

LOGISTICS CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGEMENT ON THE EXAMPLE OF A MANUFACTURING COMPANY

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Purpose: The aim of the article is to analyze the operation of company X in the context of logistic customer service in practice.

Design/methodology/approach: The idea of the work is to present the theoretical part of customer service and compare it to logistic customer service in practice. It also includes comparisons of practical solutions of company X to theoretical requirements.

Findings: The research issue discussed in the article was a survey. Its purpose is to present customer service in Patrick's Day in company X. 81 people of different genders and age groups responded anonymously to the survey questions 15- >60 years. General knowledge of the logistics industry and responses from opinion makers were taken into account. The responses of the surveyed people were presented graphically along with their descriptions.

Research limitations/implications: The practical part is intended to reflect the actual compliance of company X with the imposed rules. The Logistics Customer Service Principles were created to ensure a consistent and effective approach to customer service in the context of logistics.

Practical implications: The type of customer service strategy depends on the specific goals and needs of a given business. The essence of logistic customer service is the effective management of the flow of products and services from the place of production to the place of consumption in order to meet customer needs. Logistics customer service covers many aspects, such as planning, controlling and monitoring the flow of goods, inventory management, transport, warehousing and coordination of activities between various links in the supply chain.

Social implications: Customer service also means the ability to accept customer opinions and comments with an open mind. Customers should be able to express their opinions and complaints and then respond effectively.

Originality/value: The article draws attention to the importance of a non-routine approach to the dynamics of opportunities. This is important for management as a scientific discipline, but also for managers, which indicates various possible development paths.

Keywords: Customer, logistic customer service, logistics.

Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

Logistic customer service is understood as the ability to meet the expectations and needs of the customer. It is a multidimensional process that combines many pre-transaction, transactional and post-trade activities (Majchrzak-Lepczyk, 2014; Książkiewicz, 2011). This is one of the most important aspects of the operation of enterprises. It aims to meet the needs of customers, retain them and acquire them (Kręt, 2020; Kramarz, 2014; Majchrzak-Lepczyk, 2019). Proper logistic customer service ensures a good reputation of the company, optimization of costs, improvement of internal processes of the company and minimizes the risk of unavailability of products or delays. The type of customer service strategy depends on the specific goals and needs of the business (Rucińska, 2016). The essence of logistics customer service is the effective management of the flow of products and services from the place of production to the place of consumption in order to meet the needs of customers (Barcik, 2012). Logistics customer service encompasses many aspects, such as planning, controlling and monitoring the flow of goods, inventory management, transport, warehousing, and coordination of activities between different links in the supply chain (Adryjańczyk, Olech, Kuboń, Szelaż-Sikora, Sikora, Gródek-Szostak, Niemiec, Stuglik, 2020). Customer service is also about being able to accept customer feedback and comments with an open mind. The concept of customer service is multidimensional, combining logistics and marketing aspects, taking into account the mutual complementarity and dependence of logistics and marketing potential in the field of customer service. Companies need to attract customers in many ways, logistics and marketing services that guarantee reliability are essential. Service, punctuality and safety of deliveries, professional communication or building relationships with buyers. Importantly, existing customers are characterized by high price sensitivity and low product and brand loyalty, which leads to problems with demand forecasting and good distribution. Among the logistics concepts and activities carried out to meet the incalculable needs and requirements of consumers, the fundamental tasks are assigned to logistics services. "To ensure customer satisfaction, it's important that customers are satisfied with the level of service that will impact their loyalty to the company"(Harasim, Dziwulski, 2018). Customers should be able to express their opinions and complaints and then respond effectively. A customer service strategy is a plan of action to provide the best possible customer service and build lasting relationships with customers. The strategy outlines how the company will respond to customer needs, expectations, and feedback and deliver personalized, effective, and rewarding customer experiences (Kadlubek, 2011). "The customer service strategy is considered to be perspective, plan, deception, and pattern of action in order to maintain or occupy a particular position in the market" (Dyczkowska, 2015).

The customer service strategy applies not only to the service industry (including retail), but to all companies that serve customers, such as manufacturing companies (Kolasińska-Morawska, Fernówka, 2018). The concept of servicing companies is related to the product marketing strategy and sales strategy. A customer service strategy can be a combination of marketing and sales strategy (Rydzkowski, 2011). However, they mainly concern the stages of customer service (Huk, Goń, Pękalska, 2019). As such, the customer service strategy is somewhat independent of the product's marketing strategy, especially if the product is a fabricator. The basic approach to customer service therefore focuses on one of the very important elements of contact with the customer, which is customer service (Kaczmar, Suchy, 2020; Jeziński, 2013).

The practical part of the article was based on this solution, in order to reflect the actual attitude of company X to the imposed rules. The Logistics Customer Service Principles were created to ensure a consistent and effective approach to customer service in the context of logistics. The aim of the article is to analyze the operation of company X in the context of logistic customer service in practice. The idea of the work is to present the theoretical part of customer service and compare it to logistic customer service in practice. It also includes comparisons of practical solutions of company X to theoretical requirements.

2. Customer service in enterprise X in practice

To assess the operation of company X in the field of customer service in practice, an anonymous public survey was created in which 81 people participated. The survey consisted of 13 questions, including 10 directly related to company X. Respondents most often had the opportunity to answer YES/NO questions. The purpose of creating the survey questionnaire was to present the weaker points in customer service in company X and proposals for their changes. In the survey, the majority of people surveyed - 59.3% - were women. Men constituted 40.7%. Another aspect examined regarding the characteristics of the respondents was their age. Due to the possibility of its large discrepancy, the described range started from 15 years to 60 and up. In the study regarding company X the answers were as follows: 31-45 - 30.9%, 15-19 - 8.6%, 46-60 - 7.4%, while the smallest group of people were over sixty years of age, as there were 5 participants every constitutes 6.2% of the total. Respondents showed that the dominant answer in the study was professionally active status - 54.3%. The smallest group of people interacting is the group of retirees. The first aspect examined directly relating to company X was the availability of their stores in Poland. The majority of survey participants, as many as 67.9%, answered that they did not have the described commercial facility in their city.

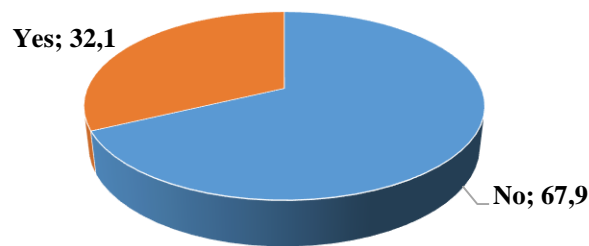


Figure 1. Availability of Enterprise X stores.

Source: Own study based on conducted research.

Buyers who want to make a purchase in company X must commute to larger cities in Poland. There are a total of eleven sales points in Poland, while there are three points in Warsaw alone. A significant number of opinion makers live in the Silesian Voivodeship, the capital of which is the city of Katowice, where the company has its store. This limits consumers' ability to purchase products in-store. In this case, purchasing goods online may be the solution. The results of the questionnaire show that the largest number of respondents made purchases in a stationary store - 44.4%. In second place in the hierarchy is the answer: stationary store and online store - 34.6%. The smallest part is made up of online purchases - 21%.



Figure 2. Possibility to make purchases.

Source: Own study based on conducted research.

Due to the fact that these studies show that this is an upward trend, the survey results are surprising. In the next stage, respondents who had marked answers regarding purchases in an online store in the previous question answered questions in this regard as part of the study. The questions concerned the ease of use of the application and the store's website, whether the order was delivered within the specified deadline, as well as whether the order was complete. The study results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.*Research based on a survey regarding an online store*

Question	Available answers	Results
Is the store website/app easy to use?	YES/NO	YES - 81,1% NO - 18,9%
Was the goods delivered on time?	YES/NO	YES - 84,9% NO - 15,1%
Was the order complete?	YES/NO	YES - 88% NO - 12%

Source: Own study based on conducted research

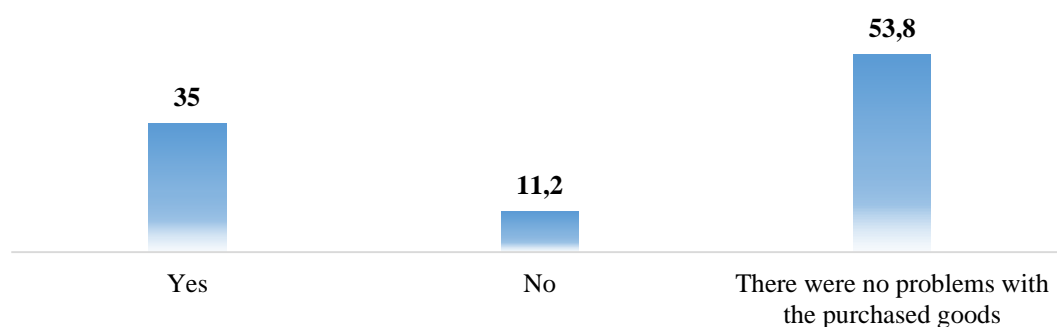
Respondents who in the survey chose the answer regarding shopping only in stationary stores were asked to express their opinion in this aspect. The effects are illustrated in table number 2.

Table 2.*Respondents' answers regarding purchases in an online store*

Question	Available answers	Results
Were the store staff helpful while shopping? (answers to questions, help in making decisions)	YES/NO	YES - 77% NO - 23%
Was the expected product available in the store?	YES/NO	YES - 80,8% NP. - 19,2%

Source: Own study based on conducted research

The later stage of the study consisted of an insight into the service provided by company.

**Figure 3.** Possibility to make purchases.

Source: Own study based on conducted research.

The company's assistance in the event of errors and dysfunctions is based, among others, on: on the quick response of employees, good contact with the customer, quick replacement or complaint, as well as the level of positive warranty considerations. To this question, the majority of respondents - 53.8% answered that there were no problems with the purchased goods. 35% of survey participants stated that company.

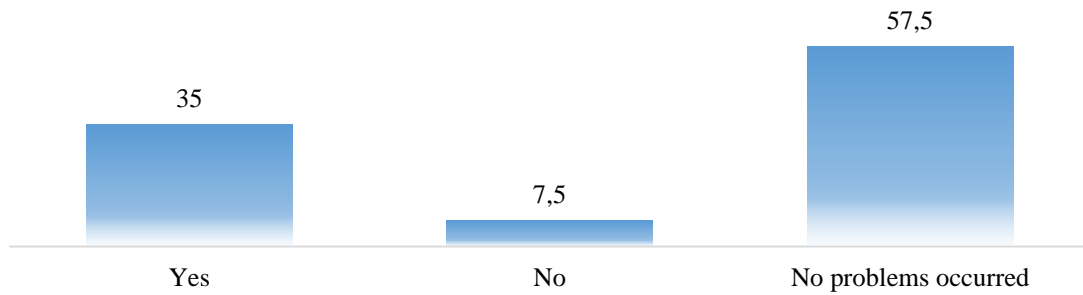


Figure 4. Company assistance in case of problems with purchased goods.

Source: Own study based on conducted research.

The next question concerned problems with the purchased goods. among others such as:

- production defects,
- damage to the goods during transport,
- incorrect packaging,
- technical defects of the product.

The results in this case are not much different from the previous study. Most people (57.5%) marked the answer "No problems occurred". The second most frequently chosen option (35%) ensures that Company X provides assistance in the event of a problem. Only 6 people surveyed (7.5%) responded negatively. The question summarizing the entire survey was mandatory for the study participants. Its aim was to determine whether, in general, they are satisfied with the customer service in company X. 85.2% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the service in the store of company X. 14.8% are not satisfied in this aspect.

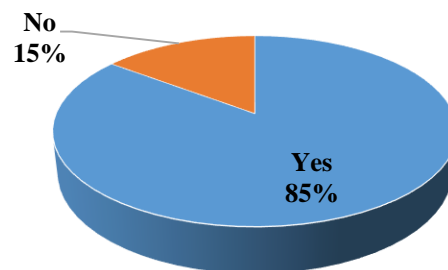


Figure 5. Customer satisfaction with enterprise service X.

Source: Own study based on conducted research.

The study shows that company X is a prosperous and customer-oriented company. It can also be said that the quality of customer service is at a high level, as evidenced by the predominance of positive responses in the survey. The company has competent and experienced employees who perform their work with the greatest care and accuracy. However, the company cannot stop at this level of service, because quality processes must be constantly improved.

3. Proposed changes for company X

The table below presents my proposed changes for company X to improve its functioning. In my study, I relied on the elements and measurements of customer service included in table 3 and on information obtained from the survey. The table of proposed changes aims to improve and modernize logistic customer service in practice.

Table 3.
Proposals for changes for company X

Customer service elements	Results based on own research
Product availability	The availability of products in company X's stores is good, but not perfect. In this case, the best solution for the company will be to maintain a constant level of inventory at each of its sales points. It would also be necessary to use the DRP system - Distribution Requirements Planning, which will allow for the optimization of warehouse levels and minimize the risk of stock shortages (Bień, Jędrzejczyk, Kucęba, 2020).
Delivery time	To improve on-time deliveries, company X should analyze its logistics process from the moment the customer places the order to the moment the product is delivered. This will allow you to find the element of the process that causes delays in delivery. Another solution is to train staff to improve the order picking and packing process or enable ongoing problem solving during the logistics process (Wiącek, Ligeikienés, 2020).
Ease of use of available online purchase options	To make the application and website easier to use, the company should minimize the number of clicks and information needed to place an order. A good solution would also be the possibility of changing the website preferences for the buyer, which will make it easier for him to search for the desired product (Zieliński, 2021).
Completeness of the order	In order to minimize shortages in orders sent to customers, the IT system should be modernized as much as possible. The solution for the company will be an RFID computer system that will simplify product identification and control of their flow.
Employee assistance during shopping	To improve this aspect of customer service, company X should retrain its employees. A bonus system would motivate staff to strive for the good of the client and make it easier to find weaker individuals in the team. An adequate solution would also be to survey the store's customers who would identify the weaker and stronger points of service (Fura, Surmacz, 2014; Marcysiak, Pieniak-Lendzion, Lendzion, 2013).
System for removing errors and dysfunctions in distribution	The most beneficial solution in the system for removing errors and dysfunctions in distribution will be a thorough analysis of the reasons for these inconveniences. For this purpose, company X should accurately report the situations that arise. Staff should implement corrective procedures as quickly as possible to reduce customer response times and waits (Smyk, 2014).
After-sales service	To improve the after-sales system, the company should improve communication with the customer. Provide detailed information regarding the return, complaint or exchange procedure. The use of the CRM - Customer Relationship Management system will be beneficial for the company (Szydelko, 2012).

Source: Own study based on conducted research.

The change proposals for company x are aimed at improving customer service in practice. The application of changes is aimed at (Kolasińska-Morawska, Fernówka, 2018; Kawa, 2017):

- improve product availability,
- improve delivery times,
- make it easier for buyers to use the application and website,
- minimize order shortages (Sułkowski, Morawski, 2014),

- improve advice when shopping,
- minimize and quick response to errors and dysfunctions,
- improve the after-sales system (Majchrzak-Lepczyk, 2015).

Continuously introducing changes for the better is crucial to the success of a company. This is an important aspect for stimulating innovation in companies. Constantly searching for new solutions, technologies and processes can discover more effective and efficient ways of operating. This contributes to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the proceedings. The company can increase team productivity and minimize wastage of time and resources. Thanks to numerous training courses and awards, employees will increase their motivation and willingness to learn, which will improve the overall comfort of work in company X. This leads to greater profitability and increased profits. Companies that do not change risk being marginalized by more innovative and progressive corporations. At this point, the market is too competitive for the company to abandon changes in the modernization of customer service processes. Most consumers are demanding and expect the best possible service. The business world is constantly changing both in terms of market trends and new technologies. The proposed changes in the table will help Company X move towards constantly evolving standards.

4. Summary

Logistics customer service is broadly understood and combines the issue of customer service with logistics. Every company tries to make this aspect as good as possible because it attracts consumers and increases revenues. The described business has many branches in which it must meet the appropriate requirements for logistic customer service. In order to find out in the best way whether this aspect is met, logistic customer service was characterized on the example of company X. To sum up the above-mentioned stages, a table of proposed changes for company X was based, among other things, on the idea of using logistics IT systems in the enterprise. The responses of the surveyed people were presented graphically along with their descriptions. As a result of this work, it can be concluded that company X, in general, performs very well in terms of logistic customer service. The respondents answered the questions mostly in a positive way. Customer service is at a high level, however, the table of proposed changes is aimed at striving for the highest possible level of logistic customer service, which gives the company benefits such as customer loyalty, recommendations and satisfaction.

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