

Break the fourth wall to improve survey experience

By Luis Melo

Abril 2018 – Also published in [Doctor CX](#)

Organisations launch surveys to measure customer experiences, but is the survey itself delivering a good experience? Those of us who usually take the time to provide an organisation with feedback on our experiences, know that the answer to that question is more often than not a resounding “No”.

The problem is that most organisations are just throwing surveys at customers without any consideration. Ultimately resulting in surveys that put people off, and customers disbelieving organisation’s intentions, thinking they just want to get more information to cross/up-sell.

If your organisation wants to be customer-centric and is truly interested in the customer opinion, then there are a few things to concentrate on when building Voice-of-Customer initiatives. One of them, which I believe is absolutely key, is **Personalisation**, and it can be addressed by [breaking the fourth wall](#).

Design your surveys with an outside-in perspective, with a big focus on the customer. The one you are talking to, not a generic customer, persona or segment. Do what *Frank Underwood* used to do in [House of Cards](#). Break the fourth wall and talk to the individual customer about what is relevant to her.

You have a full history of transactions and engagements in your operational systems (ERP, CRM, etc.) so why ask the customer what product she bought, before requesting feedback? Why ask the customer what channel she used, before checking if it was the most convenient. Ask the customer about THE product she bought or THE channel she used.

Make sure you use all information and data at your disposal – Operational Data (O-Data) and eXperience Data (X-Data) – to make surveys more personalised, simpler and effortless for the customer. This will ensure not only a great survey experience but also an increase in response rate.

The customer will not only feel valued, but also feel that the organisation is listening and willing to truly consider their opinion (closing the loop is another crucial topic that influences this, but we will address that in another blog post).

Do you want an example?... See these two surveys below. Which survey sounds better? Which sounds more truthful? Which is more attractive? Which is going to generate more responses?... It is obvious, isn't it?

Survey 1

Hello, thank you for buying from us. You are a valued customer and we would like your opinion.

Please tell us which product you have bought from us.

Product A

Product B

Product C

Please tell us which store you have bought it from.

Store - London

Store - Manchester

Store - Birmingham

Please tell us when you bought it.

January

February

March

Please tell us what you think about our product?

Like

Neither like nor dislike

Dislike

Survey 2

Hi **Luis** thank you for returning to our **Store - London** on **Sunday 19 Feb**. You are a valued customer and we would like to have your opinion on **Product A**

Like

Neither like nor dislike

Dislike