"Creating Customer loyalty in practice - a multiple-cases approach"

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DATA-DRIVEN RELATIEMARKETEERS

"For Heit, the only man

I will always be loyal to"

Acknowledgements

Writing a master thesis is like putting (lactose-free) cream on a cake. During your study you build a proper foundation, comparable to a cake. But a cake isn't complete without the cream and cream often influences if people like the cake or not. Therefore one should not forget to put sufficient attention to the cream.

I needed several ingredients to create this cream. Writing my master thesis would never be possible without my supervisor Raymond Loohuis. I want to thank you for the great insights you gave me during the process, this really helped me when I had the slightest clue on what I should do. I also liked that we could discuss about other serious and less serious things in life. Furthermore I want to thank Kasia Zalewska-Kurek for taking the time to be my second supervisor.

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Management summary

Customer loyalty is a subject of immerse relevance for both companies and researchers. Whereas there is already a lot of literature on this subject, it was still unknown which factors during a contact moment influence if a customer becomes loyal or not. It is important to know which factors during interactions influence loyalty, because this can be used by companies to make their customers more loyal.

This research investigates which factors in the interaction between company and customer influence customer loyalty. A direct link with the quality of an interaction and customer loyalty can be found in the literature. However, the factors that influence if this contact moment contributes to loyalty were still unknown.

For this research, customers of three different companies have been questioned to develop a general view on factors that influence customer loyalty during a contact moment. All three companies operate in different markets and have a different market form; however factors that influence loyalty seem to be consistent in all cases. Therefore this research provides a general view on factors that influence customer loyalty which can also be applied to other sectors.

A multiple-cases approach has been used to see which factors influence customer loyalty. 12 customers, equally subtracted from the 3 companies, were questioned. The results have been coded and analyzed. The results show that the following factors influence customer loyalty:

- Customer friendliness
- Face-to-face contact
- Quickly solving problems of customers
- Clarity in contact moment

This leads to several practical implications. First, companies should look at how customer friendliness is secured in their contact moments. Creating a customer journey may help them to obtain insight in the contact moments and how customer friendliness is currently

embedded in their organization. Companies then should measure how customers perceive customer friendliness at these points during the customer journey and find ways to improve this (i.e. trainings, procedures etc.).

Furthermore should companies try to include (more) face-to-face contact in their customer journeys. Whereas companies increasingly communicate via digital media and want to increase marketing spending on i.e. social networking sites, companies should not forget having face to face contact with their customers if they want to have loyal customers, as proven in this research. A suitable solution differs per branch. However, if a company would like to have more loyal customers i.e. an event can be a suitable manner to engage their customers more with their brand.

The research moreover shows that quickly responding and solving customers' problems increases customer loyalty. Companies therefore should always try to immediately help customers with their problems during the contact moment and train employees to achieve this. Companies can also analyze which problems come in on a regular basis and find quick-fixes for the problems that they currently do not offer.

Finally, providing clarity in a contact moment is of substantial importance. Companies have to assure that customers know how to obtain information and know what to do during a contact moment. Creating a customer journey can also help to gain insight in this. Questions like "Are all steps logical?" "Is information clear for the customer?" and "Should we add more contact moments?" can be used to see if a company should change anything in their current customer journey. Customer satisfaction measurement methods can also be used after a contact moment to obtain insight in how the customer experienced the contact moment. If a contact moment lacks clarity, the contact moment will have a negative influence on customer loyalty.

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1. Introduction

It is important for companies to be competitive to survive. A key factor for this business' success is customer retention, in which customer loyalty plays an important role (Yoo & Bai, 2013). Customer loyalty is a condition of strong involvement in the repurchase, or reuse, of a product or brand (Oliver 1997 and Oliver 1999). This involvement is strong enough to overcome the 'situational' and 'competitive' influences which might drive a "variety seeker" or switching behavior.

This subject is still an area of immense relevance and interest for both marketing scholars and practitioners (Nyadzayo and Khajehzadeh, 2016), because customer loyalty has a significant influence on the profitability of a company: i.e. the costs of attracting a new customer are up to six times higher than the costs of retaining an existing customer (Rosenberg and Czepiel, 1984). Loyal customers are also typically less price sensitive (Krishnamurthi and Raj, 1991) and makes being competitive easier (Aaker, 1991). Halimi, Chavosh and Choshalyc (2011) even suggest that high customer loyalty leads to a significant increase in profit. According to Reichheld and Kenny (1990) lays the increase of this profit between 25% and 80%. Business nowadays is furthermore extremely competitive and challenging, and in order to survive, companies need to develop strong long term relationships with customers (Halimi et al., 2011).

Customer loyalty leads to a lot of financial benefits, so it makes sense to focus on improving customer loyalty. The results of the research of Reichheld (1996) emphasize this and show that a 5% increase in customer loyalty leads to an increase of the average profit per customer by 25-100%. Concluding, there is sufficient evidence that companies should not only focus on acquiring new customers, but should also focus on building strong relationships with their existing customers.

Several scholars have investigated customer loyalty and researched which factors affect customer loyalty. For example, Dick and Basu (1994) have investigated the relation between relative attitude and customer loyalty, moderated by repeat patronage. According to Thakur (2016) is customer loyalty influenced by customer engagement, customer satisfaction and

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shopping facilities. Nasution, Sembada, Miliani, Resti and Prawono (2014) suggest that customer loyalty is directly related to customer experience. There are also reasons to suggest that demographics of customers can predict customer loyalty and reputation (Foroudi, Jin, Gupta, Melawar and Foroudi, 2016).

However, it is also suggested that the interaction between the company and the customer can be seen as the main driver of customer loyalty. Jan Carlzon, former CEO of Scandinavian Airline System, named this the 'moment of truth'. He realized that it was the instant of contact between the customer and staff that decided how the company was performing (Grönroos, 1990). Whereas the idea of 'moments of truth' is mainly aimed at the service industry, it is applicable to all companies which sell a product with an "embedded" service element, because contact moments between buyer and seller occur in each industry. Norman (1984) was the first to introduce this idea to service management literature. According to Grönroos (1990) the moments of truth concept means that this is the time and place when and where the service provider has the opportunity to demonstrate the quality of its services to the customer. In the literature this is often called a "service encounter" or "interaction". The core of this interaction is a physical, virtual, or mental contact, such that the provider creates opportunities to engage with its customers' experiences and practices and thereby influences their flow and outcomes (Grönroos and Voima, 2012). When this moment goes unmanaged, the functional quality of the process will be hurt and will cause quality deterioration. The quality of this contact moment determines customers satisfaction and loyalty (Jones, 2002)

There are various kinds of moments of truths, which are explained in the theoretical section. However, this research focuses on moments of truths which include a direct interaction between a company and a customer. Therefore loyalty creation in the First Moments of Truth and Second Moments of Truth are only taken into consideration in this research.

Although the literature suggests that the contact moments between a customer and a company create customer loyalty, it was still unclear what factors in those contact moments influence customer loyalty. Literature provides sufficient evidence on factors which influence customer loyalty, but what happens during the interaction between the company and the customer that makes a customer loyal to the company? There is a lack of literature on the

characteristics of customer interactions which results in customer loyalty. Therefore the research question for this research is:

"Which factors during the interaction between companies and customers influence customer loyalty?"

The purpose of this study is to deepen knowledge on the phenomenon of customer loyalty from the perspective of interactions. Literature shows that loyalty is created in the contact moment between a company and a customer, but it was still unclear what really happens in the interaction between the company and the customer that influences loyalty. This research elaborates on existing literature by explorative investigating which factors during interactions between customer and company influence customer loyalty. This makes the research theoretically relevant.

The practical implication of this research is that companies can use the research to increase their customers' loyalty, because it helps them to understand which factors during contact moments should be taken into account when they want to increase customer loyalty.

Customers from three different companies were questioned to see which factors influence the impact of a contact moment and therefore will decide if customer loyalty changes. First, the companies were questioned to gain insight in their customer journeys and their most important contact moments. The companies were chosen from three different industries, to see if homogeneity exists between industries. The results of these interviews can be found in the Appendix, because it has no direct relation with the research question. Next, 4 customers of every company were interviewed to uncover what factors during contact moments create customer loyalty, resulting in 12 cases. The cases were analyzed separately, followed by a cross-case analysis of the factors.

The report starts with a literature review to explore how customer loyalty is created, which factors influence this and to obtain more insight in the relation between interactions and customer loyalty. This is followed by a chapter about the methodology of the research including the data collection method. The results are presented in the following chapter. This research is concluded with a summary on the findings, discussion, practical implications and the limitations of the research.

2. Theoretical framework

This literature review starts with a paragraph that explains interactions. Next, the idea of moments of truth is more deeply discussed. This will be followed by a chapter that explains customer loyalty and how loyalty emerges. The theoretical framework will be concluded with the conceptual model, which summarizes the relation between literature and the research question.

2.1 Interactions between company and customer

To obtain insight in how loyalty is created during interactions, it is necessary to first understand what an interaction is and why interactions are important.

Value is created in usage, and therefore value is typically created during interactions (Grönroos and Voima, 2012). The quality of those interactions becomes fundamental for customer value creation (Fyrberg and Jüriado 2009), as does the firm's understanding of the customer's independent value creation outside the direct interaction (Voima et al. 2011b).

Interactions can be subdivided between direct interactions and indirect interactions. A direct interaction refers to a process by which the customer's and firm's resources (personnel, system, service landscape) interact through an active and ongoing coordinated, dialogical process (Grönroos and Vioma, 2013). Direct interaction usually takes place in the parts of these processes that occur simultaneously with the customer's use process, but it can occur in any type of process in which the customer interacts with the firm's resources in a dialogical manner (Grönroos et al., 2013). Indirect interaction refers to situations in which the customer uses or consumes resources that are outputs of the firm's processes, such as a product provided by a firm, and thereby interacts with this resource.

In a service context, when the direct interactions have ended, the customer generally interacts with the resource or outcome of the service process. As Helkkula, Kelleher and Philström (2012) argue, interactions between customers and service providers do not always need to be experienced in reality but may also be imagined or take the form of indirect interactions with the service, such as through peer communication and word-of-mouth recommendations, reviews or advertisements. In particular, firms should focus on using

existing direct interactions with customers and, when appropriate, strive to create additional interactions to enlarge the value perceived by customers.

2.2 Moments of Truth

This paragraph explains what a moment of truth is, which different kinds of moments of truth exist and helps to understand why this research focuses on two specific moments of truth.

As mentioned by Helkulla et. al. (2012) are direct interactions especially important for companies. These moments occur when a company and a customer have contact with each other. A moment of truth is an interaction with significant impact (Grönroos, 1990). This research will focus on the moments of truth that include direct interaction, because we want to know which factors during contact moments between a company and a customer influence loyalty.

The idea of a Moment of Truth stems from Jan Carlzon, former CEO of Scandinavian Airline System. He realized that it was the instant of contact between customer and staff that decided how the company was performing (Grönroos, 1990). Whereas the idea of moments of truth is mainly aimed at the service industry, it is applicable to all companies which sell a product with an "embedded" service element, because contact moments between buyer and seller occur. Norman (1984) was the first to introduce this idea to service management literature. According to Grönroos (1990) does the moments of truth concept mean that this is the time and place when and where the service provider has the opportunity to demonstrate the quality of its services to the customer. It is a true moment of opportunity. This is also called a service encounter, which means 'a period of times during which a consumer directly interacts with a service' (Shostack 1985, p.243). The service encounter is a "moment of truth" because the customer's experience of the encounter is the main contribution to his or her perception of the total service quality. The core of this interaction is a physical, virtual, or mental contact, such that the provider creates opportunities to engage with its customers' experiences and practices and thereby influences their flow and outcomes (Grönroos and Vioma, 2012). When this moment goes unmanaged, the functional quality of the process will be hurt and cause quality deterioration. The quality of this service

determines customers' satisfaction and loyalty (Lymperopoulos, Chaniotakis and Soureli, 2006.). This shows that loyalty therefore is created at the moment itself.
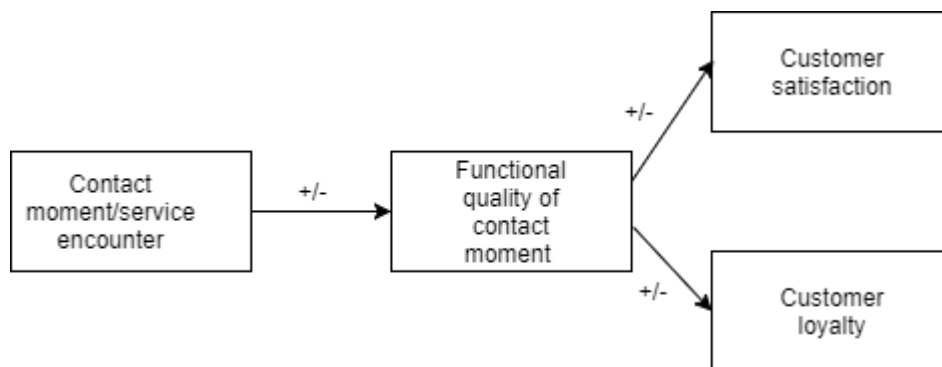
Fig. 1: Influence of contact moment on satisfaction and loyalty

The idea of a Moment of Truth has changed over the years. Whereas the Moment of Truth was assessed as one particular subject, it can actually be subdivided in different forms. Literature helps to obtain insight in the different kinds of moments of truth and in which moments of truth are relevant for this research.

2.2.1 Customer Journey Peak & End Moment (CJPM & CJEM)
Nobel Prize winner Daniel Kahnemann (1997) developed a theory about how customers look back at emotions when they have to assess events: this is called the peak-end rule. In 1993, Kahnemann, Fredrikson, Schreiber and Redelmeier demonstrated that participants preferred to put their hand in water of 14 degrees Celsius for 60 seconds and then 30 seconds in water of 15 degrees Celsius, rather than putting their hands 60 seconds in the water of 14 degrees. These findings are counter-intuitive, because water of 14 and 15 degrees are both unpleasant, but participants ought to choose for more pain with a longer duration than less. The authors suggest that the level of pain is influenced by the highest peak of experienced pain during a specific period and the last level of pain, although the time recorded has no influence on the memory (duration neglect). The authors named this phenomenon the peak-end rule. According to the peak-end rule, there are two factors that decide how we remember and appreciate a certain moment: there is a first 'peak emotion' (either positive or negative) during the event and the second emotion is the remembering of how the event ended. The peak emotion is remembered, because people remember the moment when they have the strongest emotions. The emotion at the end of the event is also remembered,

because it influences how a person assesses the whole event. A surprisingly good end of the customer contact or purchasing process lead to (really) satisfied customers. Both are the memories which stay in top of the mind of the customer. Other experiences are not forgotten, but are not decisive in the overall evaluation of the event (Kahnemann, 2011). The peak-end rule can be used to explain why some moments have a high influence on customer loyalty, because the peak and end moment of contact with a company are best remembered. The peak-end rule can be found during all the below mentioned moments of truths and is a way to explain why some events are remembered and others not.

The peak-end rule was confirmed in a variety of follow-up studies with negative emotions or positive emotions. The following table gives an overview of these studies.

Positive emotions	Negative emotions
Do, Rupert and Montfort (2008) – give only the best present or give best present as the last present. Shows higher positive emotion than giving several presents with same perceived value or giving present which is perceived as worse as the best present as the last present.	Fredrickson and Kahneman (1993) – duration has no influence on peak-end rule. Even if uncomfortable experiment takes longer, but water i.e. is warmer in the last seconds in comparison with shorter experiment, longer experiment is perceived as less uncomfortable.
Kahnemann (1999) shows that objective happiness is influenced by the peak-end rule: the peak and the end of a moment strongly influence how happiness in that moment is perceived.	Kahneman (2000a) (2000b) argues that pleasure and pain are attributes of a moment of experience, but the outcomes that people value extend over time. In this study, it is shown that the most intense level of pain reported during the procedure could be predicted by the peak-end rule.
Varey and Kahneman (1992) show that retrospective evaluations of affective episodes are strongly influenced by the affect experienced at singular moments, notably the moment at which affect was most extreme and the final moment.	Schreiber and Kahnemann (2000) showed that 88% of the variance in a factorial study about responses to loud unpleasant sounds can be explained by the peak-end rule.
	Ariely (1998) showed that the peak/end average accounted for 98% of the systematic

	variance of global evaluation in a study about ischemic pain
	Kahneman, Frederickson, Schreiber and Redelmeier (1993) add to other evidence suggesting that duration plays a small role in retrospective evaluations of aversive experiences; such evaluations are often dominated by the discomfort at the worst and at the final moments of episodes.
	Redelmeier and Kahnemann (1996) show that patients' judgment of total pain is strongly correlated with the peak of pain and with the intensity of pain recorded the last 3 minutes of the procedure. This is confirmed in the study of Redelmeier, Katz and Kahneman (2003) about how colonoscopy is experienced.

Table 1: summary of peak-end moment research

In practice, this means that companies should focus on creating a positive peak-moment and a positive end-moment: it is not necessary to create these moments on all aspects of service provision. Companies like IKEA and Transavia use the peak-end rule to create a positive experience, whereas the whole experience of buying furniture or travelling may not be extreme pleasurable: customers remember the peak and the end and that makes that they asses the experience they had with these companies as positive (Hagen and Bron, 2013).

2.2.2 Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT)
The Zero Moment of Truth is an idea that stems from Google and is explained in Winning The Zero Moment of Truth (Leckinsy, 2011). It argues that the journey of buying a product or service has changed due to the internet. Leckinsky argued that the internet has led to a new moment of truth: The Zero Moment of Truth. He argues that the mental model of the customer has changed. The traditional model shows that a stimulus leads to the first moment of truth (seeing the product in the store) which then leads to the second moment of truth (experience).

Fig.2: the traditional 3-step mental model of marketing

The new mental model incorporates the ZMOT, which is related to the decisions made before entering the store. The occurrence of the internet caused that customers have access to a lot of information about a product or service before experiencing the first moment of truth (i.e. actually seeing the product in the (digital) store). Nowadays the customer can look up information on a product 24/7, wherever it goes. This is now often the first contact moment a customer has with a company. 84% of buying decisions nowadays involve the Zero Moment of Truth and therefore it is important for companies to be aware of this aspect (Leckinsky, 2011).

Fig.3: the new mental model of marketing

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The ZMOT is less relevant for this research, because the research focuses on a direct interaction between the customer and company when communication between them is possible.

2.2.3. First Moment of Truth (FMOT)

The First Moment of Truth is the moment the consumer is in the store to buy the product. This idea stems from Procter & Gamble (Löfgren, 2005) and defines the first interaction between a shopper and a product on a store's shelf. Lafley, former CEO of Procter and Gamble, defined the First Moment of Truth as the moment when a consumer stands in front of the shelf and chooses a product from among many competing offerings (Chairman Statement 2004-2005, P&G). Harish (2010) claims that the First Moment of Truth occurs at the moment when consumers finally place their money behind the brand, which is a better definition, because a lot of products are bought digitally nowadays.

The decision if the consumer is buying the product or not is influenced by a number of stimuli in a (digital) store. Most of these stimuli are ignored by customers who purchase habitually (Underwood, Klein and Burke, 2001). At this point, consumers make a choice between products within seconds when they are shopping (Judd, Aalders, Melis 1989). Packaging plays a significant role in deciding to buy the product. Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2006) argue that sales persons, product displays, electronic media and point of purchase advertising also influence the purchase decision.

A lot of consumers change their purchase decision at the buying place. More and more consumers are also using their mobile phone to look up information at the place itself: the relevance of the mobile phone as a touch point at the first moment of truth grows in importance (Leckinsky, 2011). Suppliers which are not noticed until this phase can get notified by the customer by using outstanding instore-appearance, good mobile shopper support and an excellent offer at the selling place.

This moment of truth is more relevant for this research, because at this point a customer directly interacts with a company. Even in most digital stores it is possible to communicate with the company via i.e. chat.

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2.2.4. Second moment of truth (SMOT)

The second moment of truth, also called the ultimate moment of truth, occurs after the customer made a purchase, uses the product and then shares the feedback. It can be seen as the moment the customer interacts with the product/service (Löfgren, 2005) and therefore is also relevant for this research. The term Second Moment of Truth is coined by Procter & Gamble and explains the moment when the consumer uses the product and evaluates his or hers expectations (Chairman statement, 2004-2005, P&G). This moment mostly happens at home, when the consumer decides if the product delivers the brands promise. Satisfaction occurs when customer expectations are matched by perceived importance. When experiences and performance fall short of expectations, dissatisfaction occurs. These outcomes are significant because customers store their evaluations in their memory and refer to them in future decisions. If a company wins the second moment of truth, it means that a company can expect a lasting association with the customer (Lafley, 2005).

2.2.5. Third moment of truth (TMOT)

The term Third Moment of Truth is defined by Pete Blackshaw (Ex Procter & Gamble) and means the powerful inflection point where the product experience catalyzes an emotion, curiosity, passion or even anger to talk about the product (George, 2014). This moment can be used to absorb insight and deeper consumer understanding, but can also nurture empowerment and advocacy (Hart, Farrel, Stachow, Reed and Cadogan, 2007). This happens during the post-purchase phase. This is also the moment when a customer can become a true fan and can give something back to the brand (Blackwell, Miniard, and Engel 2006). This moment is linked to Consumer Generated Media (CGM). CGM represents first-person commentary posted or shared across a host of expression venues, including message boards, forums, rating and review sites, groups, social networking sites, blogs and video sharing sites. The Third Moment of Truth becomes the new advertising when the impact of the message from social media dominate the impact from paid advertising, because customers give more weight to the product reviews from friends, relatives and colleagues than an advertisement. This can be seen as a new sort of word-of-mouth (Hart, 2007). This moment of truth is less relevant for this research, because this research focuses on moments when customers directly interact with a company. The Third Moment of Truth does not include this.

Graphically the order of moment of truth looks like figure 6.
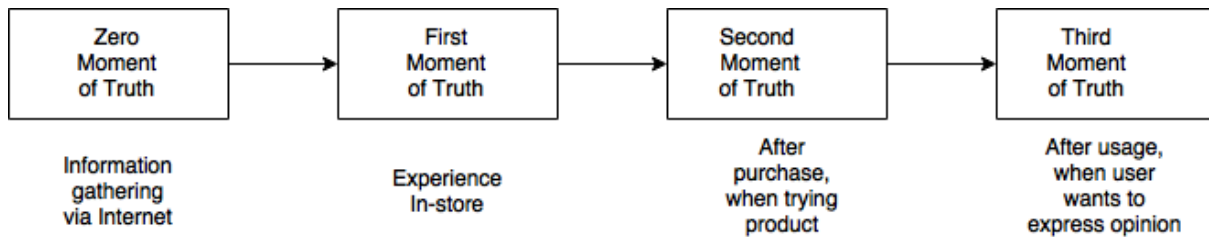
Fig. 4: process of moments of truth

It is argued by Löfgren (2005) that "Pure" service encounters end after the first moment of truth, because the offer is immediately consumed at the moment of purchase. Combined goods (products and service) and products also face a second moment of truth. However, customers nowadays can share their feedback online, also for pure services, which is typical for the third moment of truth.

Whereas literature shows that there are different kinds of moment of truths, this research looks at the moment a customer directly interacts with a company. The first and second moments of truth are typical moments when this might occur: i.e. after buying the product the customer calls the company to complain. The peak-end rule may be used to explain why some moments may have higher influence on customer loyalty than other moments, because the peak and end moment are best remembered.

2.3 Customer loyalty

Before we are trying to understand how loyalty occurs, it is important to know what loyalty exactly is. According to Olivers (1997, p.392) is loyalty "a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior". A loyal customer is willing to co-operate with the firm in a trade sense (by actively and spontaneously spreading the word about the firm), and in the technical and productive sense (by supplying suggestions about how the firm could improve products, processes, and forms of customer-firm interactions, trying out new organizational or commercial organizations, etc. etc.) (Costabile, 2000).

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2.3.1. Different kinds of loyalty

Some authors argue that there is not one kind of loyalty and that loyalty has different forms. Oliver (1997 and 1999) researched customer loyalty with a dynamic approach. According to Oliver, customer loyalty goes to a four-stage process: cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty and action loyalty.

In the first stage, a customer is **cognitively loyal**. A customer knows how to demonstrate direct or indirect knowledge about the brand and its benefits and proceeds to the purchase on the basis of a belief in the superiority (compared to competitor products) of the offer. After a few repeated purchases, the customer develops **affective loyalty**. This is a particularly favorable attitude to the brand which develops in the customer as a result of the repeated confirmations of his expectations, recorded during the stage of cognitive loyalty. In the third stage, the customer develops **conative loyalty:** after the passage of time and repeated purchases, buying the product is strong intentional and has a high involvement that is a motivating force. Finally, referring to the 'action control' theory (Kuhl and Beckmann, 1985), Oliver identifies the most intense stage of loyalty as **action loyalty**. This means a loyalty that is sustained not just by strong motivations but one that results in actions undertaken by the 'desire to overcome' every possible obstacle that might come in the way of the decision to buy the brand to which the person is loyal.
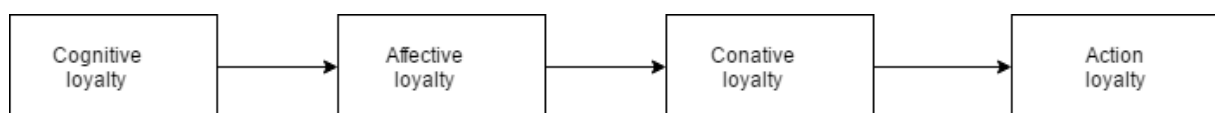
Fig. 5: stages of loyalty

Costabile (2000) also argues that a dynamic approach should be considered: loyalty is a dynamic process and therefore created the dynamic model of customer loyalty, because loyalty changes in the various stages of the relationship life-cycle. The model starts with the purchase decision and leads to loyalty. The stages of the model are defined by different constructs and relational strength, and can be described as follows.
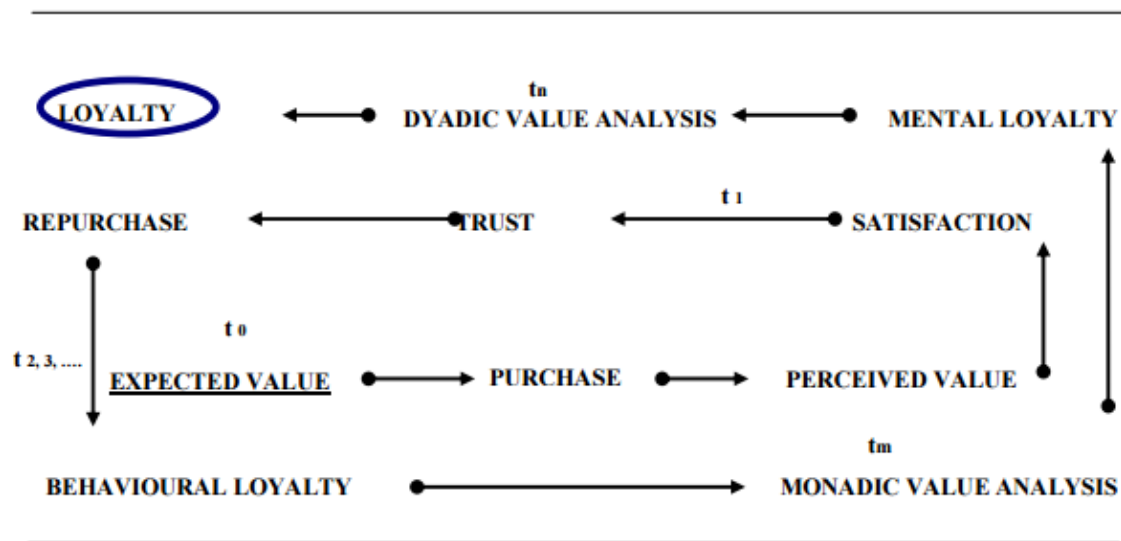
Fig. 6: the dynamic model of customer loyalty

T1 leads from satisfaction to the trust stage: when perceived value, in the customer's perspective, meets or exceeds the expected value, satisfaction is generated. When a customer is satisfied, purchase after purchase, a positive attitude towards the supplier will be strengthened, which is named trust. This allows the development of the relationship towards loyalty (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). The purchase and consumption experiences, which result in customer satisfaction, feed the tendency to buying repetition (Boulding, Kalra, Staelin and Zeithaml, 1993). And, if satisfaction is further confirmed by all successive repurchases, this "accumulation" process gives rise to increasing levels of trust, in its reliability dimension, allowing the development of the relationship towards loyalty (Bolton and Drew, 1992; Chang and Wildt, 1994). T2, 3,… is the trust and behavioral loyalty stage. Trust has a positive effect on the customer repurchase behavior (Boulding et al., 1993), thanks to customer savings of cognitive, emotional, operational and structural costs (Costabile, 2000); these "repurchase economies" cause a behavioral loyalty.

Many of these are costs that the customer regards as sunk costs when a repurchase option is called (Oliva, Oliver and Macmillan, 1992). The perception of the economic advantage deriving from the repurchase is much higher the greater the customers trust in the firm (cost-based loyalty (Wernerfelt, 1991)). The length of this stage depends on competitive and technological pressures operating on customer involvement to keep buying from the same supplier.

Tm is the mental loyalty stage. During the life cycle some "conflicts" could emerge (Iacobucci and Zerrillo, 1997), and a customer mostly compares the value offered and experienced by the company and its competitors (Woodruff and Gardial, 1996). If the supplier ratio (value) is perceived as higher than competitors, without looking at the switching cost, the customer

Fig. 7: creation of loyalty

becomes mentally loyal. If this is not the case, the perceived loyalty can be explained by switching costs. When a customer is mentally loyal, it has a very strong relationship with the firms, which results in positive word-of-mouth and less switching likehood. The stage is characterized by a high solidity and by the customer's readiness to widen the relationship scope. It is at this stage, for example, that the trust component of the brand allows its extension on new varieties in the same product line, on new product categories or on new business. Cross buying (and selling) phenomena are now likely. Other things being equal, the mentally loyal customer's purchases guarantee the duration of the relationship, and this, as noted, produces significant results under the financial heading (Busacca and Costabile, 1995; Reichheld, 1996)
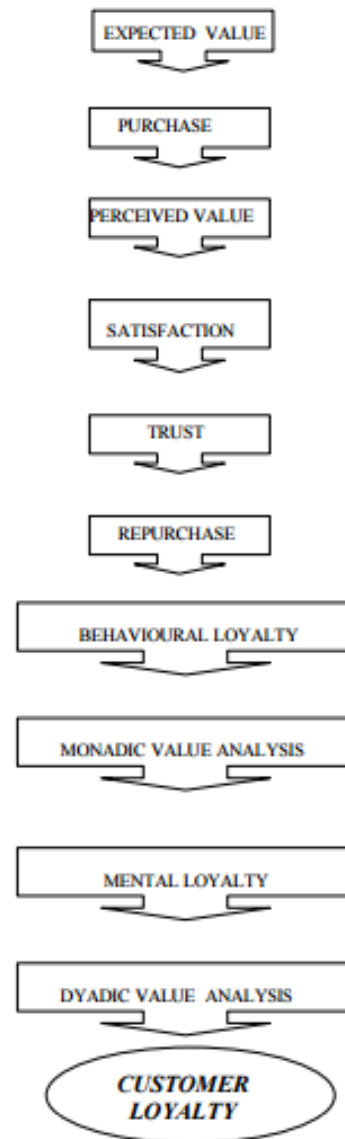
Tn is the ultimate stage, the co-operative, real customer loyalty stage: for a relative long time, the customer has enough information of the relationship with the company over time and the customer knows how it values the company. This can be seen as the optimal stage of the relational continuum: the customer loyalty.

Whereas literature shows that there are reasons to suggest that a dynamic approach of loyalty is more suitable, this research focuses on loyalty in general, which is described by Olivers (1997, p.32) and Costabile (2000) in the beginning of this paragraph. We are interested in the factors during contact moments that influence loyalty. Because there is hardly any literature on this subject, it seems reasonable to look at factors that influence loyalty in general. Further research should look at how these factors manifest in the various loyalty phases.

2.3.2. A framework for customer loyalty

Now we know what loyalty exactly is and how this manifests over time, it is interesting to see which factors influence customer loyalty. Dick and Basu (1994) created a framework to explain customer loyalty. They state that both a favorable attitude that is high compared to potential alternatives and repeated patronages are required for loyalty. For attitude, the **relative attitude** is meant: this is the attitude towards a product in the context of comparable products. According to the authors, the degree of attitudinal strength (or extremity) and the degree of attitudinal differentiation seems to underlie an individual's

Fig. 8: a framework for customer loyalty

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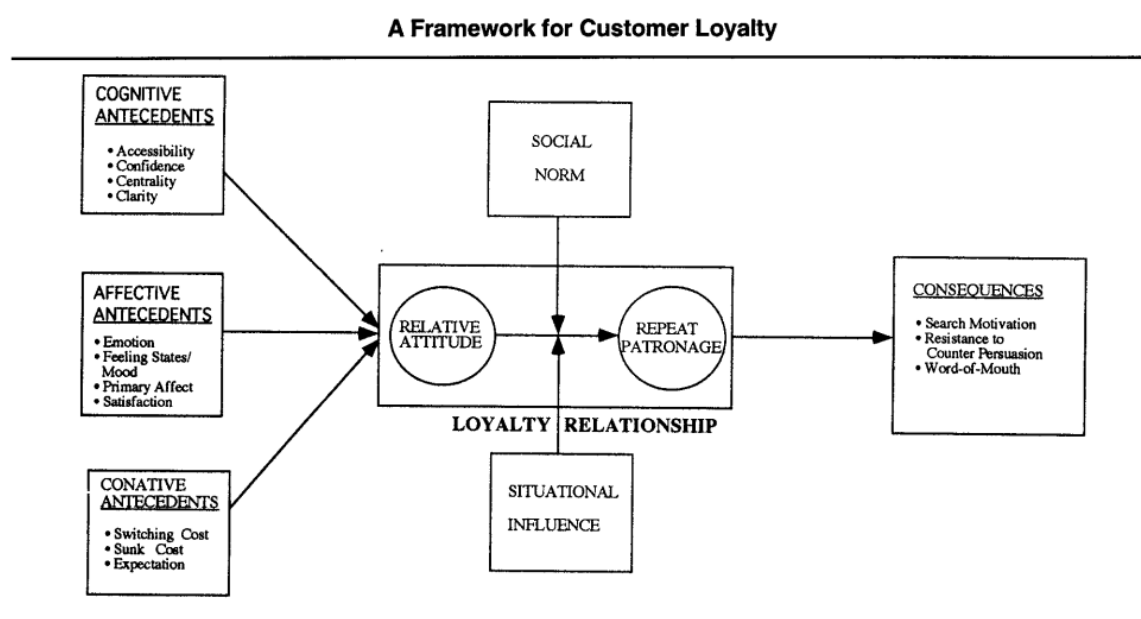
relative attitude towards an entity.

The authors state that a positive attitude towards a product has a positive influence on customer loyalty. In deciding on a purchase, the individual's perception of differences among brands is critical as well, leading to high relative attitude when a significant attitudinal differential is perceived. On the other hand, a strong attitude coupled with little perceived differentiation may lead to multi-brand loyalty as alternatives are viewed as equally satisfying. A positive but weak attitude associated with no perceived differentiation would lead to lower relative attitude, with patronage possibly being less frequent and also varying from occasion to occasion based on non-attitudinal influences. Also repeat patronage influences loyalty.

If there is a high relative attitude, but low repeat patronage, latent loyalty exists. When relative attitude is low and repeat patronage is low, there is no loyalty. When relative attitude is low and repeat patronage exists, spurious loyalty occurs. When both factors are high, the highest form of loyalty exists. Therefore it is important that companies try to stimulate both high relative attitude and high repeat patronage.

Fig. 9: different kinds of loyalty

Next to 'real' loyalty, Dick et al. (1994) argue above that two other forms of loyalty exist, which relate to customers that are no real loyal customers.

Spurious loyalty (Assael 1992) means that a consumer perceives little differentiation among brands in a low involvement category and undertakes repeat purchase on the basis of situational cues, such as familiarity (caused by shelf positioning) or deals.

Latent loyalty is a high relative attitude with low repeat patronage. It is likely that this is caused due to a marketplace environment where non-attitudinal influences such as subjective norms and situational affect are more (or at least equal) influencing patronage behavior. A variety of preferences may cause that the customer has a positive attitude of the brand towards other brands, but does not repeatedly purchase.

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Factors influencing relative attitude

(Relative) attitude is a result of various interactions and factors. These factors or antecedents can be cleaved in three categories: cognitive, affective and conative antecedents.

Cognitive Antecedents are associated with informational determinants (e.g. brand beliefs) and exist of:

- **Accessibility**: the ease with which an attitude can be retrieved from memory. The strength of the association between an attitude object and its evaluation influences the accessibility of the attitude.
- **Confidence**: Attitudinal confidence is the level of certainty associated with an attitude or evaluation
- **Centrality**: The degree to which an attitude towards a brand is related to the value system of an individual.
- **Clarity**: An attitude is well-defined (clear) when an individual finds alternative attitudes toward the target objectionable and is undefined when many alternative positions are acceptable.

Affective Antecedents are associated with feeling states involving the brand and exist of:

- **Emotions**: The intense state of arousal (Mandler, 1976). This leads to focused attention on specific targets and are capable of disrupting ongoing behavior
- **Moods**: Moods or feeling states are less intense than emotions, less disruptive of ongoing behavior, and less permanent (Clark and Isen 1982). Their impact on behavior is presumed to occur through rendering mood-congruent knowledge more accessible in memory. People who have a good mood are expected to recall more positive items than those in a negative mood.
- **Primary affect**: The reaction that occurs when direct sensory experience (e.g. taste) is involved in the attitude-behavior and which influences the strength of the association with the brand.

- **Satisfaction**: How expectations and perceived performance are related results in satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

Conative Antecedents are related to behavioral dispositions towards the brand and exist of:

- **Switching costs**: According to Porter (1980, p.10) are switching costs the "one-time costs facing the buyer of switching from one supplier to another". Developing switching costs helps to increase loyalty, because customers are less likely to switch between brands caused by the corresponding costs.
- **Sunk costs**: costs which have already been paid and cannot be undone. Customers are less likely to switch if sunk costs exist.
- **Expectations**: The future expectations which reflect the current and expected fit between marketplace offerings and consumer needs, i.e. the repurchase of a product a consumer currently uses. This may also reflect beliefs about how attitude of one will change over time.

Repeat Patronage

Loyalty is influenced by repeat patronage, which exists of social and situational factors. These are called the non-attitudinal sources of variance in purchase behavior and act as moderators of loyalty: relative attitude decides if a customer is loyal or not, however the degree of loyalty can be influenced by repeat patronage.

Social norms:

Wicker (1969) and Ehrlich (1969) suggested that perceived behavioral norms or role requirements might influence behavior. If a consumer has the idea that his friends/family don't agree on the buying decisions he/she makes, he/she might be less likely to show repeat buying behavior. This sensitivity level may differ per type product.

Situational Factors:

Several situational factors may impact on loyalty (Smith and Swinyard, 1983) including actual or perceived opportunity for engaging in attitude-consistent behavior (i.e. stock outs),

incentives for brand switching through reduced prices (deals when your mobile subscription almost ends) of competing brand and effective in-store promotion.

Concluding, Dick and Basu (1984) state that loyalty is based on relative attitude, whereas repeat patronage plays a moderator: when relative attitude is high, but a customer decides to buy another brand, it influences loyalty towards a brand. The model of Dick and Basu 1984) corresponds with other studies (Day, 1969; Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978).

2.3.3. Customer Experience and its influence on customer loyalty

Another way to explain how loyalty is created is by looking at the relation between customer experience and customer loyalty.

Customer experience management is a viewpoint from the perspective of what and how customers experience a certain service encounter (Nasution, Sembada, Miliani, Resti, Prawono, 2014). Customer experience consists of perceptions that shape emotions, thoughts and attitudes and involves a constant feedback loop repeated throughout the usage lifecycle. According to Gentile, Spiller and Noci (2007) is customer experience strictly personal and implies the customer's involvement at different levels (rational, emotional, sensorial, physical and spiritual). This experience is not completely controlled by a company itself: Verhoef, Lemon and Pararsuramab (2009) argue that customers may perceive value through any part of their customer journey, including those parts outside the firm's direct control such as other consumers, culture and economic climate. According to Maklan and Klaus (2011) are there four dimensions in which customer experience can be measured, including peace-of-mind, outcome focus, moments-of-truth and product experience. This research focuses on how customers experience moments-of-truth.

Many researchers have written about what customer experience exactly is. Because there is so much literature on customer experience, Nasution et al. (2014) developed a framework to understand customer experience. They used the definition of customer experience of Swinyard (1993) which metaphors customer experience as a journey the customer undergoes where they accumulate of perceptions and responses through every touch point with the service provider.

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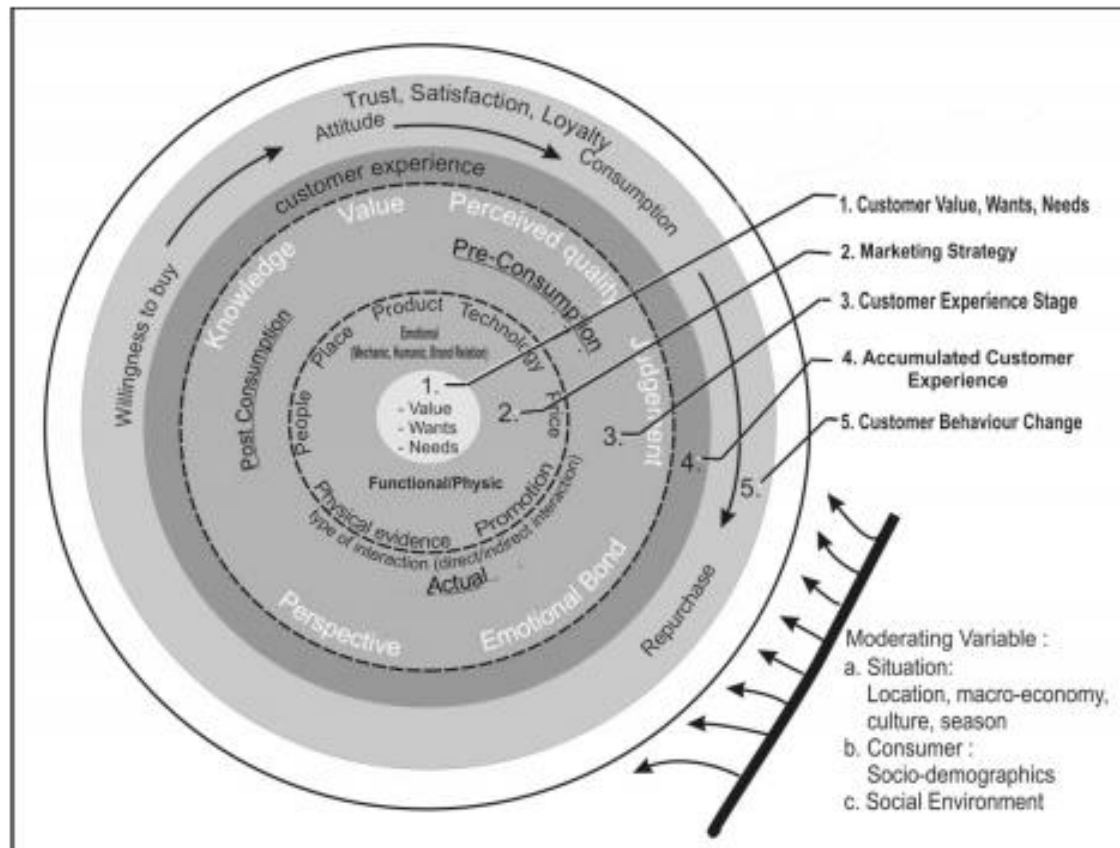
Fig. 10: the customer experience framework

This figure explains how customer experience is formatted. The starting point of the journey is the values, wants and needs of an individual. Theories and findings stress that it is important to make the customer the central focus of marketing. Gopalani and Shick (2011) found that individuals have different and often unique needs and wants at different stages of a service encounter. Understanding these values, needs and wants are fundamental in the success of a well-developed marketing strategy. Therefore these aspects are the center core of the whole model.

The next step is focused on the experiential marketing strategy. Firms try to provide satisfactory customer experience by developing whole packages of experiential marketing strategies consisting of various stimuli designed to be touch points with the firm. The above mentioned customer's wants and needs are the precursor of this strategy.

Experiential marketing strategy is designed to attract customers to interact and be involved with the product or service and are specifically designed to make the customers experience

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favorable responses, either through direct contact or indirect contact with the company through the intermediaries that contact them (Gopalani & Shick, 2011). These interactions lead to the customer experience with the company. This interaction can be classified as pre-, actual and post consumption. According to Smith et al. (2009), companies need to be aware of the different consumption phases and adjust their strategy to these. These moments can also be linked on the different kind of moments of truth: when the consumer is looking for information via internet (zero moment of truth), the experience in-store (first moment of truth), the moment after purchase when consumer tries product (second moment of truth) and the moment after usage when consumer wants to share its opinion about the product (third moment of truth). These concepts are more deeply discussed in paragraph 2.2.

The accumulation of knowledge, value and perceived quality in every stage of the experience process influences the likelihood of customers establishing an emotional bond with the offering. The accumulation of these moments determines the customer experience. This influences willingness to buy, attitude, consumption and repurchase. Eventually, this leads to trust, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. This framework therefore helps to understand how customer loyalty is created: how a customer experiences a contact moment is directly related to satisfaction and loyalty, as is shown in the framework.

2.4 Conceptual model:
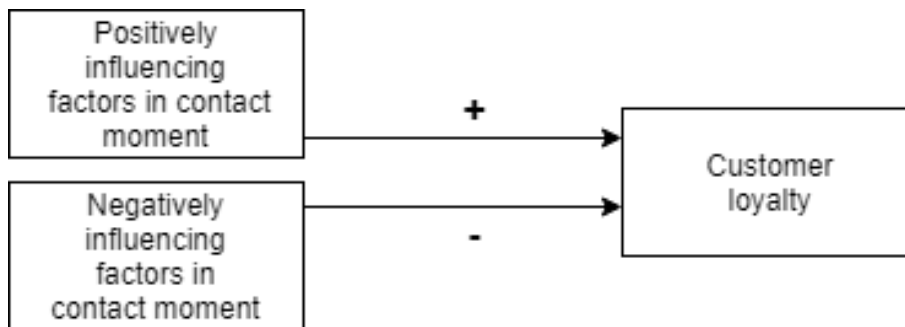
Fig. 11: conceptual model

Literature shows a direct link between a contact moment and customer loyalty, as shown by the customer experience framework of Nasution et al. (2014). Also Jones(2002) shows that a contact moment determines customer satisfaction and loyalty.

However, it is still unknown which factors during a contact moment decide if a customer becomes more (dis)loyal. This research investigates these factors and results in an overview of the factors influencing customer loyalty. It is assumed that there are factors in a contact moment that negatively influence customer loyalty and factors in a contact moment that positively influence customer loyalty. This research aims to find out what these factors are.

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3. Research Methodology

This chapter provides information about the research methodology. Paragraph 3.1 describes the research design, followed by a paragraph about the data collection method. Paragraph 3.3 is about the selection of the participants of the research. The chapter is concluded by paragraph 3.4 about the data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

For this research, a qualitative approach is used. Qualitative data collection is chosen because this research goes beyond the measurement of observable behavior. This means that it helps to find the underlying reasons why someone does something instead of observing what the person does. A qualitative approach is therefore suitable, because this research is not just looking for what people are doing, in a behavioral sense ("what are they doing"), but it seeks to understand the meaning underlying the activity ("why are they doing this") (Buckley and Chapman, 1998). This research investigates "why" loyalty is created and "which" factors in a contact moment influence this. Therefore qualitative research is more suitable than a quantitative approach.

This research analyzes multiple cases to answer the research question. A research design with such a form is likely when the researcher is not able to manipulate the behavior of those involved (Yin, 2003). The questions that were asked to the respondents are about an event that has already happened and therefore it is not possible to manipulate the behavior during the contact moment. Replication logic is used (Eisenhardt, 1989b) which means that each case serves as a distinct experiment that stands on its own as an analytic unit (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007) and contributes to finding the factors that influence customer loyalty.

This research furthermore has the form of an explorative research, because the factors that influence loyalty during a contact moment are still unknown. 12 cases are analyzed to find which factors during a contact moment influence customer loyalty.

3.2 Data collection method

Qualitative research data can be collected by interviews, focus groups, verbal protocols, using existing documents, observations or diaries (Aken, Berends and Bij, 2007). For this research, qualitative interviews are chosen as the data collection method. Interviews enable the participants of the interview to reveal their reasons, thoughts and attitudes on the discussed topics with great detail (Babbie, 2007; Louise Barriball & While, 1994). More specific, semi-structured interviews are used, so that the order of the questions can be adjusted to what the respondent says. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with the help of an interview guide. The interview guide can be found in the appendix. This guide contains relevant topics and questions which are necessary to be covered, but not restricted to a certain order (Harrel and Bradley, 2009) Moreover, the interviewer has the possibility to dive deeper into a topic by making use of probing questions, to ensure getting sufficient insights for an addressed topic or a correct understanding (Harrel et al., 2009).

Integrated in the semi-structured interviews with the customers of the companies is the usage of the Critical Incident Technique.

3.2.1. Critical Incident Technique

The Critical Incident Technique is a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behavior in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles (Harmeling, Palmatier, Houston, Arnold, Samaha, 2015). The critical incident technique outlines procedures for collecting observed incidents having special significance and meeting systematically defined criteria (Flanagan 1954, p. 327). To apply the Critical Incident Technique, interviews can be used. The specific descriptions of events and behaviors mentioned by respondents are identified as critical incidents.

An incident is defined as an observable human activity that is complete enough in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act. A critical incident is one that contributes to or detracts from the general aim of the activity in a significant way. In general usage 'critical incident' often implies a major crisis or turning point (Hughes, Wiliamson and Lloyd, 2007). Using this method, the respondents can be asked questions about a particular moment which has influenced their perception of loyalty corresponding to the company and therefore is very suitable for this research. It was still

unknown which factors during a contact moment influence loyalty. Therefore the following was asked to the respondents:

"Think of a moment which has changed how loyal you are to company X" (positive or negative)

- What moment was this?
- What happened during this moment?
- How did you experience this?
- What would you have liked to see differently?

To find out what moment has influenced loyalty and which factors during this contact moment have influenced customer loyalty.

3.2.2. Net Promoter Score

Because the research has an explorative approach, there are no factors that need operationalization. However, it is useful to have insight in the overall customer loyalty of the company and therefore the Net Promoter Score is used to calculate the overall loyalty of the three different companies.

This methodological triangulation helps to give a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation of the cases (Altrichter, Feldman, Posch and Somekh, 2008). In this research, it shows more objectively how loyal customers are to the company.

Many scholars and marketers use tools to measure customer loyalty. A widely used method is called Net Promoter Score (NPS). Net Promoter Score is based on the fundamental perspective that every company's customer can be divided in three categories: Promoters are loyal enthusiasts who keep buying from a company and urge their friends the same. Passives are satisfied but unenthusiastic customers who can be easily wooed by the competition. Last, detractors are unhappy customers trapped in a bad relationship." (Reichheld, 2006). To measure in which group a customer falls, the question "how likely is it that you would recommend company X to a friend or colleague on a scale from 0-10" is asked. 0-6 means detractor, 7-8 means passives and 9-10 means promoter. The NPS is calculated by detracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters. To obtain insight in how loyal the customers are, the Net Promoter Scores were calculated for

all three companies. For the respondents belonging to the semi-governmental organization the question "How likely are you to speak positively about company X (0-10)" is used, because the company has a monopolistic position and recommending the company does not make any sense: if one lives in a certain region, he/she is obliged to be a customer. The semi-governmental company also uses this question in their customer satisfaction researches and therefore this question is more suitable than the original NPS question.

3.3 Selection of participants

Three representatives of three companies were interviewed, to see what their perception is on how they make their customers more loyal. It is useful to gain insight in these processes and customer journeys before interviewing their customers. These three companies all operate in different sectors (semi-government, foundation, wholesale), so that the research can show if homogeneity exists in the creation of loyalty between sectors. The interviews with the companies can be found in the appendix.

Subsequently, four customers of each company were questioned to see how they perceive contact moments with the company, to find out which contact moment most likely influenced how loyal they are and which factors caused that this specific moment made the customer more/less loyal. This resulted in twelve cases. The customers were randomly selected, to avoid that the company nominates customers who are already very loyal to the company, which may have led to biased answer. The length of being a customer and demographics differs per case. Both are not taken into account when analyzing which factors influence loyalty and is something for further research.

3.4 Data analysis

The research has an explorative approach, because the factors found in the interviews that influence loyalty are new to literature. Therefore coding seems to be an appropriate way to analyze the date and find factors that influence loyalty. Atlas TI will be used to code the interviews and to create code groups, which will serve as the left axis of the table with answers. The categories related to the contact moments will be displayed in the result section. Each case will separately be analyzed and coded and is displayed in the result

section, after which a cross-case analysis is made. Factors that seem to have influenced the contact moment in more cases will be more deeply discussed, because these contact moment factors seem to influence loyalty. Quotes will be used to support the interpretation of these factors, as is also displayed in the result section.

4. Results

The following section shows the results of the case studies.

This section starts with the case descriptions. The cases are summarized to show what happened during the contact moment between the customer and the company that strongly influenced customer loyalty. The factors that influenced loyalty during the moment are also mentioned shortly here. The results are summarized in a table, which can be found after the last case. It displays the factors the respondents mentioned that influenced their perception of loyalty and can be used as a guide. Next, a cross-case analyses of the factors is made, to show which factors in contact moments are most likely influencing customer loyalty. Quotes are used to support this evidence.

4.1 Case descriptions

Case 1- wholesale company:

The contact moment that changed the loyalty of the respondent was when the customer could not pay with his debit card in the store, and therefore faced a problem. This was face-to-face contact. The respondent was not a regular customer at that point, but the company showed a great degree of trust by letting him take the goods home. The company helped him to solve the problem and the respondent mentioned a positive influence on recommendation willingness. A factor that the respondent mentioned was that customer friendliness was above expectations. The feeling the moment gave the respondent was very positive and surprised. The respondent also mentioned that he actively recommends the company to his friends/family and therefore is a promoter. This means that the respondent can be seen as a loyal customer. The factors during the contact moment which seem to influence loyalty are: customer-friendliness, face-to-face contact, solve problem quickly.

Case 2 – wholesale company:

The respondent mentioned that the first time he entered the store of the company was the moment that had the strongest influence on his loyalty. This was face-to-face contact. He mentioned that the employees helped him really friendly in the store, which lowered the

threshold to go again. He emphasized that customer friendly and customer focused contact persons are very important and that personnel should not be too old. The contact was formal. The feeling corresponding to this moment was relaxed and therefore positive. The respondent also mentioned that he actively recommends the company to his friends/family and therefore is a promoter. This means that the respondent can be seen as a loyal customer. The factors during the contact moment which seem to influence loyalty are: customer-friendliness, face-to-face contact, young personnel.

Case 3 – wholesale company:

The respondent could not mention any contact moment that influenced how loyal he is to the company. He says he just buys at the place where the product is cheapest and does also not recommend the company to his friends/family. Therefore the customer cannot be seen as a loyal customer. Because the respondent cannot mention a contact moment that influenced loyalty, factors contributing to answering the research question cannot be subtracted from this case.

Case 4 – wholesale company:

The moment that influenced the loyalty of the respondent most was when he visited the store with a friend of him plenty of years ago. The people of the company then drove him around the store. The respondent mentioned that the people who helped them were very friendly and emphasized that the first impression of a company should be good and is very important. This impression was good, however the contact moment was very long ago and the respondent mentions that his company just became a customer of the wholesale company. According to the NPS is the respondent not a promoter (loyal customer). The factors during the contact moment which seem to influence loyalty are: face-to-face contact and customer friendliness

Case 5 - foundation:

The respondent could not mention any contact moment that influenced how loyal she is to the company. She said she just had to become a customer, because she was buying a horse that belonged to the studbook. That was the only reason she became a member of the association and she thinks that this membership is expensive. She also does not actively

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recommend the company to friends/family. Therefore the customer cannot be seen as a loyal customer. She however did mention that she did not understand the process of a certain contact moment: the company promised to call her, did not do this and therefore she still does not know if her foal got chipped. She emphasized that she expected more pro-active contact from the company. The company therefore failed to provide clarity. This case shows that providing clarity in a contact moment is important.

Case 6 - foundation:

The moment that positively influenced the loyalty of the customer is the horse judgment competition of the company that she joined. This was informal face-to-face contact. That day she learned on which factors one should focus when judging horses. She really liked this event, because she beforehand had the idea that she was an amateur, but the course leaders clearly showed that everyone could learn to judge horses. She will join this event again when it is organized another time. This moment gave her a positive feeling. She emphasized that satisfaction corresponding to the studbook rises when people are getting engaged. However, communication of the course was not good at all: information is hard to find and therefore lacks clarity. Whereas the contact moment increased recommendation willingness, the respondent is overall not a loyal customer, because she does not actively recommend the company to others. The factors during the contact moment which seem to influence loyalty are: face-to-face contact, engaging customers, clarity of communication.

Case 7 - foundation:

The contact moment that most likely influenced the loyalty of respondent was the moment when someone of the organization came over to chip her newborn foal. She became a member of the foundation when her horse was expecting a foal and the moment that someone of the foundation came over to chip the foal was the moment that most likely influenced loyalty. However, how this worked was not clear to the respondent. She knew that someone of the foundation would come along, but not when. She phoned the organization to find out. The foundation was supposed to contact her when the foal had a certain age, but she did not hear anything from the foundation, so she called. She expected more information and help. The information about the contact moment was not clear. However, she assessed the moment the person came over to chip her foal as positive. The

respondent really liked the face-to-face contact and the person that came over also explained things about the foundation to her. She could also ask the person of the organization questions about the foundation. The contact was both formal and informal and positively influenced recommendation willingness. She was happy that her foal now officially belonged to the studbook. The respondent can be seen as a loyal customer, because she actively recommends the company to friends and family. The factors during the contact moment which seem to influence loyalty are: face-to-face contact, possibility of getting more information, clarity of communication.

Case 8 - foundation:

The respondent could not mention any contact moment that influenced how loyal she is to the company. She just had to become a member because she bought a horse belonging to the foundation. She has chosen this horse because she likes this kind of horses: not because of the organization. The respondent does not actively recommend the organization to family or friends and therefore cannot be seen as a loyal customer. Because the respondent cannot mention a contact moment that influenced loyalty, factors contributing to answering the research question cannot be subtracted from this case.

Case 9 – semi-government:

The contact moment the respondent mentioned was when she called the organization when she was moving to a different house. Everything was clear and went smoothly and the respondent mentions that changing her address is easier via phone than via internet. The people on the phone were friendly and nice. She never had problems with the company and she also is very willing to speak positively about the company to friends/family and therefore can be seen as a loyal customer. The factors during the contact moment which seem to influence loyalty are: clarity and phone contact.

Case 10 – semi-government:

The contact moment that the respondent remembered was when he had to pass his data when he had to move. He forgot to pass the data and got a letter from the company that they did not know who was using water in the new house and that they would cut off the water if he did not contact the company. He called the company and they did not make a

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problem of it. He could just pass the data via internet and mentioned that this was really easy, because the process was clear and went smoothly. The factors during the contact moment which seem to influence loyalty are: clarity, solving problem quickly and phone contact.

Case 11 – semi-government:

The moment that the respondent remembered was the moment when she called the company to change how much she pays monthly. It should be possible to do this online, but the system was broken. The contact was formal. The feeling the respondent got was good, the company changed the monthly amount and that was everything that was needed. The customer service therefore "did what they had to do", as mentioned by the respondent. However, the respondent emphasized during the conversation that the contact moment really did not influence loyalty and she emphasized that she cannot imagine that someone talks about the company at i.e. birthday parties at all. The respondent cannot be seen as a loyal customer, because she is not likely to speak positively about the company. Because the respondent emphasized later in the conversation that the contact moment did not influence loyalty, factors contributing to answering the research question cannot be subtracted from this case.

Case 12 – semi-government:

The moment that significantly influenced the loyalty of the respondent was when they faced a water breach and their whole house was surrounded by water. This was the same for the neighbors. He immediately called the company and they immediately helped them with finding a solution. The same day, employees of the company came over to help fix the problem. The respondent mentioned that the people working for the company were very friendly and that they had very nice, informal contact. Furthermore he emphasizes that the process went smoothly and the company helped them very fast. The respondent mentions that it positively influenced how they speak about the company, because the company helped them very well. The respondent can be seen as a loyal customer, because he is very willing to speak positively about the company with his friends/family. The factors during the contact moment which seem to influence loyalty are: face-to-face contact, customer friendliness, solving problem quickly.

4.2 Loyalty of respondents

The underlying table shows what NPS scores the companies have, based on recommendation willingness of the respondents and provides insight in the overall loyalty of the customers. The table shows that the foundation customers are less loyal than the customers of the wholesale and semi-government companies.

	Wholesale company (case 1,2,3,4)	Foundation (case 5,6,7,8)	Semi-government (case 9,10,11,12)
NPS	50	25	50

Table 1: loyalty of respondents according to NPS

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4.3 Factors influencing contact moment

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5	Case 6	Case 7	Case 8	Case 9	Case 10	Case 11	Case 12
Feeling about contact moment	Very positive, surprised	Relaxed feeling	N/A	No negative feelings	Expected more from company	Positive, being together with people with the same interests. Feeling that horse judging was accessible for everyone. Safe	Positive feeling, happy that foal now belonged to studbook	N/A	Positive feeling, really had the feeling she was helped	Comfort	Positive feeling, they did what they had to do. Respondent explained later that moment had no influence on loyalty	Positive feeling (very good), because the company helped them really well with solving the problem
Communication medium contact moment	Face to face	Face to face	N/A	Face to face	N/A	Face to face	Face to face	N/A	Phone	Phone/internet	Phone	Phone and face to face
(Dis-)satisfying factors in contact moment	Customer friendliness, company showed high degree of trust, solved problem immediately	Customer friendliness, young personnel	N/A	Customer friendliness	Respondent did not understand process of company. Company failed to provide clarity	Communication around horse judgment competition should improve. Personal contact. Engaging members.	Information was not clear, company lacked providing clarity. Respondent liked that she could ask contact person in face-to-face contact questions about the foundation, because the foundation did not answer these beforehand	N/A	Customer friendliness, clarity of process.	Clear process, solving problem quickly.	They did what they have to do	The company helped the respondent fast with solving the problem. People of company were very friendly.
Contact moment influence on recommendation willingness	Positively influenced	Positively influenced	N/A	No influence	N/A	Positively influenced	Positively influenced	N/A	No influence	No influence	No influence	Positively influenced
Tone of voice	Informal	Formal	N/A	Informal	N/A	Informal	Both formal and informal	N/A	Informal	N/A	Formal	Informal

Table 3: factors in contact moment influencing loyalty

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A cross-case analyses of the above mentioned cases resulted in four factors that seem to strongly influence customer loyalty: customer friendliness, face-to-face contact, solving problem quickly and clarity. Descriptions of these factors are supported by quotes manifesting in moments of truth to show how these factors influence customer loyalty

Customer friendliness

A factor that was mentioned in several cases was customer friendliness and seems to strongly influence loyalty. The respondent in case 4 mentioned the following:

> *"The contact was very friendly. The first contact was very important, the people who have contact with the customer are really important for the image of the company."*

This quote clearly shows that the respondent finds customer-friendliness in the first contact very important. The loyalty-changing moment he described was also the first moment that he visited the store and the respondent emphasizes that customer friendliness in the contact moment changed his perspective on loyalty.

> *"This was very client friendly and really caused a change in image I have about the wholesale company. They were so customer friendly at that moment, above my expectations."*

The respondent of case 1 was very surprised about the customer friendliness and it seems that this customer friendliness was the factor that really made this contact moment a loyalty changing moment.

There seems to be a positive relation between customer friendliness in a contact moment and loyalty. Therefor customer friendliness in a contact moment seems to positively influence customer loyalty.

Face-to-face contact

In the majority of the cases studied, we found that respondents frequently indicated the importance of having face-to-face contact. For instance, the respondent of case 6 recalled that:

"If you go to these events (judgment course, stole visit etc.), you get more

engaged with the foundation. If you only read the magazines at home, then

you don't have the engagement."

This quote clearly shows that the respondent suggests that face-to-face contact, here in the form of events, make people more engaged with the company. When a company manages to engage their customers, it seems likely that loyalty also increases.

The respondent of case 2 recalled a similar event:

"When I walked into the wholesale company for the first time and they

helped me really friendly. The threshold was lowered by this. "

An important factor of loyalty is that people not only say that they are loyal (attitudinal loyalty), but also keep buying at the company (repeat patronage)(Dick and Basu, 1994). This quote indicates that the respondent would now more often visit the store after he had face-to-face contact. The face-to-face contact he had therefore positively influenced loyalty.

A lot of respondents mentioned that the contact moment that has positively influenced recommendation willingness involved face-to-face contact. The results therefore show a positive relation between a contact moment including face-to-face contact and higher loyalty.

Solving problem quickly

Several cases show that when organizations succeed to solve the problem of a customer quickly, loyalty increases. There seems to be a relation between responding quickly to the problem and customer loyalty. The respondent of case 1 recalled:

"Once I had a problem with my debit card and I did not have an account at

the wholesale company at that moment. I bought a lot of stuff, but it was

no problem for them that I took it home and paid it later. They did not even

know me at that moment, this was very good service."

The company immediately solved the problem of the customer and the respondent mentioned that this was very good service. This is the reason why he mentioned this moment as the contact moment that changed how loyal he is to the company. Solving a

problem quickly seems to positively influence customer loyalty. Case 12 mentioned a similar situation:

"The semi-governmental organization helped us correctly during this moment….I called the company and then people came immediately over to help us. It took some time to find the breach, this took the whole Saturday."

The company immediately helped solving the problem of the respondent. The problem had a big impact on the respondent's life, because his house was surrounded by water, but the company made sure that they helped him immediately and this positively contributed to the respondent's loyalty.

A positive relation between quickly responding to a problem and solving it and loyalty seems to exist. If the company responds quickly to the problem, a positive relation between solving a problem and customer loyalty can be found.

Lack of clarity

Some cases also show that providing clarity in the contact moment is an important antecedent of loyalty. It seems that customers want to know where they stand, what to expect and how the process of the company works. Furthermore respondents mention that communication should be clear and understandable, as is demonstrated by case 5:

"Then you get a confirmation that at a certain date the horse inspector comes over. I have never heard from this inspector. My foal is standing in a stall which is not at my house, maybe he came there to inspect my foal, but I don't know, I never heard anything about it. "

The respondent was very confused during the contact moment and the whole process is not clear to her at all. This clearly illustrates that a company should make sure that customers can understand the contact moment and what happens. In other words must companies assure that they provide clarity within their contact moments. Case 7 recalled a similar situation:

"I just wanted to know how the process works, there is a lot of information on inspections and matches on the website, but I don't care about this. I just wanted to know what the best

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manner is to become a member and the people at the phone did not really explain this. I had to ask a friend how I had to become a member, I did not like this moment, this contact moment was fairly negative. "

This respondent also shows that she missed clarity during the contact moment and that the company did not help her with finding the right information. Lack of clarity negatively influenced how she experienced the contact moment.

This shows that providing clarity in a contact moment seems to be an important factor in the contact moment. It seems likely that when a customer does not know what to do during a contact moment, a negative relation with customer loyalty emerges.

4.4 Summary of findings across cases

A cross-case analyses of the cases resulted in four factors that seem to strongly influence customer loyalty: customer friendliness, face-to-face contact, solving problem quickly and clarity. Customer friendliness and face-to-face contact seem to be the most important factors, because most cases mention these factors. Companies should therefore strive for contact moments that both involve face-to-face contact and customer friendliness. Furthermore should they strive to solve problems as fast as possible. Not every customer faces problems, but when they do, they should be helped as fast as possible. Companies also have to assure that all contact moments are clear to their customers if they want to strengthen their customers' loyalty. Loyalty will be negatively influences when a contact moment lacks clarity.

5. Conclusion and discussion

5.1 Conclusion

Customer loyalty is a widely discussed subject among a lot of researchers and there are various perspectives and models developed by researchers that try to explain how loyalty emerges. One perspective, researched by several researchers, is that loyalty is created in the contact moment between customer and company (Grönroos (1990) , Norman (1984), Grönroos et al. (2012), Lymperopoulos et al., (2006), Nasution et al. (2014)). Whereas these contact moments influence customer loyalty, it was still unclear which factors during the interactions between companies and customers influence customer loyalty. Therefore this research has tried to answer **"Which factors during the interaction between companies and customers influence customer loyalty?".**

Twelve cases were analyzed, subtracted from three different companies, to find the factors that influence loyalty in a contact moment. Semi-structured interviews, with the integration of the critical incident technique, were used to find out which contact moments influenced customer loyalty and why these contact moments influenced this. A cross-case analysis led to four factors that answer the research question. The factors customer friendliness, face-to-face contact, solving problem quickly and providing clarity all seem to be factors that influence customer loyalty. Integrating customer friendliness, face-to-face contact and solving a problem quickly in a contact moment positively influences customer loyalty. Furthermore, loyalty is negatively influenced if companies lack to provide clarity in a contact moment.

For this research, customers of three different companies have been questioned to develop a general view on factors that influence customer loyalty during a contact moment. All three companies operate in different markets and have a different market form; however factors that influence loyalty seem to be consistent in all cases. Therefore this research provides a general view on factors that influence customer loyalty which can also be applied to other sectors.

This leads to the following propositions:

- Customer friendliness in an interaction positively influences customer loyalty
- Face-to-face contact in an interaction positively influences customer loyalty
- Solving problem quickly in an interaction positively influences customer loyalty
- Lack of clarity in an interaction negatively influences customer loyalty

5.2 Discussion

This research answers the question "which factors during the interaction between companies and customers influence customer loyalty". The factors found in this research contribute to the existing literature on customer loyalty, because literature lacked insight in the factors during interactions that influence loyalty. Therefore this research can help companies to implement factors in their contact moments to enlarge loyalty.

Some of these factors agree with existing literature on customer loyalty. Clarity is according to Dick and Basu (1994) an important antecedent for loyalty. However, they define clarity as "An attitude is well-defined (clear) when an individual finds alternative attitudes towards the target objectionable and is undefined when many alternative positions are acceptable". This perspective differs from the perspective of clarity that this research has found. Dick and Basu (1994) also look at loyalty in general and not at loyalty emerging at contact moments. There however is an overlap: a customer need to have a clear image about the company in his/her head to develop high relative attitude, which leads to loyalty. This research shows that clarity in a contact moment is also important for making customers loyal: the customer must not be confused during the contact moment and everything must be clear in order to create a loyal customer. The NPS of the company of the three cases where lack of clarity negatively influenced the contact moment is also lower than the other companies. All three cases are customers of the foundation, which has an NPS of 25 whereas the other companies have an NPS of 50. Therefore this research confirms that clarity influences loyalty in general and shows that clarity influences the creation of loyalty during an interaction.

One of the results of this research is that companies should create (more) face-to-face contact moments with their customers. Helkulla et al. (2012) argued that companies should

strive to create more direct interactions with their customers. This research adds to this by suggesting that these interactions should involve face-to-face contact if the goal of the company is to create more loyalty.

This research also adds to the literature on moments of truth. Kahneman et al. (1997) suggested that the peak and the end of a moment are specifically remembered. This is confirmed by this research: when a problem occurred and the company was able to fix the problem fast, the end of the contact moment was positive. These contact moments had a positive effect on loyalty and therefore this research confirms that the end of a contact moment is one of the decision makers in how a person assesses a specific contact moment.

About the first moment of truth is said that packaging (Löfgren, 2005), sales persons, product displays, electronic media and point of purchase advertising (Blackwell et al., 2006) play a deciding role in the decision of the consumer. This research shows that face-to-face contact is imperative and that the contact or sales person during face-to-face contact is important: customer friendliness of this person plays a big role in the creation of loyalty. Therefore it can be said that the characteristics of the sales/contact person are important during this first moment of truth, because this person can give the customer the feeling of 'customer friendliness'. This adds to Blackwell et al., (2006) by giving more specific insight in what characteristics give the sales person a deciding role during the first moment of truth.

Furthermore does literature about the 'second moment of truth' (Lafley, 2005) show that satisfaction arises when expectations meet reality. One case mentioned that his expectations were exceeded (case 1) and this moment, which is an SMOT, shows a positive contribution to loyalty. However, case 7 said that she expected more from the company during the contact moment (SMOT) and this contact moment also did not lead to more loyalty. These cases confirm that reality of the contact moment should meet or exceed expectations during a second moment of truth.

5.3 Managerial implications

The research shows that companies should look at how customer friendliness is secured in their contact moments. Creating a customer journey may help them to obtain insight in the contact moments and how customer friendliness is currently embedded in their

organization. Companies then should measure how customers perceive customer friendliness at these points during the customer journey and find ways to improve this (i.e. trainings, procedures etc.).

Furthermore should companies try to include (more) face-to-face contact in their customer journeys. Whereas companies increasingly communicate via digital media and according to Michaelidou, Siamagka and Christodoulides (2011) want to increase marketing spending on i.e. social networking sites, companies should not forget having face to face contact with their customers if they want to have loyal customers, as proven in this research. A suitable solution differs per branch. However, if a company would like to have higher customer loyalty, i.e. an event can be a suitable manner to engage their customers more with their brand.

The research moreover shows that quickly responding and solving customers' problems increases customer loyalty. Companies therefore should always try to immediately help customers with their problems during the contact moment and train employees to achieve this. Companies can also analyze which problems come in on a regular basis and find quick-fixes for the problems that they currently do not offer.

Finally, providing clarity in a contact moment is of substantial importance. Companies have to assure that customers know how to obtain information and know what to do during a contact moment. Creating a customer journey can also help to gain insight in this. Questions like "Are all steps logical?" "Is information clear for the customer?" and "Should we add more contact moments?" can be used to see if a company should change anything in their current customer journey. Customer satisfaction measurement methods can also be used after a contact moment to obtain insight in how the customer experienced the contact moment. Examples are sending an assessment email or calling after the contact moment. However, a company can also create a test panel and question the participants how they assessed a particular contact moment to get to know what they should change during specific contact moments.

5.4. Limitations and future research

This research only investigated three different kinds of companies, however other results may have been found when looking at different sectors. Also the respondents have been asked to talk about the moment that most likely influenced their perception of loyalty with an interview, but observations may have given different results.

Moreover does this research focus on loyalty in general; however literature shows that there are different kinds of loyalty. It is suggested that further research tests the found factors on customers which are in the various loyalty stages, to see if the factors change during the loyalty process. Also does this research only look at loyalty emerging at the first and second moment of truth and factors may differ for non-direct interactions.

It is furthermore suggested that the factors found will be confirmed on a larger scale by i.e. quantitative research, to increase the reliability of the results.

Concluding, the demographics of respondents are not taken into account in this research. Further research should look at the influence of demographics on customer loyalty from the perspective of interactions.

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Appendix 1: questions for companies

Names of companies are made anonymous.

Measurements

What customer satisfaction measures do you use?

What customer loyalty measurement methods do you use?

Customer journey process:

Can you describe what happens when a lead becomes a customer?

     Do you welcome a new customer? How?

Do you have a customer journey starting from when a person becomes a customer?

     What does this look like?

What (standard) contact moments are there with existing customers?

     Specify per channel

     Who is the contact person (per momentum)

     What is the tone of voice? (informal/formal)

     Which contact moments have the highest impact on customer loyalty?

     Why do you think these have the highest impact?

     Do you celebrate specific moments in the customer lifecycle? (birthday of customer etc.)

Loyalty

How would you describe a loyal customer?

What changes did you make to enlarge the loyalty of your customers?

How did this work out? Do you know how this quantitatively changed customer loyalty/did you -

measure how this influenced customer loyalty?

To what extend do you know that customers trust your company?

How do you enhance a good relationship with your customers?

How high are switching costs in your industry?

How high are the sunk costs?

How price sensitive are your customers?

Appendix 2: interview with semi-governmental company

How would Semi-government describe a loyal customer?

Semi-government is a monopolist: customers cannot choose if they are a customer or not. If you need water and you live in a certain area, you are a customer of Semi-government. Semi-government has 5.6 million customers which won't switch unless they move to a different region.

Some customers want as few contact with Semi-government as possible and only want to have contact when they have to transmit their meter readings. However, other customers find it very important that Semi-government takes it corporate social responsibility role and are more engaged with the company.

What changes did you make to enlarge the loyalty of your customers?

The introduction of a welcome present, improvement website, improvement of customer service

How did this work out? Do you know how this quantitatively changed customer loyalty/did you measure how this influenced customer loyalty?

Introducing a welcome present had a positive effect on customer loyalty. We first offered a package with flyers and a lot of information. This has changed to a letter: customer loyalty declined. Also the new website influenced NPS negatively, because it does not work properly.

Customer journey process:

Can you describe what happens when someone becomes a customer?

Gets a welcome letter. First there was a bigger welcome with flyers, but this has changed to a letter, because this is cheaper. This has significantly influenced the loyalty of the customers. Letter is also not segmented! -> influences customer loyalty too!

Do you have a customer journey starting from when a person becomes a customer?

What does this look like?
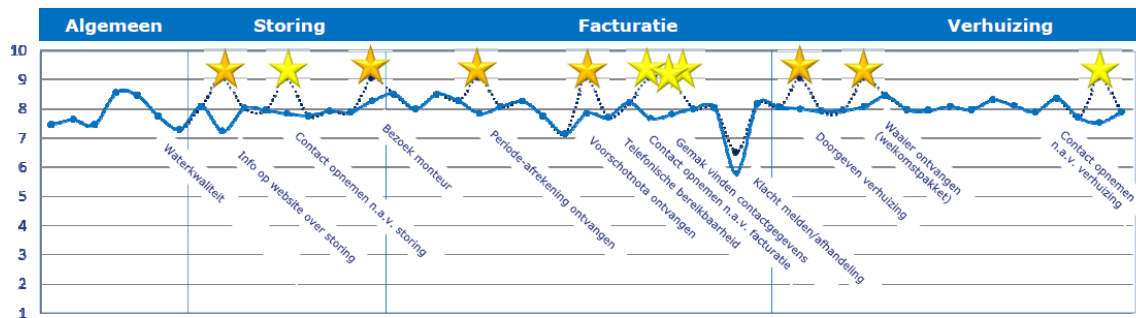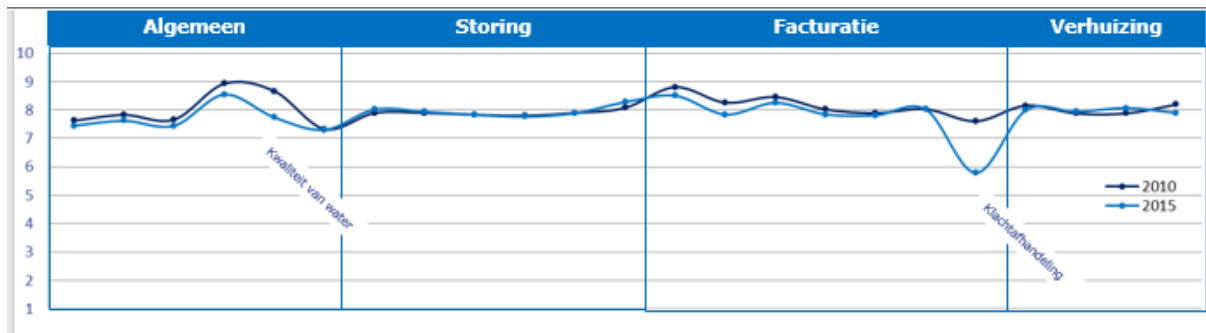
What (standard) contact moments are there with existing customers? -> which 3 contact moments do you think have the highest impact on customer loyalty.

The moment a customer moves to another house -> should be easy, but is not an easy process yet. A customer has to cancel its existing contract at the old house and apply for a new contract in the new house. Semi-government wants to make this process smoother. Somehow trying to change addresses fails a lot. NPS score is also very low for people who have to move.

*Moving is a very stressful moment, what is most important is that Semi-government provides (extreme) **comfort at this moment,** because customers have different things to think about. 60% tries to change addresses online, but this does not work.*

Personal contact with a call center employee during this process influences loyalty too -> more than doing something online. The interviewee argues that this is the most interesting process to investigate for this research.

The customer journey for moving looks like this:

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Customer Journey Verhuizing 2015

The NPS, measured on the process of moving is rapidly declining. In 2015 it was +6, in the first quartile of 2016 it was -1, in the fourth quartile of 2016 it was -6.

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Tevredenheid CJ Verhuizing (Rapportcijfer)
Q4 2016

	Q4 2016	2015
Doorgeven verhuizing	7,3	8,0
Welkomstbrief	7,7	7,9
Tel. bereikbaarheid	7,5	7,6
Contact	7,6	7,5
Vindbaarheid contactgegevens	7,6	7,9
Info indienen klacht	5,7	6,2
Wijze melden klacht	5,9	6,4
Bevestiging klacht	5,4	6,1
Afhandeling klacht	4,9	5,3
Compensatie n.a.v. klacht	3,8	4,6

Tevredenheid Doorgeven verhuizing: 7,3
Customer Journey Verhuizing - Q4 2016

- Ontevreden (1-5): 17%
- Voldoende (6-7): 22%
- Tevreden (8-10): 61%

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Klantreis verhuizen (niet ingelogd)

Stap 1 — Homepage informeren
Stap 2 — Verhuizen
Stap 3 — Inloggen
Stap 4 — Nieuw adres
Stap 5 — Datum sleuteloverdracht
Stap 6 — Meterstand (2 types)
Stap 7 — Contactgegevens
Stap 8 — Verbruik
Stap 9 — Financiële gegevens
Stap 10 — Donatie
Stap 11 — Vorig adres
Stap 12 — Controle gegevens
Stap 13 — Bedankpagina
Stap 14 — Bevestigingsmail
Stap 15 — Bevestigingsbrief (1)
Stap 16 — Bevestigingsbrief (2)

Klant logt in >>

Wanneer de klant is ingelogd via MijnVitens zijn de bij Vitens bekende gegevens reeds ingevuld

Klantreis verhuizen (ingelogd)

Stap 4 — Nieuw adres
Stap 5 — Datum sleuteloverdracht
Stap 6 — Meterstand (2 types)
Stap 7 — Contactgegevens
Stap 8 — Verbruik
Stap 9 — Financiële gegevens
Stap 10 — Donatie
Stap 11 — Vorig adres
Stap 12 — Controle gegevens
Stap 13 — Bedankpagina
Stap 14 — Bevestigingsmail
Stap 15 — Bevestigingsbrief (1)
Stap 16 — Bevestigingsbrief (2)

The yearly moment that a customer has to transmit their meter readings is also included in one of the most important contact moments Semi-government has with the customer. This is a low interest moment: customers are not really looking forward to do this. Mostly Semi-government needs to send 3-4 reminders before customers submit their meter reading. However, Semi-government sees this as an important moment to have contact with their customers, because this is the only yearly moment that they have contact with all of their customers.

*Semi-government wants people to have **insight** and **access** in their billing and administration*

Customer Journey Facturatie 2015

Facturatie

Periode-afrekening   Voorschotnota   Contact opnemen met Vitens

1. Waterlevering (continuïteit)
2. Smaak
3. Kwaliteit
4. Prijs
5. Doorgeven meterstand
6a. Keuze info wel/niet digitaal ontvangen (online)
6b. Keuze betalingen wel/niet via autm. incasso (online)
6c. Keuze nieuwsbrief wel/niet ontvangen (online)
7a. Duidelijkheid bevestiging meterstand
7b. Vriendelijke toon bevestiging meterstand
8a. Duidelijkheid van verzoek meterstand doorgeven
8b. Vriendelijke toon in verzoek meterstand doorgeven
9a. Duidelijkheid periode-afrekening
9b. Vriendelijke toon in periode-afrekening

9c. Snelheid van ontvangen periode-afrekening
9d. Correctheid van periode-afrekening
10. Gemak geld terug ontvangen/bijbetalen n.a.v. periode-afrekening
11. Betalingsmethode (hoe de betaling verloopt)
12a. Duidelijkheid van betaalherinnering
12b. Vriendelijke toon in betaalherinnering
13a. Duidelijkheid van aanmaning
13b. Vriendelijke toon in aanmaning
14a. Duidelijkheid voorschotnota
14b. Vriendelijke toon in voorschotnota
14c. Tijdigheid van voorschotnota (ontvangst)
14d. Correctheid van voorschotnota
15. Gemak bijstellen voorschot
16. Duidelijkheid van ontvangstbevestiging n.a.v. bijstellen voorschot
17a. Telefonische bereikbaarheid
17b. Duidelijkheid van telefonisch keuzemenu

17c. Snelheid medewerker aan de telefoon
18. Snelheid reactie op vraag (alle contactkanalen)
19a. Vriendelijkheid medewerker (alle contactkanalen)
19b. Getoond begrip medewerker (alle contactkanalen)
20. Deskundigheid medewerker (alle contactkanalen)
21. Duidelijkheid reactie (alle contactkanalen)
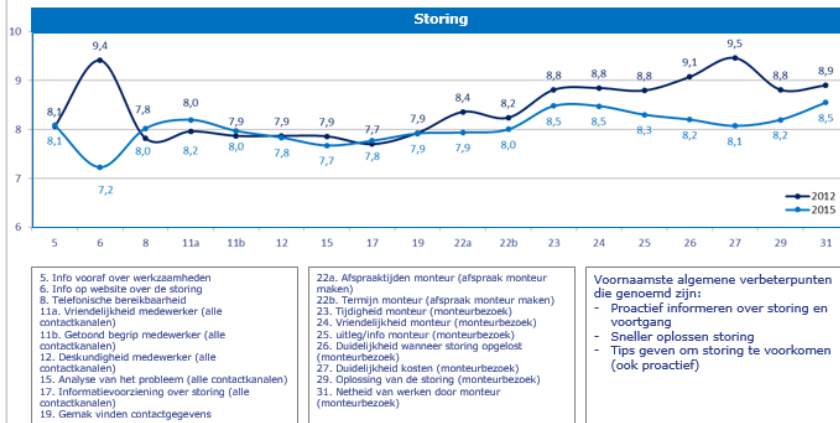22. Vindbaarheid antwoord op website (te lage n dus niet weergegeven in grafiek)
23. Mate van beantwoording (alle contactkanalen)
24. Gemak vinden contactgegevens
25. Gemak gegevens aanpassen
26. Metervervanging

TOTEM ★ Branded touchpoint

★ Branded touchpoint – specifiek m.b.t. contact opnemen met Vitens

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*The third, important moment is when a customer experiences a spontaneous failure in the water system at his home (unplanned failure). This is an unexpected problem. Semi-government wants to pro-actively communicate, but this does not work properly yet. Water is a low interest product, but has a high impact: when there is no water, there is a huge problem for the customers. When there is no problem, no one really notices the importance of water. **Trust** is the most important factor here.*
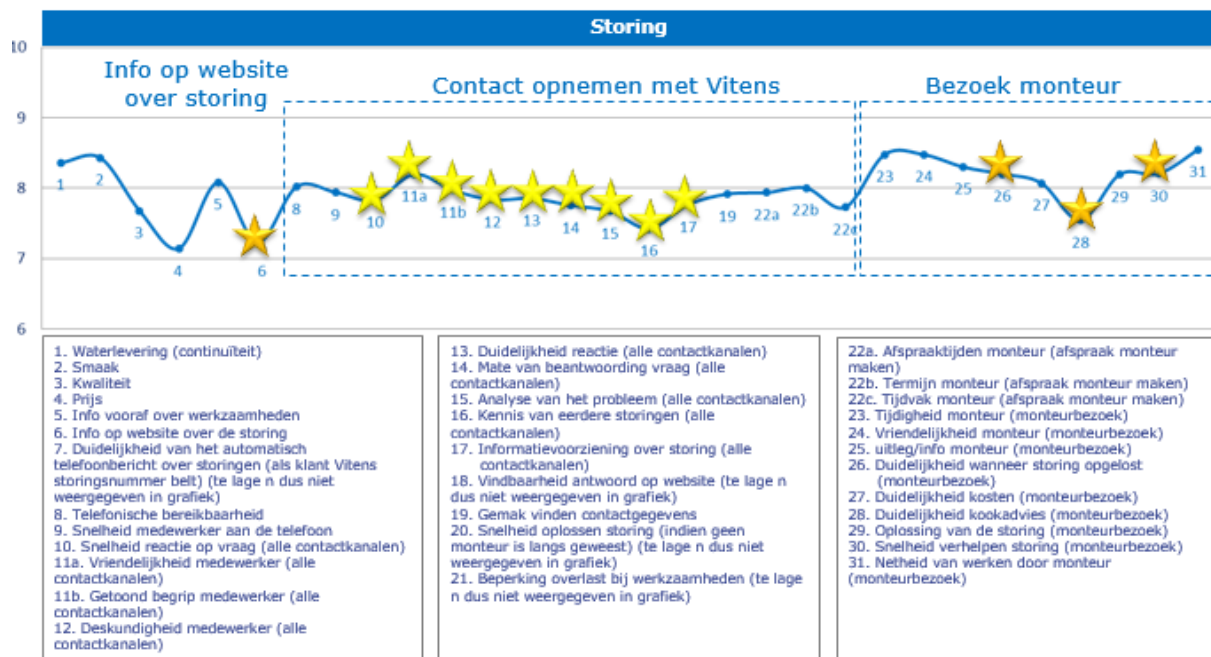
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*Overall value Semi-government wants to provide: **worth (waarde),** according to social responsibility role towards nature (sources of water -> groundwater). Water source needs to be as pure as possible. When source is contaminated, costs go up and water becomes more expensive.*

Do you celebrate specific moments in the customer lifecycle? (birthday of customer etc.)

No

Measurements

What customer satisfaction measures do you use?

Customer satisfaction survey, mapping customer journeys and imago survey

What customer loyalty measurement methods do you use?

Net Promotor Score
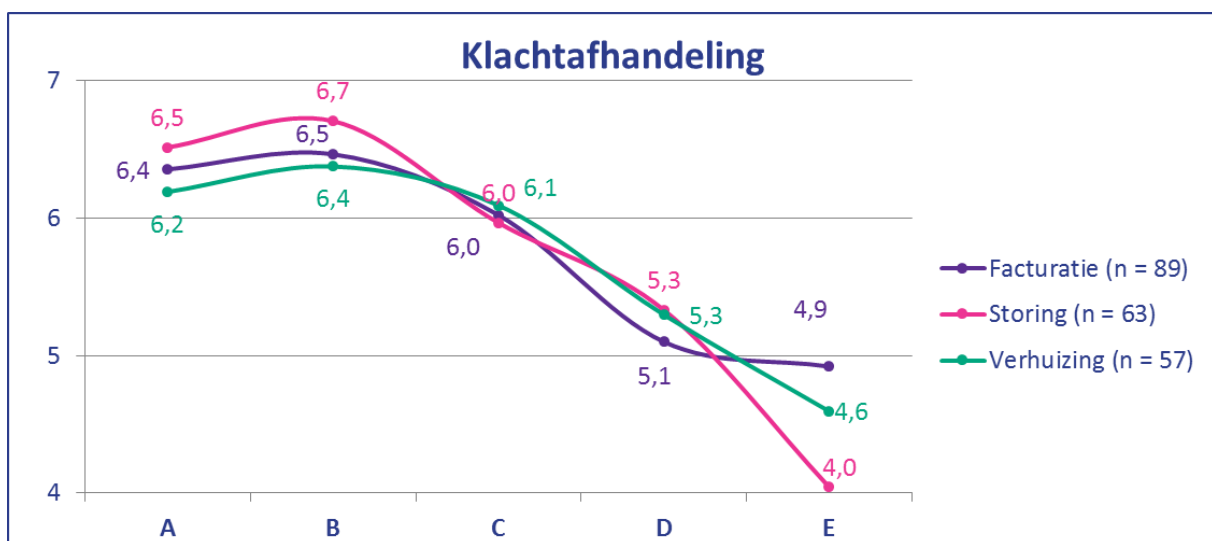
Semi-government does not know why NPS changed over time. ¼ of respondents also says that it does not make sense to recommend Semi-government, because they are obliged to choose for Semi-government (monopolistic role).

Loyalty

To what extend do you know that customers trust your company?

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Trust is very big. Also stems from imago survey. High 'deserve (gun) factor'. High trust in product (120% trust). People blindly trust that the water Semi-government delivers is drinkable. However, Semi-government is very vulnerable: when water will be poisoned, it has disastrous consequences.

How do you enhance a good relationship with your customers?

Try to communicate properly at the above mentioned moments, improve customer contact moments, improve customer service.

How high are switching costs in your industry?

Non-existent, because monopolist.

How high are the sunk costs?

Non-existent, because monopolist.

How price sensitive are your customers?

Non-existent, because monopolist.

Appendix 3: interview Wholesale company

How would you describe a loyal customer?

We call this an A-customer, a customer that comes to Wholesale company every week or multiple times a week. These are also the customers which generate most profit for us and therefor are most important for Wholesale company. Our aim is to raise the number of A-customers. 10% of our customer can be seen as a A-customer, thus loyal customer. Ideally this increases, but we know not all customers can become an A-customer. We do not know currently why people become A customers or not. At the end of the year we want 15% to be A-customers.

What changes did you make to enlarge the loyalty of your customers?

We organize a lot of events and actions with incentives to enlarge the loyalty of customers. Also do we shift more to the service aspects for construction companies. We offer to get materials installed at the place the constructor needs to work and can even combine this with materials we don't sell: we pick it up at a different supplier and deliver it where it needs to be.

We created a system what makes it easier for people to join Wholesale company as a customer and created a system which we can use to actively approach our target group. We wanted to pro-actively communicate with them to make them more loyal, but this did not bring the increased profit we expected.

How did this work out? Do you know how this quantitatively changed customer loyalty/did you measure how this influenced customer loyalty?

Unfortunately, we don't know. We have sufficient materials to measure customer loyalty, but we don't use them probably: this is a big wish for the future, because we want to know what the results of our actions are and if it leads to higher customer loyalty.

Measurements

What customer satisfaction measures do you use?

Every two years we hold a customer satisfaction research under our customers.

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What customer loyalty measurement methods do you use?

In the same research, we research customer loyalty, but is not really used

<u>Loyalty</u>

To what extend do you know that customers trust your company?

There is a really small staff turnover at Wholesale company and most people work a big part of their lives at Wholesale company. Because personal contact at the stores is very important for customers, this feels comfortable for the customers, because they get to develop good relationship with the people behind Wholesale companyThere is trust between employees, because there is a small staff turnover. Customers can also feel this trust, and this works positively for them too. I think this creates a good atmosphere and enlarges trust.

How do you enhance a good relationship with your customers?

The combination of assortment, knowledge and our people. We offer quality products, which we think is very important. Also do our people have a lot of knowledge about the products. The most important thing is having customer intimacy: we try to enhance good personal relationships with our customers and anticipate on their upcoming needs and wants. This could be improved by using a structural method: their needs and wants are not structurally registered in a specific format in our CMS.

How high are switching costs in your industry?

Low, if they want to buy at a competitor, they can

How high are the sunk costs?

Low, customers don't have a big investment to make to buy products at Wholesale company

How price sensitive are your customers?

Some are price sensitive and go to the cheapest company; however we rather focus on quality and personal contact. Therefor we are also aiming for customers which find this important.

We are not the cheapest and we also do not aim to be the cheapest: we want to distinguish ourselves with quality and human capital. Bouwmaterial Nederland is cheaper and a big competitor. Pon Meijer Jongeneel is also an important competitor. However, both companies are owned by overseas companies: I think that this makes Wholesale company strong. The above mentioned companies are results of mergers and acquisitions: this did not happen as Wholesale company. The bond within

Wholesale company is probably also way stronger than these concerns which are owned by overseas shareholders.

Customer journey process:

Can you describe what happens when a lead becomes a customer? -> when does he/she join activation program

He gets involved in the activation campaign: this is a campaign of thirteen weeks where customers can collect for a saving voucher up to more than 600 euros. Every time they spend more than 20 euros at Wholesale company, they save for this voucher. After thirteen weeks, they can hand this voucher in at Wholesale company.

Do you welcome a new customer? How?

Yes, this is integrated in the activation program: this program is used as a welcome.

Do you have a customer journey starting from when a person becomes a customer?

What does this look like?

Yes. A new customer will be invited for the activation program. We ask them for their data when they become a customer and send them an email. They have to activate their account to start saving: if they do not do this, they will receive a reminder. When they registered, the account manager will call them to say that their account is activated and they can start with the program. The customer receives a welcome to the program message. The customers starts saving for a voucher when he/she is buying things. When the first transaction have taken place, the customer receives a message with 'congratulations with your first purchase'. Then the customer comes in a cycle where Wholesale company informs the customer what Wholesale company can offer them and also to let learn Wholesale company more about the customer (interests, birthday etc.). In the process, the customer gets a call twice from the account manager to check if the customer is satisfied. After the 12 weeks, the customer gets a message that the program has ended and obtains a voucher. If he does not hand in the voucher, the account manager will call him again.

Which standard contact moments are there when the activation program is finished?/What (standard) contact moments are there with existing customers? (activation program and others)

They get a voucher with the amount they saved during the activation period. This could be better, because 50-60% of the A customers which come from the activation period remains an A or B customer: the other half becomes a C or D customer. However, outside the activation program there

are also a lot of contact moments with the customers: newsletter, events etc.. It is the question if there are too many contact moments with the customer.

What are the three most important contact moments with customers (also outside the activation program included).

Get new customers at the company to show them around in the building: we do not structurally do this, but think this has a high impact on the view of Wholesale company. Face-to-face personal contact is created, which helps with creating a bond between the customer and the customer.

The activation program, as mentioned above

Events, because we can talk to the customer personally.

Why do you think these have the highest impact?

Because it includes personal contact. We assume that personal contact has the highest influence on customer loyalty.

Specify per channel

Contact is or via e-mail, or phone or personally. We assume that personal contact has the highest impact

Who is the contact person (per momentum)

Mostly the account manager

What is the tone of voice? (informal/formal)

Informal

Do you celebrate specific moments in the customer lifecycle? (birthday of customer etc.)

No

General

How many people do you need for your research? (suggestion 2/3 for each group)

8 to start with

What is the main goal of the research?

What should the deliverable be?

Find out how we can improve the activation program and enlarge conversion

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Appendix 4: interview with the foundation

Loyalty

How would you describe a loyal customer?

Someone who has been a member for longer than 5 years, who visits events, visits end presentation of horses and has visited the THE FOUNDATION center.
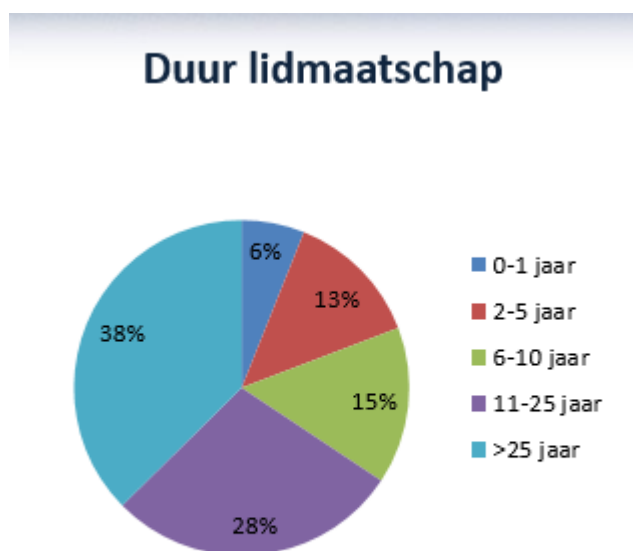
What changes did you make to enlarge the loyalty of your customers?

Inspectors visit customers which are dissatisfied to see how they can become more satisfied and what can be done to improve service. They do not do this for every customer, mostly for people who are member for a long time or which are relative bigger breeders.

How did this work out? Do you know how this quantitatively changed customer loyalty/did you measure how this influenced customer loyalty?

I don't really know if this really helps, I can image it helps. I hear positive stories, but we did not measure if it really helped or not.
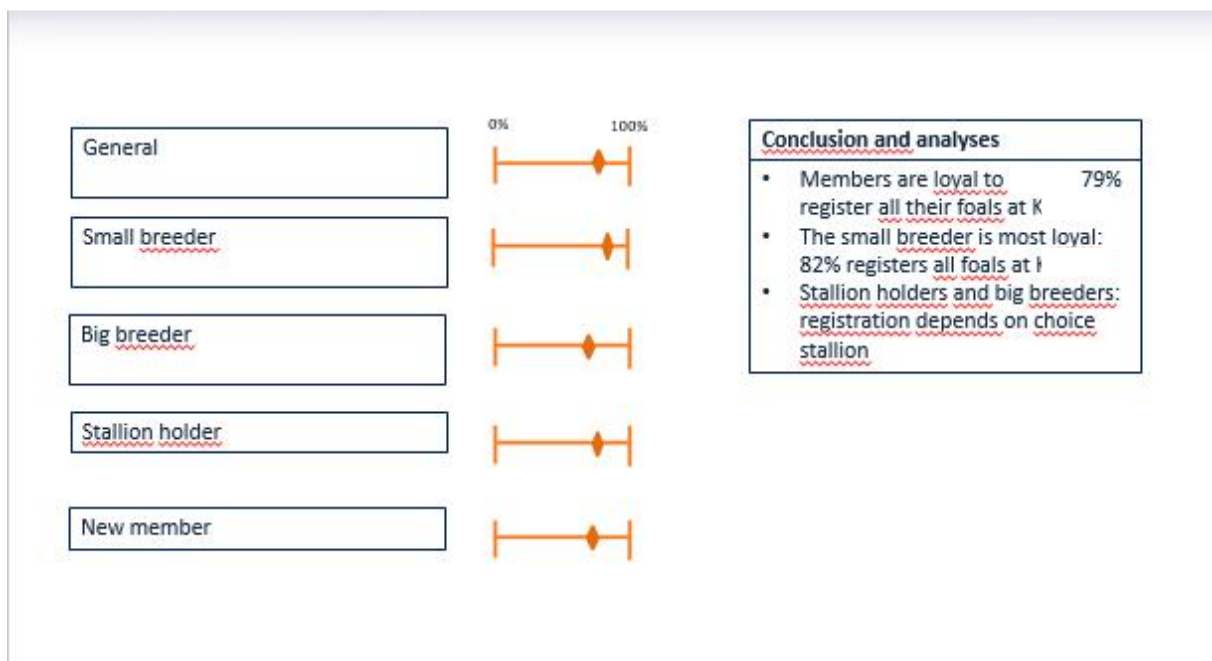
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Measurements

What customer satisfaction measures do you use?

Customer satisfaction survey. Most people are satisfied/neutral.

What customer loyalty measurement methods do you use?

Integrated in the customer satisfaction survey

	0%	100%
General		
Small breeder		
Big breeder		
Stallion holder		
New member		

Conclusion and analyses

- Members are loyal to 79% register all their foals at K
- The small breeder is most loyal: 82% registers all foals at K
- Stallion holders and big breeders: registration depends on choice stallion

5. Are you considering breeding a foal in the future?

#	Answer	Totaal	HH	Klein	Groot	Actief	Niet-actief	Nieuw
1	Yes	85%	95%	95%	98%	85%	54%	91%
2	No	15%	5%	5%	2%	15%	46%	9%

Customer journey process:

Can you describe what happens when a lead becomes a customer?

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Do you welcome a new customer? How?

There are various ways that lead to membership and often are people obliged to become a member of THE FOUNDATION. When someone's horse gets pregnant from a stub horse, they need to register the cover at THE FOUNDATION. The mare owners automatically becomes a member of THE FOUNDATION, because the foal will then be registered in the studbook of THE FOUNDATION. The owner of the stub horse registers the owner of the mare. Sometimes people want to join an event and become a member, furthermore there are people who join THE FOUNDATION, because they are interested in the studbook itself.

When someone becomes a member, he/she joins process related to way of membership

When someone becomes a member due to coverage, he/she gets information about the process related to the coverage. Furthermore does everyone get a welcome letter and the latest magazine.

The problem is that the stub horse owner registers the mare owner and there are no obligatory, pre-specified fields which have to be filled in obligatory. Therefore sometimes information like e-mail addresses miss.

What do you think are the most important contact moments you have with customers

When foal is born, passport checker visits horse owner. The foal also gets chipped. -> important contact moment with most of the members -> passport checker is sometimes someone from the office of THE FOUNDATION, but also people who do not work at THE FOUNDATION. Personal contact. Informal. High impact, because personal contact

People who bring horse at location of THE FOUNDATION for research

Events: stallion inspection, WK young dressage horses etc. Championships. Pedigree inspection / central inspection -> can be more contact, they can have contact with people from THE FOUNDATION or the judges from THE FOUNDATION, but this can be better, because members complain they do not get a lot of contact here.

Information desk: people call when they do not understand site/events and contact with biggest customers. Per phone, customer service employee, formal when needed, informal when they know the customer. Can help to solve problems, so can have high impact.

Do you celebrate specific moments in the customer lifecycle? (birthday of customer etc.)

No

Other contact moments:

- *Two kinds of magazines.*
- *THE FOUNDATION TV*
- *Newsletter (not segmented between members/non-members)*
- *Website*
- *Social media (Facebook/Instagram)*

General questions

To what extend do you know that customers trust your company?

I think they trust us pretty well, because we have developed a lot of knowledge through the years. We are also very high in the world rankings of studbooks. We decide what is good or not (we make the standards in the horse industry). 95% says, if we have to choose a horse, we choose THE FOUNDATION. We are also pretty innovative

How do you enhance a good relationship with your customers?

Providing them with a lot of information. Personal contact (events, passport check, horse check). Helpdesk when they have problems. However, personal contact/helpdesk mostly is reactive instead of pro-active.

How high are switching costs in your industry?

Not very high, they can discontinue their membership whenever they want

How high are the sunk costs?

€115,- . People who only see this as a membership the magazine are more likely to cancel membership.

1000 people stop their membership, 900 people become new member

How price sensitive are your customers?

Some are quite sensitive and sometimes choose to go to another studbook. There is no other studbook for rig horses, so a lot of the rig horse owner are member of THE FOUNDATION. For the other horses, some people switch to the German or English studbook, because this is cheaper. However, these studbooks do not offer all the kinds of horse checks and events that THE FOUNDATION offer.

Appendix 5: results interview with companies

Semi-government

Semi-government is a drink water supplier in The Netherlands, serving approximately 5.6 million customers.

According to the interview, which can be found in Appendix 3, has Semi-government three customer journeys which include the most important contact moments they have with customers. These are:

- Moving to a new house
- Transmit meter readings
- Facing an unexpected error in the water network

For this research, the focus will be on one customer journey and the contact moments within this journey. Participants which **moved to a new house** will be questioned, because Semi-government thinks that loyalty according to this process has changed significantly over time.

The NPS, measured on the process of moving, is rapidly declining. In 2015 it was +6, in the first quartile of 2016 it was -1, in the fourth quartile of 2016 it was -6.
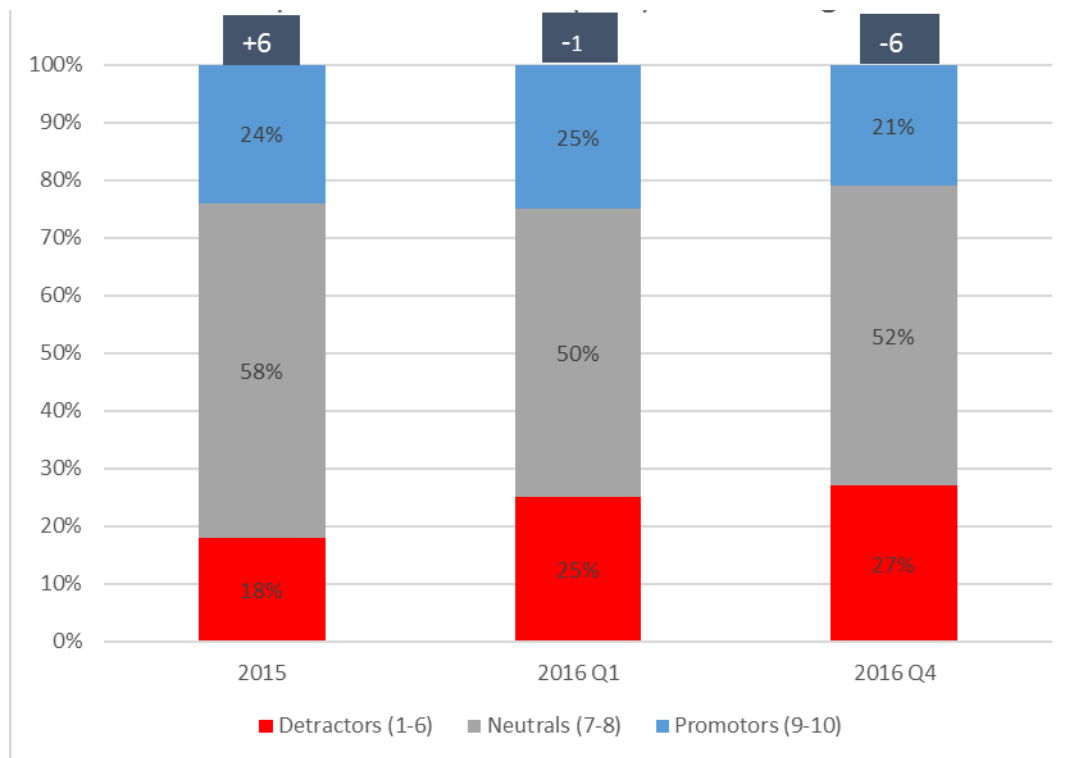
Fig. 13: the NPS of moving at Semi-government

The journey is designed around the moment a customer moves to another house. Somehow customers are getting more dissatisfied over time, as can be seen in the underlying graph.
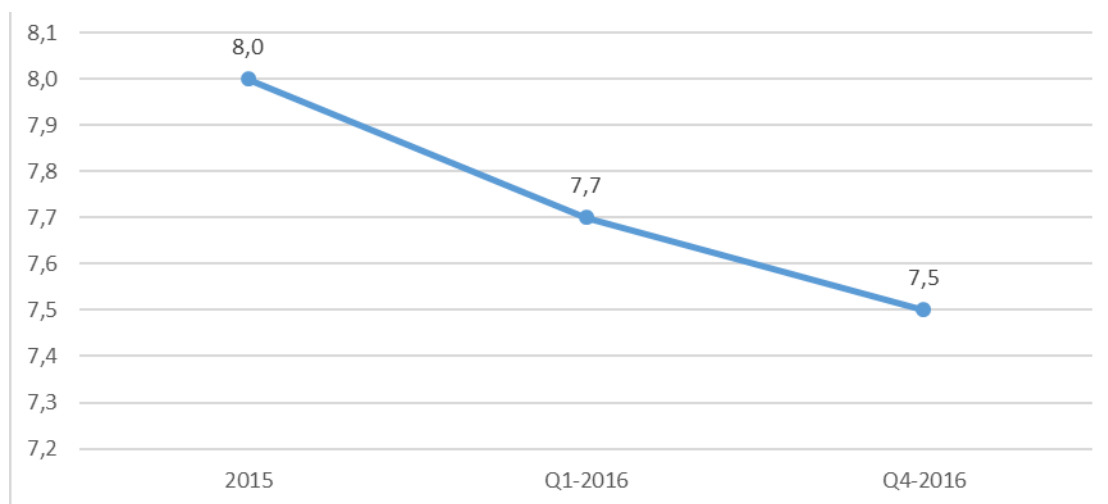

Fig. 14 General satisfaction rate for Semi-government – Customer Journey 'moving'

The average satisfaction rate Semi-government got, corresponding to moving, was a 7.5 in the fourth quartile of 2016. 63% gave Semi-government a mark between 8-10 and is satisfied; 27% gave a 6 or 7 and is satisfied; 10% is dissatisfied and gave a mark between 1-5.

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Transmitting a movement has an even lower rate. The average satisfaction rate Semi-government got, corresponding to transmitting a movement, was a 7.3 in the fourth quartile of 2016. 61% gave Semi-government a mark between 8-10 and is satisfied; 22% gave a 6 or 7 and is satisfied; 17% is dissatisfied and gave a mark between 1-5.

Moving is a very stressful moment. It Is therefore important that Semi-government provides their customers with (extreme) **comfort at this moment,** because customers have other things on their mind. This is also the main goal for Semi-government (for their moving customer journey).

According to the interview does 60% try to change their addresses online, but failed and had to contact the service desk. Semi-government therefor does not provide (extreme) comfort at this moment.

The combinations of these factors and especially the decreasing NPS, which can be related to customer loyalty, makes this process interesting to focus on. The contact moments in this customer journey, as are displayed in the underlying image, will be used to research the interactions between Semi-government and the customer, to see which factors influence customer loyalty.
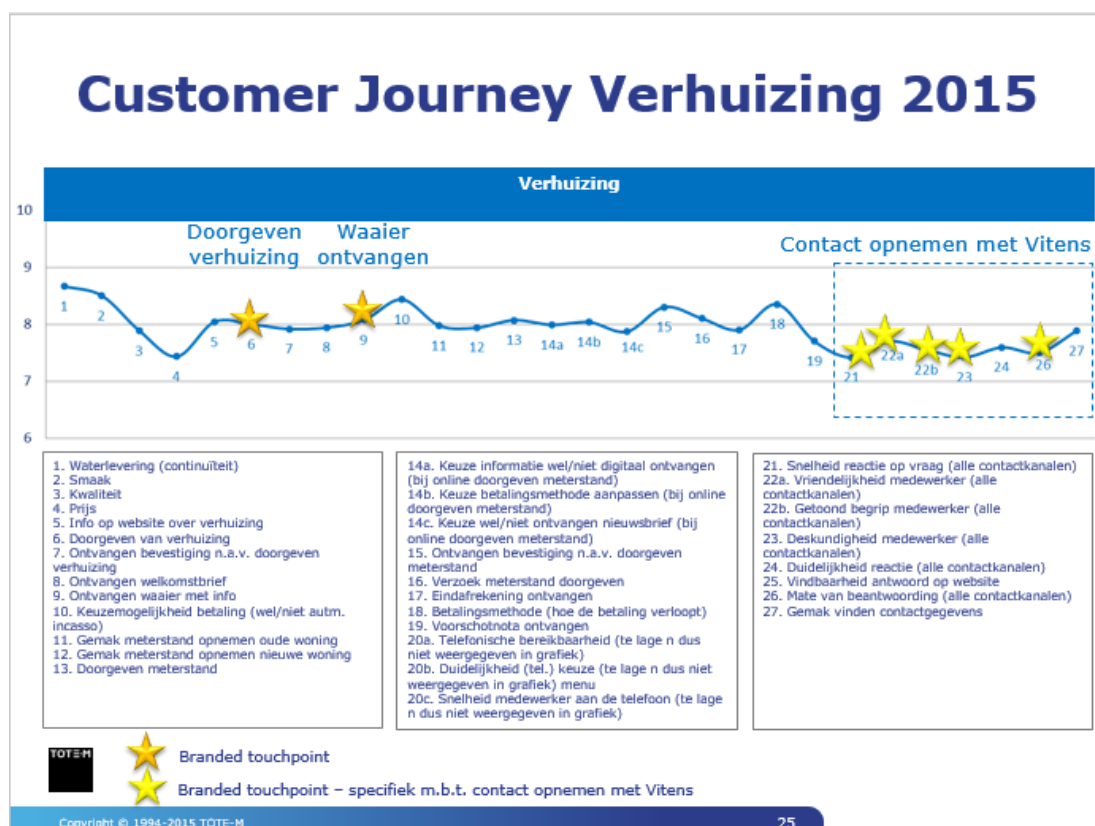
Semi-government developed a customer journey for moving (in Dutch):

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The moments which are marked with a star are branded touch points and the most important contact moments. These are subdivided in branded touch points and branded touch point which are specifically for getting in touch with Semi-government. In the interviews with customers of Semi-government, the focus will also be on these moments after the questions related to the critical incident technique have been asked. It might be that other moments are more important for customers than the above mentioned, branded touch points. The questions will be designed in such a way that it becomes clear if these branded touch points are significantly influencing customer loyalty or not.

Semi-government also measured the satisfaction rate corresponding to the journey above. The underlying graph shows that the satisfaction rate of a lot of aspects declined in the last year.
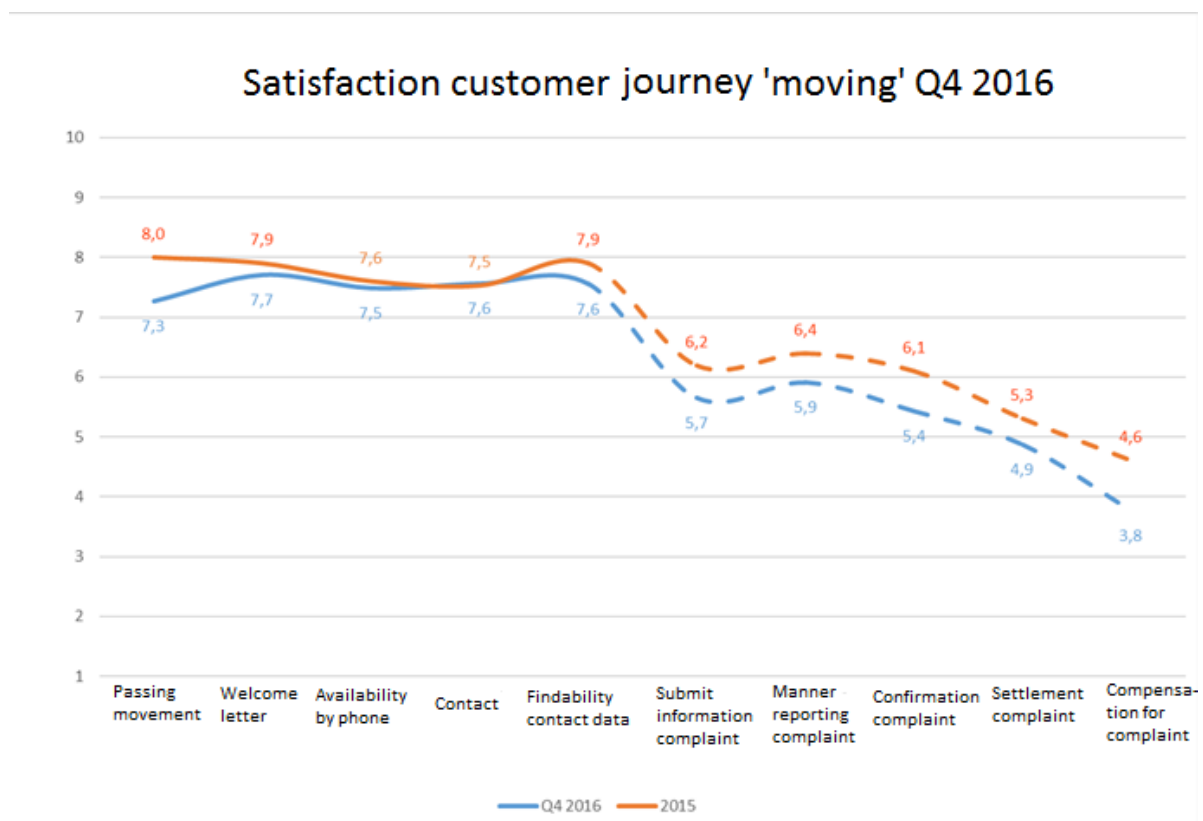
According to the interview does personal contact with a call center employee during this process influences loyalty too. Semi-government thinks that this moment has a significant higher influence on loyalty and satisfaction than when the customer only uses the website. However, if everything goes well online, the customer does not have to call customer service.

Wholesale company

Wholesale company is a wholesale company selling materials, tools, services and advice to builders and other professional processors of wood, sheet metal and construction materials in The Netherlands with approximately 680 employees throughout the whole country.

Wholesale company thinks that the most important contact moments include personal contact and are:

- Showing a new customer around at the company
- Events
- The activation program for new customers

For the latter has Wholesale company an elaborated customer journey: when someone becomes a customer, he/she joins the activation program. This is a campaign of thirteen weeks where customers can collect for a saving voucher up to more than 600 euros. They also use this as a welcome. Every time they spend more than 20 euros at Wholesale company, they save for this voucher. After thirteen weeks, they can hand this voucher in at Wholesale company.

A new customer will be invited for the activation program. They are asked for their data when they become a customer and will receive an email. They have to activate their account to start saving: if they do not do this, they will receive a reminder. When they registered, the account manager will call them to say that their account is activated and they can start with the program. The customer receives a welcome to the program message. The customers starts saving for a voucher when he/she is buying things. When the first transaction has taken place, the customer receives a message with 'congratulations with your first purchase'. Then the customer comes in a cycle where Wholesale company informs the customer what Wholesale company can offer them and also to let learn Wholesale company more about the customer (interests, birthday etc.). In the process, the customer gets a call twice from the account manager to check if the customer is satisfied. After the 12 weeks, the customer gets a message that the program has ended and obtains a voucher. If he does not hand in the voucher, the account manager will call him again.

It is suggested that the activation program has a positive influence on repeat patronage, as can be seen in the underlying table.

Purchase percentage in:	Activation program	No activation program

First month	70%	60%
Second month	51%	33%
Third month	44%	23%
4-6 month	68%	30%
7-9 month	58%	26%
10-12 month	50%	22%
	n=502	n=1491

Customers who join the activation program keep buying more often at Wholesale company. However, it is not clear if this program is the main contributor to loyalty: people who are not joining the program are still buying at Wholesale company. People who are in in the activation program may have bought once at Wholesale company, because they needed to. Furthermore, repeat patronage influences loyalty, but relative attitude is the main contributor to loyalty according to Dick and Basu (1994). Therefore it is interesting to see if people who i.e. still buy at the 10-12th month are really loyal to Wholesale company and if the activation program influenced the degree of loyalty.

Wholesale company has 4 types of customers:

Type	Description
A-customer	A customer that visits Wholesale company at least every week. An a-customers has placed 13 or more orders in the last 13 weeks. These customers generate the most profit for Wholesale company. 10% of Wholesale company's customers are A-customers. Wholesale company sees this as the ultimate loyal customer
B-customer	A customer that visits Wholesale company at least every month. A B-customer has placed 3-12 orders in the past 13 weeks.
C-customer	A customer that visits Wholesale company a couple times per year. A C-customer has placed 1 or 2 orders in the past 13 weeks.

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D-customer	The group that is subscribed as customer, but hardly visits Wholesale company. They did not place any order in the past 13 weeks.

It is interesting to investigate the influences of (dis)loyalty for all types of customers. To get a clear view of the antecedents which contribute to the loyalty of Wholesale company, 4 customers will be questioned, divided among the categories. This can show the influence of repeat patronage.

The NPS for Wholesale company is quite high. Whereas it varies between different location, the average NPS is 18

It seems that customers are quite loyal, but Wholesale company does not know what makes a customer (dis)loyal yet.

The foundation

THE FOUNDATION is a horse studbook which is related to the THE FOUNDATION horse

THE FOUNDATION is a famous organization all over the world and the studbook is world leading in dressage and jumping. They are also leading in the field of breeding innovation and are highly trusted by their members.

There are various ways that lead to membership and often are people obliged to become a member of THE FOUNDATION. When someone's horse gets pregnant from a stub horse, they need to register the cover at THE FOUNDATION. The mare owners automatically becomes a member of THE FOUNDATION, because the foal needs to be registered in the studbook of THE FOUNDATION. The owner of the stub horse mostly registers the owner of the mare and makes the mare owner a member.

Sometimes people want to join an event and become a member, furthermore there are people who join THE FOUNDATION, because they are interested in the studbook itself. However, most memberships are a result of a mare getting impregnated by a THE FOUNDATION stallion.

Whereas THE FOUNDATION is a recognized and famous organization, the number of members is decreasing. Every year THE FOUNDATION gets 900 new members and loses 1000 exiting members.

In 2016, THE FOUNDATION held a survey under their members and they concluded that members are quite loyal: 79% would register all their foals at THE FOUNDATION. However, their number of

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members have been declining over the past year, so this high number may not have a direct relation with loyalty, as THE FOUNDATION suggests.
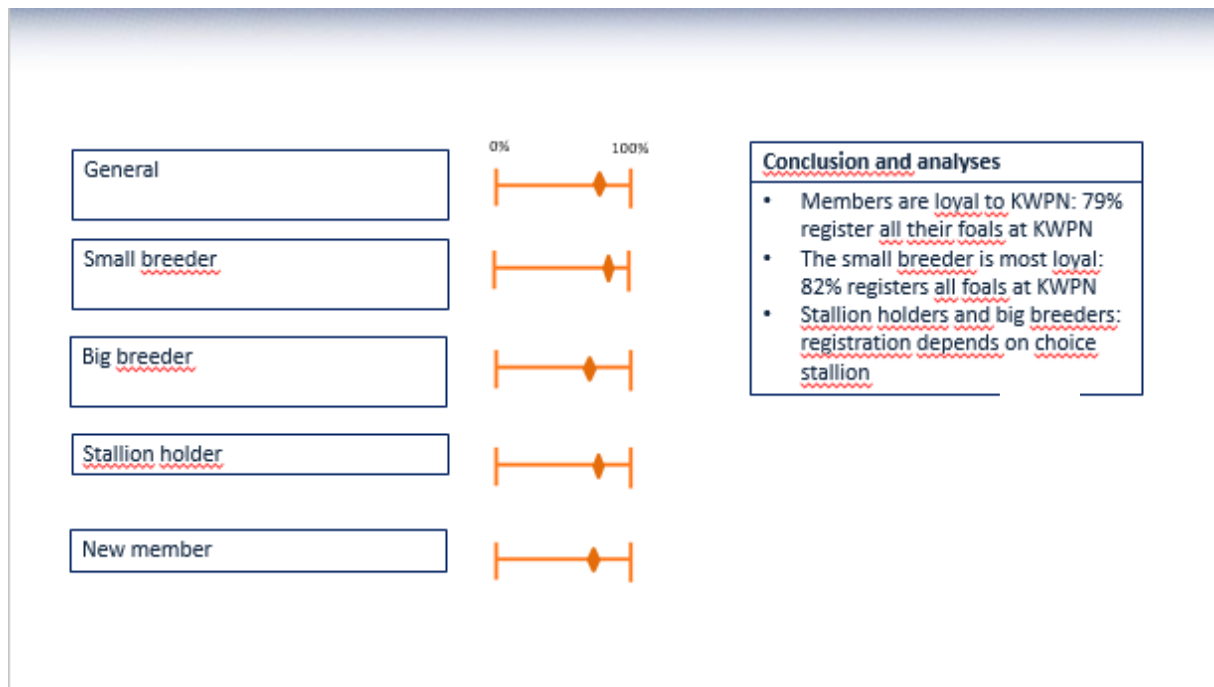
THE FOUNDATION suggests that the most loyal members are the bigger breeders. Also they suggest that a loyal member issomeone who has been a member for longer than 5 years, who visits events, visits end presentation of horses and has visited the THE FOUNDATION center.

3. Hoelang bent u al lid

#	Answer	Totaal	HH	Klein	Groot	Actief	Niet-actief	Nieuw
1	0-1 jaar	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
2	2-5 jaar	13%	10%	13%	2%	30%	16%	0%
3	6-10 jaar	15%	16%	17%	11%	24%	15%	0%
4	11-25 jaar	28%	26%	32%	31%	27%	26%	0%
5	Meer dan 25 jaar	37%	47%	38%	56%	20%	43%	0%

- Doelgroep segmentatie vraag: alles van 0-1 jaar zit in 'Nieuw lid'

Because most people become a member caused by breeding, the focus of the interviews will also be on this process. 4 people who become a member via breeding will be questioned, to see how loyal they are

THE FOUNDATION claims that when someone becomes a member, he/she joins process related to way of membership. When someone becomes a member due to coverage, he/she gets information

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about the process related to the coverage. Furthermore does everyone get a welcome letter and the latest magazine.

The research will be used to see which contact moments really influenced (dis)loyalty towards THE FOUNDATION.

According to THE FOUNDATION, the following are the most important contact moments:

- When a foal is born, a passport checker visits horse owner. This is an important contact moment which most members have experienced. THE FOUNDATION thinks this has a lot of influence, because personal contact is involved.
- The moment when a member brings his or her horse to the residence of THE FOUNDATION for research.
- Event where members can have contact with people from THE FOUNDATION or the judges from THE FOUNDATION, but this can be improved, because members complain they do not get a lot of contact here.
- Information desk: people call when they do not understand site/events and also service desks maintains contact with the biggest customers. Phone calls can help to solve problems, so these can have a high impact.

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Appendix 6: questions customers

Critical Incident Technique

Think of a moment which has changed how loyal you are to company X (related to loyalty)?

- What moment was this?

- What happened during this moment?

- How did you experience this?

- What would you have liked to see differently?

Customer Journey Process:

What are the most important contact moments you remember you have had with company X? (name 3)

Specify for the contact moments:

- Via which medium did you communicate?

- Who did you have contact with?

- What was the tone of the message (formal/informal)

- How did this make you feel?

- Did it satisfy you?

- Did it influence the image you have about the company?

- Did it influence your level of satisfaction?

- Did it influence the willingness to speak positively about the company?

How did you become a customer/member of company X?

What happened when you became a member of the company X? (warm welcome?)

Specify for the welcome:

- Via which medium did you communicate?

- Did you have contact with someone of the company after this moment?

- What was the tone of the message (formal/informal)

- How did this moment make you feel?

- Did it satisfy you?

- Did it influence the image you have aboutthe company?

- Did it influence your level of satisfaction?

- Did it influence the willingness to will speak positively about the company?

General questions:

How long have you been a member/customer?

If you would give the company a grade of 1-10, what would this be? Why?

What is your age?

If there would be a company which is able to provide you exactly the same as the company at the same price, would you switch to this supplier? Why/why not?

Attitude:

What do you think about the company?

How do you feel about the brand? (emotions, inner state related to company)

NPS:

How likely are you to recommend the company to your friends/family (1-10)? (how willing are you to speak positively about the company to your friends/family(1-10)?)

Expectations

What were your expectations before becoming a member?

How did these expectations meet reality?

Complaints

Have you ever complained at the company?

If yes: how did they handle your complaint?

Price:

What do you think about the price you pay?

Is the price worth for what you get?

Appendix 7: interview customers

General information:

Name: -

Age: 34

Membership:

I've been a member of THE FOUNDATION. When I sold my horse, I cancelled my membership. My first membership was 13 years ago. I stopped being a member for 3 years. I became again a member when I bought a THE FOUNDATION horse. I subscribed myself for membership when I was buying a horse.

I don't know if THE FOUNDATION welcomed me when I became a member. I don't think this is the standard at THE FOUNDATION. I think that people will only get the magazine 'In den Strenge', that's it. Maybe I have gotten a mail as a welcome, but I don't remember, because the welcome didn't impress me enough to remember.

THE FOUNDATION is for me a very functional company. I get In Den Strenge, the magazine, but I don't really have time to read this so I don't really care about the magazine. Furthermore I bought a foal twice and I had to do with them for the studbook. I follow the THE FOUNDATION for the PROK (research) or what I have to do to register my foal. The most recent moment was when I had to register my foal, everything is possible to do digital. You just fill in a form and that's it. Then you get a confirmation that at a certain date the horse inspector. I have never heard from this inspector. My foal is standing in a stable which is not at my house, maybe he came there to inspect my foal, but I don't know, I never heard anything about it. It probably went fine, but I just don't know.

I am not consciously a member of THE FOUNDATION and I don't really care if I get attention from THE FOUNDATION, I am only a member of THE FOUNDATION because I have to.

Contact moments:

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THE FOUNDATION never called me pro-actively. I had phone contact once about registering a foal. The lady on the phone was nice. Furthermore there are not really moments which have impressed me to a certain extend that I still remember those contact moment with THE FOUNDATION.

On the question if she has ever been to a physical meeting, she answered:

"I have been to a studbook meeting, but you are so busy with your horse at the specific moment and you observe people with a pen in your hand and that moment goes at is goes. There are not really moments that I remembered with WOW, that is THE FOUNDATION. "

The only thing I wondered about during the studbook meeting is if it matters if my horse would be from a stall which is known by the judge. (will it get a better grade).

The studbook meeting is clear and I understood what happened. I got a positive outcome for the test, but I can't really say if it satisfied me or not, I don't really have an opinion about that. It also did not change how I think about THE FOUNDATION. I did also not influence how I will speak about THE FOUNDATION, positively or negatively.

When I got a foal, I registered it online: both the deck moment and the foal birth. For this I also had contact with the service desk, because I did not really understand the registration. The conversation was informal and we had an equivalent conversation. I did not get a certain feeling about this moment: I saw it more as an obligation. I don't think I will ever get a certain feeling for THE FOUNDATION. I need it at certain moments and outside this I don't need THE FOUNDATION. Outside the formalities I do not need contact with THE FOUNDATION. I don't have a bond with THE FOUNDATION. It also did not influence the manner I will speak about THE FOUNDATION. Actually I never talk about THE FOUNDATION at all. When I have to do an EBOP, I talk about the EBOP, not about THE FOUNDATION. I rather talk about KNF, because I get in touch way more with them during matches.

I think it is very difficult to give THE FOUNDATION a grade, because I am hardly in touch with them. I just give it a 7, but I don't really know. Is it objective? I think not.

I see no reason to switch to another supplier for these kind of administrative tasks.

Critical incident technique:

I really cannot mention a moment which has changed the feeling I have about THE FOUNDATION. They did not impress me to a certain extend that I can say what. I think it is better to ask this

question to people who do have a lot of contact with THE FOUNDATION, which have more contact with THE FOUNDATION: I am just an amateur.

If I really have to say something, it is contact with Charlotte: she has her horse at the same stole. She is the only thing I really relate to THE FOUNDATION, because she works at THE FOUNDATION.

NPS:

I would never recommend THE FOUNDATION, because my friends without horses don't need it and the persons with horses know what to do. I never talk about THE FOUNDATION, but if I really have to, I would speak positively. Once a friend did not know which stallion she had to choose for breeding, and I advised her to look at the breeding advice part of THE FOUNDATION. The grade will be a 7.

I did not have any expectations before becoming a member of THE FOUNDATION. I also never complained at THE FOUNDATION.

Price:

I know THE FOUNDATION is a huge organization, but I have the idea that I pay for the services they do for breeders. It is really expensive for one or two horses and I don't think the price is worth what you get from it. I have the idea that I only get the magazine for the price and I really don't even want the magazine

Interview THE FOUNDATION 2

General information

Name: -

Age: 33

Membership

I've only be a member of THE FOUNDATION for a year. I've been a member earlier, because I had to overwrite a horse to a different owner. I became a member again, because I had to overwrite a horse to my name. The horse was getting a foal, and overwriting caused that the foal would be placed on my name automatically.

I also joined the horse judgment events a couple of times, that is fun, but due to the high costs I decided to cancel my membership. I like being a member of THE FOUNDATION, I always read the magazine. But at the point that you don't have a horse, and you only pay for the magazine, the membership is too expensive.

I do not remember getting a welcome. I do remember that, after I became a member, an action with which you would get a free halter when you became a member was launched. I thought "shit, I should have become a member later".

The last horse that I overwrote I did online. Also I signed my foal up online. I cannot imagine that I didn't do this for the other horses not online.

Critical Incident Technique

When I became more active with judging horses, I also met a famous person in the horse world and I saw the drive what was behind the studbook. That is really nice, just as visiting the stole. I really like these initiatives: going somewhere where you can go as member and not as non-member. I also like to meet the people which are behind THE FOUNDATION. I was also teaching in Leeuwarden on horse breeding and I also went with my students to the first horse visit. If you go there, then the assignment was to check the horses and see what was wrong with them or not. If you go to these events, you get more engaged with THE FOUNDATION. If you only read the magazines at home, then you don't have the engagement. THE FOUNDATION does not organize a lot, but when they organize something, I will mostly go there.

The website is renewed and better. I was active with breeding with my students. Beforehand THE FOUNDATION had a calculator to calculate what could be better for the horse and what stallion fits with the mare, but this is very difficult. I also called with the service desk of THE FOUNDATION, but they also do not really understood the tool. It is not user friendly, so I cannot use it.

The stole visits are really good organized, but the location is not ideally for me (I live in the north of North-Holland).

Contact moments:

Horse judgment competition course

The feeling I had was informal and it gave me the feeling that I am with a lot of people who are as interests in the studbook as I am who all want to learn something and the course leaders really gave me the feeling that everyone can learn to judge horses. I only knew later that it was a competition, I

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thought that it was solely a course. The feeling was 'safe'. I was satisfied about this: when they organize this again I will join it again. It also influence the image I have about THE FOUNDATION: it gave me the feeling that the stud book is for everyone. Earlier I thought that breeding and judging was not something for me: more something for older and better people. However, when you join this competition, you get the feeling that it is something for everyone. It also positively influenced what I think about THE FOUNDATION. I would even say: become a member of THE FOUNDATION and get 50% discount on the horse judgment course. I think that you make people more satisfied by engaging them. I am eager to learn, so I go to the events, but people who have this less do not go to events and do feel less engaged with the studbook. Communication of horse judgment is also not good: it is also noted very small in the magazine and people do not always tend to read it. It positively influenced how I would speak about THE FOUNDATION with other people. A friend of mine also watched the judgment course, but did not want to join. I don't know why.

Foal judgment which I visit every year, but you don't really have contact with someone of THE FOUNDATION there.

I did not have any contact with people of THE FOUNDATION. The judgment was really formal, I did not find the coziness here. I don't know really why. It also goes very fast: you indicate your foal and they run around with it. My foal cannot jog, at this moment it is not judgment ready.

The feeling that the judgment gave me is individualistic, each for themselves.

The last time we also got a note how your foal was judged. I found this an improvement: you get the feeling to get something back from the judgment day instead of solely hearing that you did not win. I do not feel togetherness at the judgment day so I do understand that not a lot of people go to these judgment days. It is killy. First you need to find out if someone wants to run with your horse: you have to find a distributor yourselves. Foal judgment day gives me a complete different feeling about THE FOUNDATION than other contact moments.

THE FOUNDATION should divide more attention to the judgment, to also make sure that more people bring the foal to the foal judgment. At the moment I do not dare to go to the judgment day, because I do not know if my man has to run with the foal or if I can also pay someone to do it. I am very practical and it is not clear to me: I cannot find it anywhere online. It also negatively influenced if I would recommend it: I would not ask a customer to join me. The state of affairs at the judgment is not clear to me: **better information beforehand needed.** I did not receive any information beforehand. It is also a threshold to go there. However, a judgment is a manner to keep people enthusiastic and engaged: if THE FOUNDATION improves this and more people would come, this

would be better for the degree of how people are engaged to THE FOUNDATION. Big breeders are always coming to these judgments, but the threshold is too high for small breeders.

On the phone, they are super nice to me on the phone. I bought a horse, and there were a lot of photos and I thought: I would like to have a PROK certificate for that. I called them and they asked me how old the pictures are. When I said that, they asked me to send it up and they arranged a PROK certificate for me. I also suggested doing this for a family member. The communication on the phone was informal and personally, and that is what I like about the contact. The feeling it gave me was willingly (to help). It also satisfied me. When I called for a different thing, it also satisfied me. It also positively influenced my image of THE FOUNDATION: I had the feeling that I didn't know anything about this subject and they gave me the feeling that it doesn't matter that you don't know a lot and that they just want to help me. This is the same for the horse calculator: the person on the phone really took the time to help me. It also positively influenced the level of satisfaction I have for THE FOUNDATION: you pay a lot of money, but it is really nice that you can always call them when you need something. I would also positively recommend THE FOUNDATION to other people if I look at this moment.

Grade:

I would give THE FOUNDATION a 7.5 on a scale 1-10. The reason is that THE FOUNDATION can do more if they are going to engage the member more (spawn). At KNS they improved this a lot too. I do not know if the breeders café is organized, but there are so few people. They provided good information and nice speakers, but I saw at the number of people that not a lot of people knew about the event.

I think that THE FOUNDATION breeds good horses and that THE FOUNDATION has a good selection policy, but they should provide more information to beginning breeders/young members.

Te feeling that THE FOUNDATION gives me is professional, qualitative. At a different studbook where I am a member of it is way less professional. THE FOUNDATION does a lot, but a lot of people don't know how great the extend of activities of THE FOUNDATION does is. I am positive about THE FOUNDATION, but there is more to pick up from this.

If there would be a different company which offers the same as THE FOUNDATION, I would not switch.

NPS:

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I think it is very difficult to say to what degree I would recommend THE FOUNDATION. If someone says to me that he/she wants to have a foal, I would recommend to become member of THE FOUNDATION. But not spontaneously. It will be something like a 7, depends on the situation.

Expectations:

I do not really know how to answer what my expectations were. It would have been cool to get a welcome present or that someone called me and asked me why I became a m ember and if the person could have helped me with something. If you call, THE FOUNDATION is very personally. What I would really help is that personal contact happened more pro-actively from THE FOUNDATION and that they would call me.

Complaints:

I never complained at THE FOUNDATION

Interview THE FOUNDATION 3

General information

Name: -

Age: 29

Membership

I've been a member of THE FOUNDATION since I registered my foal, or honestly when I inseminated my mare to get a foal. When I had to register the foal, I h ad to become a member. The foal is now a year, so I've been a member for 1 year.

It turned weirdly. Automatically it is logged that a stallion of THE FOUNDATION has been used to inseminate the mare, and you also get a bill for this. This bill was delivered on the wrong address. You have registration fees or something you have to pay and when I paid that, I became a member. So yes, this was on the moment the mare got inseminated. I registered for THE FOUNDATION via the website.

I did not get a welcome. I must say that everything was really vague. I hardly use THE FOUNDATION but you need it when your foal is born. My mare was already THE FOUNDATION. I don't know, do I still have to stay a member for my foal? When do I need or need to be a member? It was not clear. A

lot of different bills did also come in. I thought: hello, I pay a lot of money for cover costs, I also had to pay for putting the foal on my name and I already pay a lot for the membership. I understand I have to pay for chipping the foal, but a lot of costs seemed unnecessarily much. I was really surprised how much money everything costs.

Someone visited me to look at the foal, I phoned THE FOUNDATION to check if they were coming, she called me and she came over to draw and chip the horse. THE FOUNDATION was supposed to contact me when the foal had a certain age, but I never heard something from THE FOUNDATION, so that's why I called again. THE FOUNDATION said: no worries, we'll call you when it is time. That visit was really nice.

Contact moments

The moment the woman came over to chip my foal. Nice moment, went in the good way. Someone visited me to look at the foal, I phoned THE FOUNDATION to check if they were coming, she called me and she came over to draw and chip the horse. THE FOUNDATION was supposed to contact me when the foal had a certain age, but I never heard something from THE FOUNDATION, so that's why I called again. THE FOUNDATION said: no worries, we'll call you when it is time. That visit was really nice.

The contact was both formal and informal. She said my foal was looking nice, but it was also formal. The feeling I got was that it was official that my foal was in the studbook. Then you also receive the horse passport, that is really nice. It did not have influence on the degree of satisfaction I have at THE FOUNDATION. I think that you have a lot to pay for the membership and the actions you do for the foal. I thought that chipping was really expensive, but that wasn't as expensive at all. I also positively influenced the way I talked about THE FOUNDATION.

Phone conversation about bills which were still open. I did not receive any bills, so I did not know. During the conversation it became clear that the bills were send to the wrong address. After the phone conversation they send the bills to my e-mail address and it was well organized again.

The contact was formal on the phone. The conversation gave me a good feeling, they understood it and the conversation is fine. The conversation also gave me a satisfied feeling. I thought: now everything goes well and I will get the mails via e-mail. It positively influenced the image I had about THE FOUNDATION. I think that all the contact moments you have influences this positively. THE FOUNDATION is normally just a name and at these moments you really have contact with the people behind THE FOUNDATION. I did think that I am a layman, I have a recreative mare and I just really wanted offspring from her. I am really a layman in the field on how things work and I did have

contact in the beginning about how certain things work, because there is so much information on the site and this was not clear at all. I asked THE FOUNDATION how it worked and they sended me really fast back to the website. 'you can find everything there'. I just wanted to know how the process works, there is a lot of information on inspections and matches on the website, but I don't care about this. I just wanted to know what the best manner is to become a member and the people at the phone did not really explained this. I had to ask a friend how I had to become a member, I did not like this moment, this contact moment was fairly negative. There is just a lot on the website and couldn't find anything. I can imagine that there are people who understand the website, but there is so much information on the website that I really couldn't find how to apply and I can imagine that there are more people who face the same problem. I wasn't answered on the phone, they sent me to the website, but I already had looked on the website and I couldn't find it.

Further I did not really have a lot of contact with THE FOUNDATION. I am not really busy with THE FOUNDATION, I only want to have my foal in de studbook. It is more necessary to be a member and functional, I am not really engaged with THE FOUNDATION.

Critical Incident Technique

The chip moment really changed the feeling related to loyalty corresponding to THE FOUNDATION. I really like face to face contact and she also explained some things to me. She was someone where I could asked my questions to and she answered them, yes this was a very nice moment. I don't have a lot with THE FOUNDATION, but my mare and foal are in the studbook, so I don't know if It really changed. If I had to say something which could have influenced this, it is this moment.

Grade

I would give THE FOUNDATION a 7, because I think the costs are too high for a lot of things. I do understand certain thing. I am satisfied, but I am not really engaged.

Switching:

I would switch to another company if costs are lower, because price is really a thing for me.

The brand:

I am happy that my horses belong to THE FOUNDATION, I have a good feeling about THE FOUNDATION

NPS:

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I see that THE FOUNDATION that qualitative horses in house, I of course would recommend this to other. If other people have a horse of THE FOUNDATION, I would surely recommend them. The grade would be a 9

Expectations:

That I would have been helped well at the moment I will get a foal, that they would helped me, and that my horse would be registered. That's why I became a member. In reality it was really searching in the beginning, but when my foal was registered, it became clear. The information THE FOUNDATION provided in the beginning was not well, the process of getting a foal is not clear.

Complaints:

I never complained at the THE FOUNDATION.

THE FOUNDATION 4

Name: -

Age: 51

Membership

I've been a member of THE FOUNDATION for 2 – 2,5 years. I became a member by buying a horse, a star mare, I had to transcribe the horse to my name. I did this online. You just can fill the data in the site and then you can also say if you want to become a member – yes or not. Then I automatically received a mail that I had to pay. It was an easy process. I also received a welcome mail with the payment information. Everything I did went digitally.

Contact moments

Mostly I had contact via the mail for the membership and transcription and I informed by phone what the certificates of the mare were. I didn't go to a physical meeting of THE FOUNDATION.

I don't know who send the mail about the membership, The contact was friendly but formal. I don't really have a feeling attached to the mail, it was not very special. It is about the horses, I just like this kind of horses. I don't have the feeling of "Yeey, I am a member of THE FOUNDATION". The mail

satisfied me. The influence it had on my image? It was very clear and easy via the internet, so it really felt well-organized. I did not influenced how satisfied I am about THE FOUNDATION. It also did not influence how I speak about THE FOUNDATION.

I called by phone to ask if the horse needs certain certificates and if the data I had were correct. They helped me well. The contact was formal. They helped me correctly. They were not negative or something. They helped me well at the phone. It did not influence the image I have about THE FOUNDATION nor did it influence the satisfaction rate. It also did not influence how I speak about THE FOUNDATION

Grade

I would give THE FOUNDATION an 8. I am satisfied.

I would stay at THE FOUNDATION even if there was a different organization which offers the same

Critical Incident Technique

I really cannot think of a moment which influenced my satisfaction rate, there was nothing special. I always had preference for the THE FOUNDATION horse, I always liked the horse. I didn't go a lot to inspections or something. The THE FOUNDATION horse has the most opportunities. I buy the horse for the sport, but we like it also how it looks

Image

THE FOUNDATION is a good organization that also has eye for what the future wants. For the sport and breading. The horse can be placed anywhere in the world. The feeling I link to THE FOUNDATION is reliable.

NPS

I would recommend them with 8 out of 10 because of the horse species, not because of the organization.

Expectations

I expected that I could ask all questions about the horse and its certificates at THE FOUNDATION and that they would help me well with these questions. The reality fulfilled my expectations

Complaints

I never complained at THE FOUNDATION

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Price

Membership is pretty expensive. We do receive the magazine, I can imagine that this is expensive, but outside that is membership still expensive. I can do everything via the internet, so I think it is very expensive that I pay so much for the existence of the organization

Interview Wholesale company 1

General information

Name: -

Age: unknown

Becoming a customer:

Respondent has been a customer of Wholesale company for only a couple of months (approximately 2 months).

I had to do a job in Utrecht and at the job site was also a contractor. I sometimes joined him to buy building materials at Wholesale company. I liked the business, the people were nice to me and the contractor and it is possible to drive inside the store with my car. I was going to work more in the neighborhood of Utrecht and thought it would be convenient to become a customer of Wholesale company. If I am in the neighborhood, I go to Wholesale company. I also printed my business clothing with my logo on it, this also went well.

I also joined the saving program (activation program). I received mails with welcomes like nice that you became a customer and mailings about the saving program. I received an email with a button to activate my account and to start saving. I clicked on it. They also said: if you don't do this, we'll do it for you. The contact I had with the people of Wholesale company was formal. The activation program did positively influence the image I have about Wholesale company. This program also caused that I would recommend Wholesale company earlier to colleagues. I also followed a course about a certain building product and I used this in m work too. It is nice that they do this at Wholesale company.

Contact moments: I am not the person for contact via internet

When I was buying business clothing

I had to print logos on my business clothing, I did this at Wholesale company. I had contact with someone at the store which was specialized in clothing printing. Contact was informal. They helped me friendly. The price was also fine. It also significantly influenced the degree that I am satisfied about Wholesale company. I would buy there a lot, yes. The prices for i.e. wood are good and they give good discounts. It also positively influenced the image I have of Wholesale company and positively influenced the degree I am willing to recommend Wholesale company.

The moment that when I visit the store and have good contact with employees. They help me.

It is quite often busy at Wholesale company, but I do not really have to wait a long time when I visit Wholesale company. The contact is formal, I think. They give me a 'good' and positive feeling, I like the company. The way the employees threat me at Wholesale company positively influences the image I have about Wholesale company, because I am more likely to buy at Wholesale company caused by the way they treat me.

Problem with debit card

Once I had a problem with my debit card and I did not have an account at Wholesale company at that moment. I bought a lot of stuff, but it was no problem for them that I took it home and paid it later. They did not even know me at that moment, this was very good service. It wouldn't do this myself, because it needs a high degree of trust. This was very client friendly and really caused a change in image I have about Wholesale company.

Grade

9, I really like the company. If they make no mistakes, then I think I should give them a high grade.

I would switch from buying somewhere if the competitor is easier accessible/closer to the place I have to work. If a company delivers, this also makes a difference. I cannot store a lot at home, so the place where I buy really depends on the place where I have to work.

Critical Incident Technique

The moment when I had the problem with the debet card. Once I had a problem with my debet card and I did not have an account at Wholesale company at that moment. I bought a lot of stuff, but it was no problem for them that I took it home and paid it later. They did not even know me at that moment, this was very good service. It wouldn't do this myself, because it needs a high degree of trust. This was very client friendly and really caused a change in image I have about Wholesale

company. They were so customer friendly at that moment, above my expectations. Nothing should have been different at this moment.

Image

Wholesale company is a structured company, they have their business in order. The store is big, spacious. Wholesale company gives me a positive feeling. I don't really have a happy feeling, more convenient that it exists.

NPS

I would really recommend Wholesale company to friends/family/colleagues. I would recommend Wholesale company with 9 on a scale 1-10.

Expectations

This is a hard question, I don't really know. I just needed material. The product and everything was fine. They do not sell products which are not good anymore, that is what I consider good. They only sell the good stuff to me.

Complaints

 I never complained at Wholesale company

Price

The price I pay is fine, it is also worth what I get for the products. The price is comparable to competitors.

Activation program:

I don't really check my balance. I expect to get a mail when the program is finished. I also don't know how much I saved. There are no things I would have like to see differently in the program. No one did call me, but someone talked to me personally at Wholesale company. The degree of personal contact is fine. I don't want to be called every day. One mail is sufficient. The incentive (voucher) is good, I like the idea. I think it is good that you join the activation program when you open an account at Wholesale company. Opening the account was also really easy. I would recommend the saving program with 10 out of 10, because the only thing you get is a discount, I think everyone would like this. I did never get a tour around the building. However, if you go inside with your car you already see a lot of the assortment.

Interview Wholesale company 2

General information:

Name: -

Age: 49

Membership:

I have been a customer at Wholesale company for approximately a year, it's been a year since I subscribed as a customer. The first time I went to Wholesale company was for Wood. I always go to Bouwmaat, but I think the wood stock of Wholesale company is better. I also gave my email address when I became a customer. I don't remember if I joined the activation program. I don't know if I ever got an email for this, but I just don't like savings programs. Bouwmaat also has a savings program but I also do not join that program.

I only check my mail once a week and I mostly don't look serious at e-mails of companies, only at customers. I do know that a guy who helped me at Wholesale company Nieuwegein (Indonesian guy) was really friendly. He subscribed me as a member of Wholesale company. I don't know if I got a welcome mail.

Contact moments:

Becoming a member

-   On the location of Wholesale company
-   Contact with employee of Wholesale company
-   Contact was formal, but on a nice way. Not popular, just business like. Not remote.
-   The feeling this moment gave me was relaxed, they really took the time for me
-   Wholesale company became more accessible for me. Normally I go to Bouwmaat, because the assortment is bigger. I thought Bouwmaat was more accessible than Wholesale company, but not anymore.
-   No influence on satisfaction of Wholesale company

- I would better recommend Wholesale company, because I know Wholesale company better now

Sawing a closet

- On the location of Wholesale company
- Same employee as when I subscribed as a member
- The feeling it gave we was relaxed and patient
- It absolutely gave me a feeling of satisfaction
- It positively influenced the image I have about Wholesale company, because client friendliness and personal contact was very nice
- I would now earlier recommend Wholesale company to friends and family

Buying things at a Wholesale company when a girl drove me around the building of Wholesale company. I went to the store and the girl helped me. I ordered some articles and she asked me to come along, we used a car to find the articles and then she brought the articles to my car.

- On the location of Wholesale company
- A really nice girl, it was cool that a girl helped me
- The contact was informal
- It gave me a good feeling
- I was satisfied after the moment
- It did positive influence the image I have of Wholesale company
- It positively influenced the image I have about Wholesale company. In Lagerweide mostly old men help me, now a young girl, and that is what I consider good: more young people at Wholesale company
- I would now earlier recommend Wholesale company to friends and family, because personnel is nice and young

I would give Wholesale company an 8 at the scale of 10. I don't like the personnel at Bouwmarkt, personnel wise it is better at Wholesale company and the wood assortiment is better.

Wholesale company is a good company in my eyes. The feeling that I have that corresponds with Wholesale company is decent and professional

NPS:

I would recommend Wholesale company 9 out of 10.

Critical Incident Technique

When I walked into Wholesale company for the first time and they helped me really friendly. The threshold was lowered by this. The Wholesale company in Lagerweide was worse and when I first came at Wholesale company Nieuwegein I was surprised by the friendliness. I wouldn't want to see things differently. It is important for Wholesale company to know that old personnel is not so good for the image of the company. They act like they know everything, but personnel has to be client friendly and client focused.

Expectations:

I had no expectations when I became a member of Wholesale company

Complaints:

I never complained at Wholesale company

Price:

I don't like that I can see what prices of products are. I am a small business, so I want to see the prices per product. I don't know what I pay for the products but I like to have insight in how much things cost before I buy them.

Tour:

I got a walking tour when I became a member of Wholesale company, I really liked this.

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Interview Wholesale company 3

General information:

Name: -

Age: 56

Becoming a customer

I have been a customer of Wholesale company for a year, with my company, but I am already visiting Wholesale company for 35 years, because I also visited Wholesale company when I was working at my former employer. It depended on where I had to work if I would buy at Wholesale company: if another store was closer to the location, I would buy there.

I went to Wholesale company to subscribe myself as customer. I also immediately joined the activation program, that was nice, because I thought: nice, I can save money with this. Then you will also go more to Wholesale company, the activation program stimulated me to buy more at Wholesale company for the certain period. If you buy there once and buy again in 4 weeks, the saving program doesn't make any sense. I saved approximately 300 euros, I didn't yet hand in the voucher yet. I downloaded it and if I am in the neighborhood and have time, then I will go to Wholesale company to buy something nice. There is not something I want to change in the savings program. I don't know if the incentive is the right one. If I buy a machine then it will be seen as investment, then I will get a lot or the whole sum back. I have to experience the advantage of the voucher when I hand it in before I can see if the voucher is the right incentive.

Maybe it is also an idea to have a similar program for already existing customers. Why only new customers? Some customers are a customer for a very long time, give them also something. Not only Wholesale company, but also other companies, do this: you are a customer for years and don't get anything. When you become a new member, you get a lot of advantages. Why always the new customers and not the existing customers? Longer customers are more loyal and the focus should me more on existing customers.

The question is what they do for you, the price difference with competitors cannot be too big. I.e. Wholesale company can offer nice things, but if the price difference with i.e. Hornbach is too big, I will buy it at Hornbach. If you like to keep customers and keep them satisfied, then watching prices with competitors are very important.

I did not need a tour at Wholesale company, because I am coming there for years and I know everything. I am not a whole new customer, so I do not need a tour.

Contact moments

I was called for the activation program, they said that they liked that I became a member. I also like that the same person helps you over time, that the person you helps is more often the same, because he/she knows what I am and what I want. I had contact with Koen from Nieuwegein. I don't know if the conversation was formal or informal. The feeling they gave me? They don't always have to call me to check how I am. They don't have to call me. Sometimes it is nice, but it has to be a useful conversation with a goal. I was satisfied over the conversation. It did give me a good image of Wholesale company. I am not concerned with if I am satisfied or something, I only have to buy my things, I got other things to think about as a boss. This conversation also did not influence how I speak about Wholesale company with friends/family/colleagues.

I just come at Wholesale company to buy materials, it doesn't have to be nicer than it is. Some days they offer 'kroketten' , that is nice, but you do have to have time to go there. Maybe you do that if you work for a boss but not if you are your own boss.

Critical incident technique

There is no moment that influenced the degree of loyalty to Wholesale company I can remember. The contact has always been good and I wouldn't have gone back to Wholesale company if this was not the case. There is not a moment like "how have I been threaded now"?

Grade

I would give Wholesale company a 'sufficient', give it a 7.

Competition

I would go to a different company then Wholesale company if a competitor is closer. I do not want to order it online, I want to "feel" the products before I buy it. It does depend on the size of the job. I also go buy stuff at the evening, and the Hornbach has much broader opening times. Wholesale company closes too early and I cannot buy anything there in the evening. For the price I mostly can also buy the materials at Hornbach

Wholesale company is a nice company, but when the price difference is too big with other companies, I will buy it at the other company.

Wholesale company is a good company. I see it at personnel: I mostly see the same faces. People who join Wholesale company later are also gone. I see faces from 20 years ago who still work there, I really like this, because it says something about the company.

NPS:

If I have a customer and he asks me, where are you going to buy the materials, I would say my supplier is Wholesale company. But this depends on the location of the job. I do not mind to drive a little bit further for the materials, but not too far.

Expectations:

Deliver good materials for a reasonable price. I did not have time to really check if these prices are so good. Price should be in the middle: if I look on Google and stuff is way cheaper at other companies, this would be a really bad thing. In general the price always disappoints, but this is everywhere the case.

Complaints:

I never complained at Wholesale company

Wholesale company 4

General information

Name: -

Age: 36

A employee who works here started complaining: why don't we have an account at Wholesale company. I always go to Wholesale company, it is nearby, nice location, in Nieuwegein, easy to go with your car, why don't we have an account? Then I contacted Wholesale company to open an account (via internet). I see more often bills of Wholesale company coming by, but I think that only one of two employees go to Wholesale company. A Gerritsen, Jongeneel, a Ponmeyer is in our system. Jongeneel is next to our office. Our boys always go from their house to the job. Is there a Wholesale company nearby? Then I hope that they go to Wholesale company and not to a competitor which is 10 kilometers further away, because of travel time. Our boys talk with each other, so more and more people who are working at our place are going to Wholesale company. Our

boys are used to go to other companies than Wholesale company and the feeling still has to emerge: where am I going. If they go a couple of times to Jongeneel and they don't have the product and Wholesale company does, then they will go to Wholesale company the next time too. They want the material directly and not take too much effort. I also notice that, when we have a bigger job, we send a quotation to Wholesale company and if the price is fine, I will buy it at Wholesale company. I personally never had problems with Wholesale company, I had to buy a window for my roof once, they are not doing difficult, I got a good response from Wholesale company. We have an account for a year now, just for a short time.

I did not get a welcome, but I also do not need this. I just want a reliable supplier which has a good filled stock. Price and quality is the most important aspect.

Price

I can't say if the price-quality of Wholesale company is good or not, because we are not a customer for a long time. You only get this feeling for bigger jobs. For smaller jobs, materials are needed immediately. If there are bigger jobs, then I will look closer at pricing. Price is ok, for the roof windows they were the cheapest at Wholesale company. Price is not important until a certain point: if prices are too high, we will switch.

Activation program:

I read about the activation program, but we do not order enough to join. We are just a customer and I'll see how it goes. If I would have been a customer for a longer time, then I'll activate it. When the amount of savings automatically will grows, of course I will activate it (didn't know that this goes automatically?). Of course, when there is an action at Wholesale company, I will think about it, but it does not make me buy more at Wholesale company. Also, the program was not relevant for us, because we did not have big projects for which we had to order a lot at Wholesale company.

Contact moments:

For myself I only had contacts for ordering a roof window with curtains. The curtain did not fit on the old window system. Wholesale company fixes this really good. I did not have a lot of contact anymore. The contact was via mail and I had contact with someone working at sales at Nieuwegein. The contact was more informal, I like that, I don't want contact to be formal. I like being friendly with people and having fun. It was annoying, but my fault, and Wholesale company fixed my problems very well. They did not act strict or anything, no, they just fixed the problem. Do not make fights: we are looking for a solution (Wholesale company). If I order something at a supplier, they just have to

fix it, and they do this, this is good. It did not change the image I have about Wholesale company. It also did not influence how I speak about Wholesale company: the relationship with Wholesale company is too short and nothing special happened.

When we became a customer, we had contact, we got good feedback on becoming a customer ("you're a customer now, congratulations") and you can buy now on credit. Via the site I became a customer. They gave me feedback on more information that was needed to become a customer and very fast I got a reaction that the credit account was opened. I did not have to call/mail them to ask them if everything was oke. Wholesale company did not call me afterwards. It satisfied me, because everything was fixed very fast. It did not have influence on the image I have on Wholesale company. It also did not influence if I would speak positively/negatively about Wholesale company

Critical Incident Technique

I can't think of a moment.

I can remember that, when I was with my mate, we went to Wholesale company and we drove around the store. There was nothing that made me think negatively about Wholesale company. I had personal contact, my mate came there daily and he recognized the people. The contact was very friendly. The first contact was very important, the people who have contact with the customer are really important for the image of the company. They need to be educated to be open and to fix the things. If I am grumpy on the phone, then people will also don't like me and go away.

People judge us on the price, until now we survived, but for us it is important that prices for products we buy are low, so that we can offer our customers a competitive price. If the contact with Wholesale company is good, we'll stay there, except if prices in comparison with competitors are becoming too high.

General image

I never had problems with Wholesale company. I like the company, funny. Last an employee got free sunglasses, that is nice. However, employees have personal contact, the people at the office mostly only have mail contact. The employee who said we had to buy at Wholesale company goes to Wholesale company. Other employees don't go to Wholesale company, because they have never been there. Habits have to be broken.

I don't have a specific feeling corresponding to Wholesale company, but this is also the same for the other suppliers. But this would be different if I would have daily contact with Wholesale company.

Net Promoter Score

If I am in a conversation with someone, I could suggest Wholesale company, but there is not one name that I will name in a specific conversation. The corresponding grade is 7, just a nice sufficient method. Personal contact has big influence on this, but I don't have this personal contact.

Expectations:

I did not have any expectations. I expected it to be the same as other suppliers and this was true.

Complaints:

I never complained at Wholesale company.

Semi-government 1

General information

Name: -

Age: 59

Moving

I moved at the fourth of February 2017 to this house, I moved within Enschede so I already was a customer of Semi-government. I am already a customer of Semi-government for 39 years.

When I moved, I changed my address via the phone, everything was fine. The official point ofo transfer was the 11th of February and I think we had to call back at that official date. From the 17th we were living here officially. There were no problem with that. The reason I choose to do this by phone is that I always do this per phone, because I think it is very easy. On the internet you have to make accounts everywhere with passwords and I don't like this, because I have to write down my password somewhere and I think this is dangerous. I don't like it if I have to make an account for this. One should be able to make an account by just using its customer number at Semi-government. The reason I don't do this digitally is because I don't want to make an account for things like this. When I could have done this with only my customer number, I would maybe have done it online.

The phone conversation was nice and friendly and everything went well. I don't know if I got a confirmation or welcome letter. There are also no things that should be different in the future.

I would grade the level of comfort Semi-government provided me during moving with an 8. But if you ask, what could be better? Then I couldn't mention. Maybe it is a 10 then.

I would like to get a confirmation that passing the data of the movement was processed fine.

I never got a welcome package from Semi-government.

Contact moments

The contact with the person on the phone was informal and friendly. The feeling that it gave me was good, I was satisfied after the conversation, I really had the feeling that I was helped by the person on the phone. It did not change the image I have of Semi-government: I only have to pay my monthly things, for the remaining things everything goes well. It did not change how satisfied I am about Semi-government. It also did not influence how I speak about Semi-government, but I did mention to someone that everything went so smoothly (by Semi-government)

Every year I change how much I pay monthly, I also do this via the phone with someone of customer center. This is very easy, they immediately adjust the amount I pay and the next month it is always processed. The contact is informal. The conversation gave me a nice feeling, Semi-government has very nice people at the customer center. It also gave a feeling of satisfaction. The image of Semi-government is still nice. I have always been satisfied about Semi-government and now I am even more. I would also speak positively about Semi-government caused by how they helped me.

Grade:

I would give Semi-government a 10, nothing could be better. I would also not switch supplier if this was possible

Image:

Semi-government is a nice company with helpful employees. I don't have negative feelings corresponding Semi-government, as one of the few companies. I have a very positive feeling about Semi-government.

NPS:

10, I would speak positively about Semi-government with friends/family

Expectations:

I hoped that everything was going well during the movement. I thought that not everything would go well, but everything went well. A lot of things failed during the movement, but changing addresses at Semi-government didn't.

Complaints:

 I never complained at the company

Price:

I don't really watch the price, I never really look at it. I can of course also not change supplier. They have a power position, because I cannot change.

Interview Semi-government 2

General information

Name: -

Age: unknown

Moving

We got the key to the house on the third of December. We moved in on the 31th of December. We forgot to say to Semi-government that we moved. We got a letter in which stated that Semi-government saw that water was used, but that they did not know who was using it. Then we of course immediately passed the right information. After then it was fixed. I passed the information via internet. Mostly what I do, like passing information, I'll do online. On the internet we could register ourselves with our client number. Semi-government called afterwards I think, as a welcome. We also got a confirmation letter on paper, but I think they'd rather send it via e-mail. It is better for the world.

Passing the data was really easy! Just fill in the number and say where you move to. The things I would want to see different is that I don't forget filling in the information next time. The level of

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comfort Semi-government gave me during the movement is is 8 out of 10. 1 phone call and everything was arranged.

The contact I had on the phone was formal. I understand that, I would do the same. The feeling it gave me was "Shit, I forgot to do this". But not a bad feeling about Semi-government. However, it is easily fixed. It did not change the image I had of satisfaction, neither how I see Semi-government or how I speak about Semi-government to friends or family.

I don't remember any other contact moments I had for Semi-government. I never had problems with Semi-government. Everything I get on the mail, everything is clear and nice

I never had anything else then Semi-government, because I only lived in Hengelo and Enschede.

I've been a customer of Semi-government for approximately 20 years.

Grade:

I would give a Semi-government a 9, because I never had negative experiences with Semi-government.

Image:

I would not switch companies if it was possible to switch. What Semi-government does for me is fine, I never had problems with Semi-government, always good and correct. You don't have often contact with Semi-government of course. I don't have a certain feeling corresponding to Semi-government. If I had a lot of contact, this would maybe be different.

Expectations:

I did not have expectations, only for the house. I did not think about Semi-government when I moved.

Complaints:

I never complained at Semi-government.

Price:

I don't even know how much I have to pay for Semi-government. When I read the end of the year nota, I'll look at it but that's it. It is not so high that I think that I have to use less water.

Semi-government 3

General information:

Name: -

Age: 39

Moving

I've been a customer of Semi-government for 17 years. We moved to Enchede in 2001, before we lived in Leeuwarden. I pass my data via phone or internet. Mostly we pass it via internet. I logged in on the website and I passed my data for the movement, and the day of moving I had to pass the water data. Everything went fine. I experienced the process as easy, but this may also be because I am younger. I can imagine that it is harder for older people.

I called them, because when we moved it took a while before we got a bill. I called to see if everything went well, but it apparently took some time for the system to transfer the information, so there was no problem. Nothing does have to be changed, because for me everything was clear. However, I can imagine that people would like to get feedback from Semi-government on passing the data.

The level of comfort that Semi-government gives me is 8, I think that how they do it now works quite well. This is also because we grew up with computers. If it's easy, it works.

I never got a welcome package when I moved. It is a couple of weeks ago, but I did not receive anything.

Contact moments

A long time ago people came over to check meter. The contact was formal, but this can also be caused by me, because I am also formal. The feeling I got was 'uncomfortable', I'd rather do it via the computer. It did not influence the image I have of Semi-government and did not influence how I speak about Semi-government.

I also contacted customer service when I could not change the amount I paid monthly online. It should be possible to do this online, but the system was broken or something. It did not work. The contact was formal. The feeling I got was good, they change it and then it was finished. It also gave

me a satisfied feeling after the conversation. It did not influence the image I have about Semi-government or satisfaction nrate or willingness to speak about Semi-government. Who talks about Semi-government at birthday parties?

Grade

I would give Semi-government a 7, I am satisfied about Semi-government and we never had problems. It goes like it goes, it is not so difficult. They do not have competition, so I cannot look at competitors. I am dependent on Semi-government. It wouldn't be bad if the water market, like the energy market, would be a free market. If a competitor would have a better price, I would switch suppliers. Quality has to be good in The Netherlands, so price would make the main difference.

Image

In general is Semi-government good, I never had problems with them. Just ok. It is really standard, if everything is aligned well and you don't have any problems (or make them), then nothing is wrong. I don't have a feeling corresponding to Semi-government.

NPS

8, we are dependent on Semi-government and I never had bad experiences with Semi-government

Expectations

I did not have any expectations for Semi-government. It is your own responsibility to fix your stuff as a customer, you cannot lay that responsibility at Semi-government. Everybody is responsible for what he/she does itself

Complaints

I never complained at Semi-government

Price

Water is not expensive. For a family of four not at all, and Semi-government also thinks that we pay more than needed. The price is good.

Semi-government 4

Name: - & -

Age: 66 + 59

We've been a customer of Semi-government since 1972, so 45 years.

Moving

When we moved for the last time, we passed our data via the phone, because we had some problems with our internet provider Ziggo during the movement. I had to do pass all my data via the phone, because we didn't have internet for two weeks during moving. I reserved everything and said that we were going to move etc. but we ended up without internet. The phone call with Semi-government was very nice, the only bad experience was with Ziggo. Someone at the customer service helped me. I don't want Semi-government to change anything during the movement process. I think we received a welcome letter. For passing the end meter positions I also used the phone. At my work mail I received a confirmation that passed the data worked. The rate of comfort Semi-government provided us with during the movement is a 9 out of 10, there is nothing that had to be different. We were not called afterwards by Semi-government when we were moved. But that's fine, what else is there to communicate. If nothing is wrong, don't try to fix it. The amount of personal contact we have is fine. I had very nice phone conversations with the ladies at the customer service on a very good manner, they were very understanding, there is nothing that should be different. The contact we had with Semi-government was informal. The feeling the phone conversation gave us was good. It did not influence how we see Semi-government, we always had a good feeling. It positively influenced how the talk about Semi-government, if we had to talk about Semi-government we would talk positively, but how often do you speak about Semi-government?! Almost nowhere, only when people have to move. Older people need the help when they have to move and pass their information with Semi-government, because it is difficult to do this via the internet if you are not technical savvy.

Contact moments

On the old address we had water breach before the meter, that was really problematic. Especially rounding of the terrace. It is almost a science fiction story. I went outside on a Saturday and our driveway was completely soaked. Water from the rain pipe went up. The first thing I did was going

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inside and looking at the water meter and see if it still runs. Then I watched the neighbors, they had the same problem. I started called Semi-government and it seemed that we had copper rot at the front door, a coupling was broken. The line was not broken, so we still had water at home. Only little pressure, with the result that the crawl spaces in our street were full of water. These were so full that water flooded on the garden. Then the boys of Semi-government came and stopped the water flow. They called the fire men for help but they couldn't help us, so with small pumps the crawl spaces had to be emptied. They also created a redirection, so that we still had access to water. That was fixed well, only replacing our terrace never happened well. Semi-government gave orders to a company to make it but this never happened, while it was agreed. Semi-government helped us correctly during this moment and Semi-government has no sight on how the street makers who had to fix the terrace do their work. I called Semi-government and then people came immediately over to help us. It took some time to find the breach, this took the whole Saturday. The guys who worked for Semi-government were really friendly, only the street makers didn't do their work properly. Because of my disease I don't feel anything in my feet and because the street makers didn't fix the terrace, I'd hurt myself often. The contact with the boys was very informal, we had a lot of fun with them. The feeling that Semi-government gave us was 'very good', I cannot say anything. The way they treated us gave a satisfied feeling. It did not influence the image we had of Semi-government, we never had problems with Semi-government. You just pay your bills and if nothing is wrong in the water system you don't have contact with Semi-government. It positively influenced how we talk with other people about Semi-government, because they did not let us down with our problems. It also positively influenced how satisfied we are about Semi-government.

Grade

We would give Semi-government a 9, because they treated us very well and everything went smoothly. Also on the phone, everything could be passed. Then and then we got the house, so the water had to be coupled and be set on our name. Everything went nicely and they did nothing we didn't know, that is what I like.

I only would switch suppliers if the competitor is way cheaper. Other ways no urge.

Image

Semi-government is a good company, I never heard complaints of someone about Semi-government. We had a problem, but they helped us very fast. We don't have a feeling that corresponds with Semi-government

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NPS

Out of 9 of 10, we would speak positively about Semi-government to friends and family

Expectations

They helped us like we expected, easy, no difficulties. What we expected, happened.

Complaints

We never complained at Semi-government

Price

Water is not expensive at all, I am not so concerned with the price of water. You can say something about it, but you have to pay anyway. Everybody wants to have clean and enough water, this just costs money. In The Netherlands we can't complain, because we still have drinkable water.