



the e-tailing group press release

Customer Service Winners

7 Retailers Rise to the Occasion Receiving the e-tailing group's Annual Customer Service Excellence Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 27, 2015

Contact:

Lauren Freedman
the e-tailing group
LF@e-tailing.com
Twitter: [@etailinggroup](#)
773.975.7280

THE FACTS

Results of the e-tailing group's 2014 Mystery Shopping Study, conducted during 4Q'14, recognizes seven retailers, out of the 100 benchmarked (EG100), as excelling at online customer service. In today's omnichannel climate amid heightened consumer expectations, customer service can serve as both an expected yet important differentiator. These retailers have invested in customer service excellence and we commend their performance.

Service today means unprecedented access via every channel and every device where efficiency is an expectation and choice nonnegotiable. Creating a culture across one's enterprise is no small feat but nonetheless required to achieve the high standards set by shoppers, emphasizes Lauren Freedman, President, the e-tailing group.

TOP PERFORMERS

In alphabetical order:

- DICK'S Sporting Goods
- Kate Spade
- Office Depot
- Ross-Simons
- The Home Depot
- Williams-Sonoma
- Zappos

THE METHODOLOGY

To qualify as "top performing" each of the 100 merchants was ranked using benchmarking extrapolated directly from results of the e-tailing group's 4Q'14 Mystery shopping study. Winners were revealed via a process whereby sites were systematically eliminated for not possessing "must have" features in the following rank order:

1. Accessibility of 800# on site was a 2.5 or higher
2. Overall customer service destination page score of 2.0 or higher (on a scale of 3)
3. 3 or fewer days to receive package
4. 5 or fewer clicks to checkout or if greater than 5 clicks has 1-click capability
5. Having the ability to move an item from the cart to a saved list for future access
6. Overall customer service experience on customer service call was a 2.0 or higher (on a scale of 3)
7. Answer e-mail question within 24 hours, correctly with a specific answer and personalized in salutation

Five metrics from the survey are charted here to demonstrate the superior performance by these top sites

for customer service versus the average of the 100 sites shopped.

Merchants	Customer Service Destination Page Score 1-3 (3 is best)	# Clicks to Check Out	One Click Checkout	# Business Says to Receive Item	Time to Answer Email
DICK's Sporting Goods	3.00	5.0	Y	2	24 Minutes
Kate Spade	2.75	4.0	N	2	8 Hours 27 Minutes
Office Depot	3.00	5.0	N	1	1 Hour 17 Minutes
Ross-Simons	2.00	5.0	N	3	1 Hour 31 Minutes
The Home Depot	3.00	4.0	Y	3	4 Hours 47 Minutes
Williams-Sonoma	2.50	6.0	Y	3	7 Minutes
Zappos	2.50	3.0	Y	2	8 Hours 25 Minutes
Average of EG100 sites shopped with these features	2.35	5.04	50%	3.42	21 Hours 2 Minutes

NOTABLE FINDINGS

THREE CORNERSTONES OF SUPERIOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

ACCESSIBILITY

Access ranges from finding information via self-service tools starts with FAQs now present only on 83% of the EG100 where the ability to search these databases has increased to 26 sites from 20 in 2013.

Customer service hours are less frequently found onsite this year (77% vs. 83%), making it difficult for shoppers to conveniently get in touch with retailers.

With customers shifting among channels, a universal list, optimally accessible in any channel, is now more frequently available (82% vs. 73%) with even more offering the ability to move an item from their cart to a saved list for future purchasing available (65% vs. 54%). Once orders are placed, providing a customer service phone number on the order confirmation sees slight improvement (81% vs. 77%) but should be universally available in all communication.

EFFICIENCY

Fast is the mantra of the omnichannel shopper where any roadblocks can result in abandonment, a lost sale and potentially a missed customer. 98% of retailers are wisely prepopulating customer profiles in their shopping carts to save shoppers time. One click checkout, of particular importance to mobile shoppers, has its foundation on the website, where half of the retailers now facilitate such a checkout, up from 43% in 2013. Choice plays into efficiency as well where payment options such as PayPal see increased deployment (68% vs. 62%) though mobile growth will likely mean greater payment competition in the near future.

As logistics pressure has been put to bear from Amazon to Zappos, retailers are responding as the number of business days to receive the product, based on a choice of ground shipping, improved to 3.42 days, up from 3.80 in the prior year. The return factor should never be underestimated as more retailers

(66% vs. 60%) have moved to a single return policy while online returns processing is available on 38% of sites up from 27% in 2013. The always preferred prepaid label is an added convenience and is provided on 64% of sites versus 59% in the prior year.

COMMUNICATION

Engaging with retailers for service is now more readily available so the burden is on the retailer to create a culture where associates are knowledgeable about products, adept at handling customers and efficient in their ability to deliver the right answer expeditiously. Retailers are making choices about which touchpoints to make available and the response times noted below influence the decisions consumers will ultimately make.

	% Offering	Response Time	Experience 1-3 (3 is best)
Email	89%	21 hours 2 mins	N/A
Call Center	99%	6 minutes	2.51
Live Chat	75%	11 minutes	2.44
Proactive Chat	34%	10 minutes	2.52

IN SUMMARY

Investing in the customer experience must always include a service component. Setting standards and continuously monitoring across every touch point will be essential in securing both a sale and a loyal customer.

THE COMPANY

The e-tailing group, inc. serves as the multi-channel merchant's eye, bringing a merchant's sensibility to evolving the multi-channel shopping experience. A Chicago-based consultancy, they provide practical strategic perspectives and actionable merchandising solutions to merchants selling online as well as to enabling technology firms.

For more background about this research study or for additional information on the e-tailing group, inc. please contact Lauren Freedman at LF@e-tailing.com or visit the e-tailing group website www.e-tailing.com.

###



the e-tailing group



Share the details!

1743 W. Wellington Avenue, Chicago, IL 60657
T: 773.975.7280
LF@e-tailing.com
www.e-tailing.com

© 2015 the e-tailing group. All rights reserved.

This email was sent to by **the e-tailing group, inc.**
Forward to a friend, [Manage Preferences](#) or [click here to unsubscribe](#).

his message with your friends



ail was sent to by **the e-tailing group, inc.**

. Wellington Avenue | Chicago | IL | 60657

[to a friend](#) | [Manage Preferences](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

