
Executive summary and implications for managers and executives

Executive summary of “Does customer sociability matter? Differences in e-quality, e-satisfaction, and e-loyalty between introvert and extravert online banking users”

This summary has been provided to allow managers and executives a rapid appreciation of the content of the article. Those with a particular interest in the topic covered may then read the article in toto to take advantage of the more comprehensive description of the research undertaken and its results to get the full benefit of the material present.

The people who run banks must sometimes wonder if they just can not win when they try to comply with customers’ needs and preferences about accessibility – opening times, online versus personal service and the like. On one hand, you have customers who are offered the ease of checking balances or making payments via the Internet in the comfort of their own home at any time they like, then complaining that they seldom get the chance to speak to “a real person”. Then you have people who are offered convenient branch opening hours, or the opportunity to talk to a “real” person at the bank, who shun those possibilities because they would rather avoid personal contact when they make transactions.

Like all competitive businesses, banks have to do what they can to encourage their customers to do business with them rather than a competitor. What they can not do is treat customers all the same. One size does not fit all and in respect of weighing up the pros and cons of online as against personal services, banks have to take into consideration that some people are more sociable than others – with the introverts and extraverts having very different preferences. The paradox here is that the technology which banks are using to build stronger relationships with their customers in a bid to gain competitive advantage might simultaneously both motive people and isolate them.

Take phone banking, for example, when you are merely trying to get an automated message to check the balance or a transaction and you get re-directed to a “real person”, one customer (the extravert) might value the chance to speak to a bank employee, while another (the introvert) might consider it an unwelcome interruption. The growth of online services has dramatically changed the way in which customers and organizations interact, with online service quality being one of the most researched topics of marketing due to its relationship with cost, satisfaction, retention and loyalty.

In “Does customer sociability matter? Differences in e-quality, e-satisfaction, and e-loyalty between introvert and

extravert online banking users”, Dr Mohammad Ahmad Al-Hawari investigates whether the influence of e-quality and e-satisfaction on customer e-loyalty is affected by the level of customer sociability. If these sociability differences are found, banks may need to change their perception on offering the same benefits to all the customers for managing customer e-loyalty. More customization might be required to offer the best services and, ultimately, foster stronger relationships.

A major finding of this study – which was carried out in the United Arab Emirates banking industry – is that the relationships between e-quality, e-satisfaction and e-loyalty are stronger if the online banking user is an introvert (less social) rather than an extravert (very social). That is, e-quality is considered more important by introverts than by extraverts, and introverts exhibit loyalty towards banks’ online services based on e-quality.

Less social customers seek to minimize social interaction; preferring to go online as such services involve minimum social interaction. When it comes to designing the online system, banks must give priority to introvert customers over extravert customers, understand their online preferences and aim to meet these preferences. Bank managers have to offer introvert customers all possible online options that minimize their social interaction. A user-friendly and multi-functional Web site can facilitate this process, through which banks can gain a competitive advantage over other banks that do not differentiate between customers based on their sociability level.

The study demonstrate the importance of e-quality in managing customers’ e-satisfaction and e-loyalty towards online banking services. Customers showed different relationships, based on their sociability level, indicating that managers could use this to manage the relationships between e-quality, e-satisfaction and e-loyalty.

The sociability of bank customers has a differential impact on the relationships between e-quality, e-satisfaction and e-loyalty. Therefore, banks should rethink their strategy for customer relationship building. Instead of treating all customers equally, some degree of customization should be applied. Customer relationship management depends on the customer’s level of sociability. A more challenging issue is the identification of customer’s sociability level. The appropriate relationship management strategy should then be implemented to facilitate customers’ e-loyalty toward the bank’s online services. Information on customer sociability levels can be acquired through surveys or direct observation. Customization is good for banks to gain a competitive advantage.

Although online services are important for extravert customers, these customers are more likely to value social interaction as a key aspect in evaluating the competency of banks and enjoy the benefits of a long-term personal relationship. Overall, it might not be an appropriate marketing strategy for banks to ignore a high level of face-to-face banking in favor of less expensive online banking services. The sole focus on online services would likely have a negative effect on very social customers’ evaluation of the competency of banks, and thus, affect banks’ long-term profitability.

To read the full article enter 10.1108/JSM-02-2013-0036 into your search engine.

(A précis of the article “Does customer sociability matter? Differences in e-quality, e-satisfaction, and e-loyalty between introvert and extravert online banking users”. Supplied by Marketing Consultants for Emerald.)

Retraction notice

The Publisher wishes to retract the precis article “Executive summary of ‘Does customer sociability matter? Differences in e-quality, e-satisfaction, and e-loyalty between introvert and extravert online banking users’”, published in *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 28 No. 7, 2014. It has come to the attention of Emerald Publishing that this precis article contains large sections of unattributed text taken from the original research article “Does customer sociability matter? Differences in e-quality, e-satisfaction, and e-loyalty between introvert and extravert online banking users”, by

Mohammad A. Ahmad Al-Hawari, published in *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 28 No. 7, 2014.

Precis articles are intended to summarise original academic research articles for a different audience, and should not include verbatim passages from the original articles. This error occurred due to a miscommunication in the commissioning process.

To avoid any repeated incidents of this nature, Emerald has fully revised its guidelines and briefed its Commissioning Editors. *Journal of Services Marketing* sincerely apologises to the original authors and its readers for this error. The original article can be viewed here: <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-02-2013-0036>.