

Net Promoter: Benefits for the bottom line and beyond at Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific

Case Study: Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific

Over the past few years, Net Promoter® has become widely adopted by organisations worldwide, and quite rightly, much has been written of the business benefits of implementing the metric. But beyond the bottom line, we consistently encounter individuals and businesses that experience indirect and sometimes surprising advantages to working with Net Promoter.

Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific is one such organisation. A publisher that focuses on legal, accounting, and healthcare sectors, it first implemented Transactional Net Promoter Surveys in mid-2011. A year on, Net Promoter is transforming the way the company does business, and having a positive impact on employee interactions, customer satisfaction, and product development.

Here's how the process evolved.

Starting out with Net Promoter

Globally the parent company **Wolters Kluwer** had been using Net Promoter since 2007. But in mid-2011, **Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific** made a significant departure from the organisation's standard practices. Rather than use Net Promoter as a tool to give extra insights into customer engagement once or twice a year, Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific implemented daily Transactional Net Promoter surveys in an effort to bring the voice of the customer back into the organisation and drive measurable customer-focused change.

The team responsible for implementing the surveys recommended the company look for an external partner with the right tools and expertise to implement the program. The company wanted a partner with significant demonstrable expertise in customer engagement and Net Promoter Score, and Genroe – CustomerGauge's partner in Australia – met the criteria.

“One of the best things of my day is hearing people's genuine surprise when they realise that someone's phoning them back to say that not only have we heard you, but we're doing something to improve your experience.”

*- Janine Scott,
Regional Manager, Key Business Initiatives, Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific*

Survey rollout: Challenges and specifics

In collaboration with Genroe and CustomerGauge, Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific began to roll out Transactional Surveys across a number of its Asia Pacific markets, including Australia, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Singapore, in July 2011. The rollout was accompanied by an extensive communications and corporate video campaign to drive engagement, which has delivered greater awareness of NPS and CustomerGauge.

Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific surveys not only customers who make a purchase, but also customers using its products. As 3,000 people access Wolter Kluwer's data in some form on a daily basis, this translates into a significant volume of raw transactional survey responses every day.

The approach had two benefits. First, the volume of surveys sent out daily is a huge increase from the occasional surveys Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific had previously implemented, offering a considerably greater scope for gathering feedback.

Second, following the implementation of Transactional Surveys, Wolters Kluwer experienced a three percent increase in its response rate compared to earlier surveys.

Though the company does not release specific figures, its response rate is in line with comparable B2B Net Promoter surveys.

In order to close the loop and ensure that its data was put to good use, Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific built a CRM system compatible with its version of Salesforce.com. However, this presented a challenge in that any actions captured by CustomerGauge needed to be inserted into the Salesforce.com system.

In order to make this possible, CustomerGauge adapted its system to ensure alerts, scores and comments triggered in Salesforce.com are recorded there rather than the regular CustomerGauge platform. This enables Wolters Kluwer to

ensure its internal workflow can be carefully monitored and follow-up actions to customers consistently completed.

The Impact of NPS

With a data set that spans more than one complete year, Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific has identified a number of advantages to utilising Transactional Net Promoter surveys.

Here is a brief overview of the key findings:

Feedback on isolated issues: Customer feedback can be divided into two categories. The first category of feedback comprises of isolated issues that may be solved within a matter of days. In this case, using Net Promoter has provided the means to quickly and efficiently identify customers who have been left underwhelmed by a specific interaction and take immediate action to remedy it.

Russell Evans, CEO, Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific comments: *“I saw a key new client voicing frustration, so I called them up and asked what was troubling them. He explained, and we solved it within about two days. He called me back, and said ‘You’ve got a customer for life.’”*

Feedback on system issues: The second category comprises of systemic issues that need to be assessed, improved on, and measured in the medium term. Armed with this knowledge, Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific is incrementally isolating the root causes of the issues that its customers are raising at specific points, and improving on them over a period of time, before finally assessing the effectiveness of the actions through changes in average Net Promoter Scores.

Reaching out to Detractors is a surprisingly positive experience. While it may be assumed that reaching out to unhappy customers is a challenging task, Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific has found that in reality this is a positive experience. Rather than using it as an opportunity only to voice dissatisfaction, customers are grateful to be contacted and have an opportunity to discuss how experiences may be improved.

Net Promoter increases employee engagement: Through being able to see directly what customers are saying about them on the company intranet, employees are inspired by the tangible proof that their work makes a positive difference to other people as well as improves their product.

Jessica Hobson, Director of Marketing and Product Management comments: *“Employees can see it and they can*

pick up the phone and talk to the customer, and employee engagement is going up because of that. It’s making people’s lives a bit more meaningful because they are seeing directly from these customer comments and scores that ‘hey, we make a difference.’”

Scores have become less important: There has been an evolution in attitudes toward scores across the organisation. *“We were originally very focused on our scores,”* said Craig Scowen, Market Development Manager. *“But now it has come to a point where scores are something we tend to underplay, because we want to nurture an environment where people are focused on delighting customers, rather being concerned if scores rise or fall by a couple of points.”*

Up to this point, Wolters Kluwer’s scores have stayed relatively steady, but now the company has a full year of data it can identify cycles and prepare for periods where it has to meet certain expectations.

The Future

Collecting survey responses is the starting point for uncovering insights with any kind of survey, and Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific has been considering different approaches to increase responses. Rather than focus on response rates, in the future the organisation aims to capture and measure more customer interactions across different channels and thus increase the volume of responses.

Conclusion

Craig Scowen summed up progress: *“We have moved beyond claiming to be a customer-centric organisation - now we have the evidence to back it up.”*

Prior to implementing Transactional Surveys, the most common way Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific discovered that a customer was unhappy was if they took their business elsewhere. As a deliberate, measured method of finding out what its customers are actually saying, Transactional Net Promoter surveys have helped Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific replace emotion with fact, and provided an effective system to improve service and product offerings for new and existing customers alike.

And in the process, it has helped people such as Janine and her customers and colleagues experience a little more positivity in their day.

“We have moved beyond claiming to be a customer-centric organization - now we have the evidence to back it up.”

*Craig Scowen
Market Development Manager*

“It’s making people’s lives a bit more meaningful because they are seeing directly from these customer comments and scores that ‘Hey, we make a difference!’”

*Jessica Hobson, Director of Marketing
and Product Management*

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