



Case Study

Brenntag

How we helped Brenntag to provide service excellence to every customer, every day.

The Challenge

When Brenntag approached us in 2016, they had an aspiration to change the way they carried out their business.

Products were becoming more commoditized, and the role of distributor was increasingly squeezed between manufacturer and customer.

Chemical distribution was and still is a very traditional B2B market, but as with most markets, expectations were starting to change. Brenntag wanted to be at the forefront of this change and for the very first time in its one hundred plus years history started to think about Service Excellence as an opportunity for differentiation.

The chemical distribution market is very fragmented where Brenntag is one of only a few major players. Whilst this has its advantages, it meant Brenntag could not offer the same level of personal service as the smaller players in the market. This, and operating in a market where the aforementioned commoditization was occurring, was making it more and more difficult for Brenntag to be commercially successful.

The Solution

Brenntag's overarching aim was to develop an insight program which put the customer at the heart of everything it does, by providing Service Excellence to every customer, every day. As part of the insight program, Brenntag also required a research partner to ensure all customer feedback was collected in an independent and impartial manner.

We needed to understand the business as a whole and understand which customer interactions (or touchpoints) really were making the difference. Following a Pan-European customer journey mapping workshop, a set of overview questions were put together to get a true benchmark of how Brenntag were meeting expectations. Over the 4 years, not only has the initiative evolved from telephone depth interviews to more pulse interviewing around specific touchpoints in the customer journey, but together we've developed dashboards and closed-loop systems that allow the Brenntag CX team to quickly keep their finger on the pulse of customer sentiment and act quickly on any customer feedback that is gathered.

The Insight

Acting on customer feedback which we collated is where Brenntag's CX programme has truly been innovative and creative, as the CX steering team have coordinated various internal working groups to continually review the data and make any necessary changes, be they small or large. The company has changed the focus of the business from being a product-led business to a solution-led business, developing sector propositions specific to material science, life science and the environmental sector.

"On-time and in-full" deliveries is one of the most important 'moments of truth' for customers. Brenntag therefore invested in their **Mobile Delivery Management System** following the customer feedback, which gives a fully transparent digital view to customers, giving real-time feedback around the delivery and collection process.

One of the key drivers of customer loyalty is the technical knowledge of individuals. As a direct result of customer feedback, **Brenntag Technical Services department was launched** and has made a massive impact on customer loyalty and thus their NPS scores.

Finally, with environmental and sustainable issues being at the forefront of all businesses, Brenntag used the voice of the customer to understand what was important around their packaging and developed the **returnable packaging option to all customers**.

Specific to the UK, the NPS has risen from a score of 7 in 2016 through to a score of 63 in 2020! This is not surprising considering Brenntag continued to invest in their CX program during the COVID-19 crisis with a view on the long-term service strategy, whilst others in the sector cut back to protect short term profits. This decision to focus on Service Excellence during the pandemic was not only noticed by customers but the CX industry itself, with the Service Excellence initiative winning a UK CX Award in 2020.

Due to the success of the CX programme in the UK and Ireland initially, we continue to work with Brenntag, and the research programme has now been rolled out across more than 40 countries.

Testimonial

From the outset, it was easy to see that the B2B International team clearly understood our industry, our customers and our colleagues and the unique challenges operating within the supply chain that supports our critical national infrastructure.

The B2B team just 'got it' and provided the expertise and support we needed at the outset, collaborating with us to design the first steps needed on our journey towards becoming the easiest company to deal with.

The B2B team has helped us to understand how to create a CX program that is reflective of customer needs, and highlight what Brenntag can do to respond, empowering us throughout the process.

- Malc Magee, Group Customer Experience Manager



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