include:

- Deeper Insights into the Customer Experience
- Motivates Employees to Deliver Consistent High-Quality Service Levels
- Tailored Programs that Offer In-Depth Insights
- Access to Competitive Intelligence

### **Register Receipt Surveys vs. Mystery Shopping: The Verdict Is In**

Clearly, collecting any customer feedback is better than none. But companies that rely on limited feedback collection methods—like register receipt surveys—are putting themselves at risk of losing customers. Today's customers are more empowered than ever before. They have 24/7 access to information on brands and product options—and are very willing to shop around before any purchase. And as companies like Amazon and Zappos make world-class experiences accessible. Just how big is the problem? A reported 47% of customers will abandon a brand if they have bad experiences—even if they've been loyal for years.

Register receipts alone aren't going to provide a complete picture. They will never give you the deep intelligence you need to deliver exceptional experiences across your entire service footprint. By contrast, mystery shopping lets you access powerful insight that can transform your business. You can partner with an experienced mystery shop provider to design performance evaluation programs that gather highly-specific and meaningful feedback. With a mystery shopping program, you can collect quantitative feedback to complement data gained through traditional survey programs.

Mystery shopping—with its unique opportunity to collect tailored and actionable answers to the questions that drive your brand values—should be an instrumental part of your feedback gathering program.