

Customer Satisfaction in the Retail Industry during Covid times: A market research perspective from GrowthLyne

The traditional elements of customer satisfaction such as choice, convenience, and service experience are not enough. Covid has added new dimensions to it.

MUMBAI, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA, June 16, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Covid pandemic had a profound impact on the Indian Retail industry. Lockdown meant retail stores were shut and supply chains were constrained. Many retailers, not able to withstand the mounting losses, closed business permanently. The retail industry's loss due to the pandemic is estimated to be over INR 15.5 Trillion. Customers also suffered and were forced to change their habits. As per recent [data collection in India](#), 20% of the customers shopped online for the first time and 78% of the customer reduced discretionary spending to prioritize essentials. The pandemic also led to a major shift in customer expectations from the retailers. As the pandemic wean off and the retail industry attempts a rebound, the retailers need to understand this shift and adapt to ensure customer retention and growth in the new normal.

LOYALTY IS DEAD

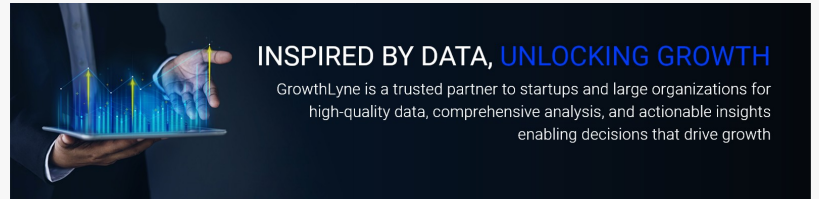
Customers were confined to homes during the pandemic and relied on the retailers for essential supplies, but retailers faltered on the customer trust. While offline retailers grappled with the challenge to quickly move online and establish a smooth ordering and fulfillment, online retailers saw a sharp spike in orders but struggled in managing supply chains and last-mile delivery resulting in delays and order cancellations. For example, Grofers stopped their services across many locations and BigBasket restricted their services to only existing customers. This dented the perception customers carried about the retailers and many switched to competitors. As per a survey by Mckinsey & Company, 94% of the customers in India shifted stores or brands.

NEW ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

The traditional elements of customer satisfaction such as choice, convenience, and service



GrowthLyne- Market research company in India



Data collection services India

experience are not enough. Covid has added several new dimensions to it.

- SAFETY:** Safety & hygiene has become a key priority for customers. While shopping at stores or online, customers want retailers to find ways to ensure their safety. In a survey by FRDC, 85% of customers expected regular sanitization and social distancing to be maintained at the stores and 62% showed a preference for self-check-out. Numero Uno started contactless shopping across 51 outlets. Similarly, Myntra focused on assuring customers of safety measures at the warehouse, safety protocols by the delivery person, and a contactless delivery.
- SUSTAINABILITY:** Customers are more aware of the scarcity of natural resources and acknowledge the need to be more sustainable. A study by Deloitte revealed that over 43 percent of customers select brands based on the environmental values of brands. Retailers are expected to focus on sustainability as they redesign their supply chains and explore new models for customer experience.
- CARE FOR PEOPLE:** Customers want retailers to be more empathetic to their employees. As per a recent survey, 66% of the customers expect the retail brands to focus on their employees and take care of them.

The pandemic has made it imperative for the retailers to put even greater emphasis on customer satisfaction. They need to focus on some critical components:

- Keeping a tab on frequently shifting customer behavior and expectations.** A clear understanding of what customers value is essential
- Monitoring customer satisfaction and what they feel about the company through regular CSAT or NPS surveys**
- Responding fast to any changes before customers move to competitors**

Normalcy will return with time, but the changes in customer expectations and behavior will stay. The impression and trust created by retailers with the customers during these difficult times will be long-lasting and will be a key driver of customer loyalty in the future. GrowthLyne makes it easier for retailers to understand customer expectations, by managing end-to-end customer satisfaction surveys and [advanced analytics](#), and respond quickly.

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