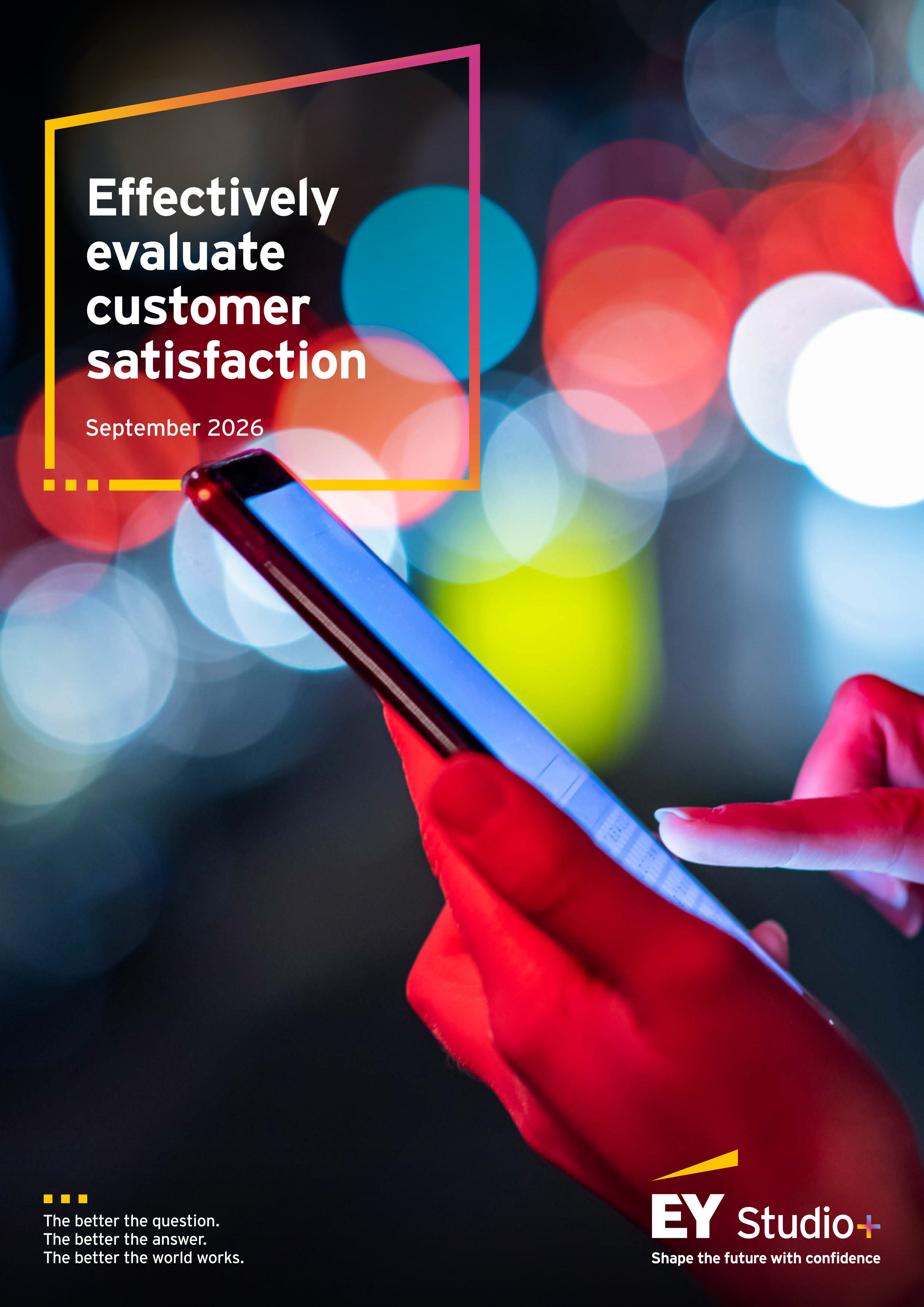

Effectively evaluate customer satisfaction

September 2026

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Introduction

In an increasingly competitive environment, customer satisfaction has become a strategic priority for organizations. According to the CX Global Insights 2025 study conducted by Ipsos, 70% of consumers say they choose a brand based on the experience they expect to receive. In addition, the French Observatoire des Services Clients and BVA Insight report that nearly one in two French consumers (49%) is willing to switch brands after a poor experience. These figures highlight the central role that customer experience plays in consumer decision-making and loyalty.

Customer experience is now one of the primary levers of differentiation. Customers are no longer looking solely for a good product; they expect a seamless, consistent and enjoyable experience across every touchpoint with the brand — whether on a website, through customer service or via social media interactions.

Historically, organizations have relied on surveys and indicators such as CSAT or NPS to measure this experience. However, these approaches are now reaching their limits. Consumers are experiencing clear survey fatigue, leading to declining response rates and less representative data. Moreover, these indicators provide only a partial view of the experience: they are subject to response bias, struggle to capture emotional dimensions, and often offer limited insight into root causes or concrete improvement actions.

In response, many organizations are gradually moving away from traditional methods and exploring new approaches to measuring satisfaction. The growing availability of data at every touchpoint, combined with advances in artificial intelligence, is opening up new perspectives. The analysis of behavioral, conversational and textual data now makes it possible to leverage customer signals at scale and continuously, providing a more granular, dynamic and actionable understanding of the lived experience.

By capitalizing on data and AI, companies can move beyond the limits of declarative surveys and transition toward a more proactive, precise and actionable measurement of customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction as a strategic imperative

Over recent years, a clear shift has emerged: customer experience is increasingly embedded in long-term organizational strategies, across sectors such as public services, retail, banking and insurance, luxury and telecommunications.

> “There is a broad awareness of the importance of the customer. However, the maturity of customer experience management varies significantly depending on industry priorities.

Nicolas CARDON
Ipsos bva France,
Customer Experience Advisor

A well-designed and context-aware Customer Experience (CX) strategy delivers multiple benefits, including:

1. **Continuous access** to relevant and high-quality data
2. **Comparable results across customers** through standardized and consistent measurement
3. **A true understanding of the Voice of the Customer** via direct access to customer feedback
4. Actionable insights that enable **targeted initiatives and optimized return on investment**
5. **Increased responsiveness** through short, near real-time feedback loops
6. Traceability and evaluation of **initiatives deployed in the field**
7. Greater flexibility within **organizational decision-making processes**

However, implementing an effective customer satisfaction and experience measurement strategy remains complex. Key challenges include:

1. Adopting a global and unified approach

By breaking down organizational silos and creating a holistic view.

2. Identifying the right indicators aligned with business objectives

While avoiding KPI overload and the limitations of generic, non-customized metrics.

3. Collecting representative quantitative and qualitative data

To assess experiences across touchpoints, journeys and channels.

4. Integrating multiple feedback channels

(Surveys, social media, customer service, etc.) into a coherent analytical framework.

5. Transform raw data into actionable insights

While accounting for diverse customer contexts and expectations.

6. Defining and executing effective corrective actions

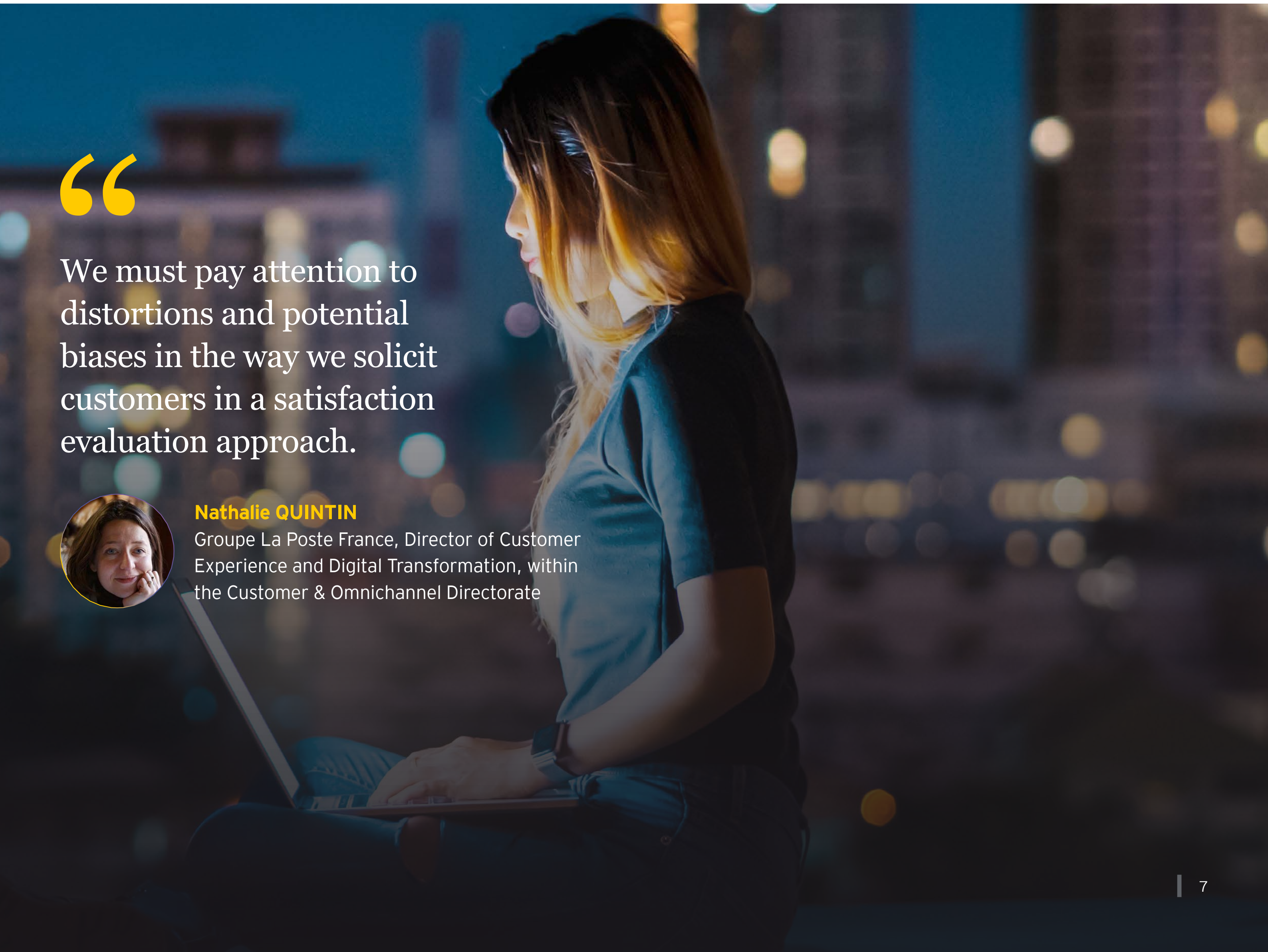
Supported by continuous monitoring and adjustment.

> “There is a clear desire to evolve beyond NPS, notably toward composite indicators. These are still being debated, and those implementing them tend to be highly mature, innovative organizations that have reached a KPI glass ceiling in CX.

Nicolas CARDON
Ipsos bva France,
Customer Experience Advisor

Market trends also highlight the limitations faced by organizations relying solely on traditional quantitative satisfaction indicators:

- **Survey fatigue**
  Customers are overwhelmed by surveys, which drives down response rates and weakens reliability. The more companies ask, the less customers respond.
- **Response bias**
  Some customer groups are more likely to respond than others, creating an inaccurate representation of overall satisfaction and missing key perspectives.
- **Limited correlation with business outcomes**
  Indicators like CSAT and NPS offer a partial view of customer experience and have been shown to correlate weakly with revenue or retention.
- **Lack of emotional insight**
  The future of customer experience lies in understanding deep emotional drivers. Sentiment and emotion are the true measures of customer experience and the key to durable relationships.
- **Lack of actionable insight**
  Traditional surveys highlight issues but provide limited clarity on root causes or specific actions to improve customer experience.
- **Slow and reactive processes**
  Traditional methods capture feedback after interactions, making adaptation and real-time action difficult.

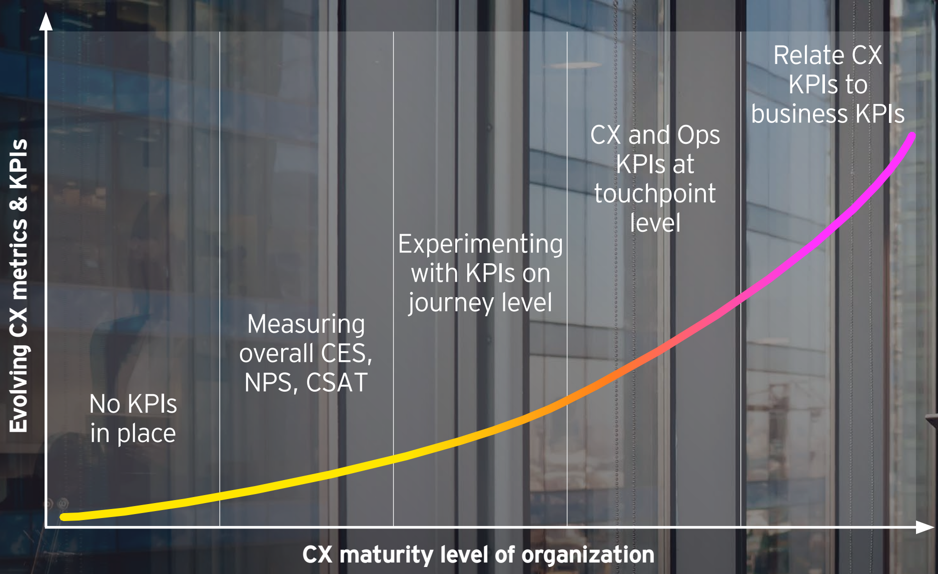


> We must pay attention to distortions and potential biases in the way we solicit customers in a satisfaction evaluation approach.

Nathalie QUINTIN
Groupe La Poste France, Director of Customer Experience and Digital Transformation, within the Customer & Omnichannel Directorate

A positive correlation can be observed between CX maturity and the evolution of key performance indicators. As organizations strengthen their ability to understand, measure and optimize customer experience, KPIs evolve from experimentation to industrial-scale implementation.

CX maturity and KPI evolution go hand in hand



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Few companies manage to study ROI on customer satisfaction. It is a key marker of organizations that are mature on the topic .

Nicolas CARDON
Ipsos bva France,
Customer Experience Advisor

Toward connected satisfaction in an era of complexity

The Year of Connection (2025) report from the XM Institute highlights a striking paradox: while organizations have access to ever-increasing volumes of data, they often remain disconnected from their customers, their employees, and sometimes even from their own strategy.

The question is no longer "**Do we measure satisfaction?**" but rather "**What are we truly steering with it?**"

In an era defined by AI, fragmented journeys and accelerated interactions, mastering satisfaction measurement requires reconnecting five core dimensions: strategy, data, omnichannel, human interaction and action.

1. Connecting satisfaction measurement to business strategy

For years, customer satisfaction was monitored primarily as an operational metric – a score reviewed in committees, sometimes compared quarter over quarter, but rarely embedded in strategic decision-making.

Today, customer experience has become a direct driver of performance. According to Salesforce, 89% of customers are more likely to repurchase after a positive experience. Yet Forrester's Customer Experience Index 2024 shows that fewer than one-third of companies clearly link customer experience to business outcomes.

The strategic challenge is threefold:

- Identify customer journey moments that genuinely influence growth (acquisition, retention, lifetime value).
- Quantify the economic cost of friction (churn, service overcosts, disengagement).
- Prioritize CX investments based on their measurable impact on overall performance.

When satisfaction is connected to strategy, it becomes a tool for objective budget arbitration, alignment of experience with business priorities, and demonstration of the link between customer perception and value creation. Satisfaction ceases to be a simple KPI and becomes a genuine **strategic steering instrument**.

2. Unifying data: from fragmentation to a holistic view

Once integrated into strategy, satisfaction must rely on a solid foundation: data. The multiplication of touchpoints and the growing volume of information complicate measurement but also dramatically enrich it. In the age of conversational platforms such as ChatGPT or Perplexity AI, expressions of satisfaction extend far beyond traditional surveys.

According to the Customer Experience Trends 2025 report by Qualtrics, the most mature organizations now combine:

- Transactional data;
- Behavioral data;
- Emotional data;
- Unstructured data (verbatims, conversations, reviews).

This requires:

- A unified infrastructure built around a single, structured data lake;
- Clear data governance to ensure reliability, consistency and compliance;
- AI-driven analytical models capable of detecting correlations, weak signals and emerging trends.

The objective is no longer merely to observe score fluctuations, but to anticipate breakpoints before they materialize in business indicators.

> Organizations need a data foundation or data lake capable of aggregating all interaction points to derive a global experience score.

Sacha VAN EL
EY Studio + Netherlands,
Director

USE CASE – LUXURY PLAYER

EY is supporting a leading luxury player as part of a global program (excluding China).

The primary objective is to embed an omnichannel strategy covering a wide variety of touchpoints and points of sale – including situations where no surveys previously existed, such as post-payment retail or "visit without purchase" scenarios involving appointment booking.

The organization opted for a "buy" approach and followed a blueprint and integration architecture defined at group level to meet privacy, scalability and robustness requirements. This was designed to benefit from the solution's GenAI-driven capabilities to address the analytics challenges of unstructured data (sentiment, tone, conversion into structured data), which is then reintegrated into the client's proprietary data platform.

The selected solution (Qualtrics) was deployed while preserving data sovereignty on the client side. The client transmits only the desired data to the software vendor so that structured and unstructured data analyses can be performed.

To measure customer and prospect experience in an appropriate and precise manner, the organization centered its evaluation strategy on the Retail Voice of the Customer and a personalization index to analyze its own performance and benchmark against peers. The information collected includes:

- Assessment of the purchasing experience;
- Satisfaction with the in-store client advisor service;
- Assessment of phone-based Client Care;
- Likelihood to recommend the store to a colleague or friend;
- Share of ambassadors among customers;
- Purchase intent;
- A global composite satisfaction indicator integrating the various scores.

Combining a proprietary data platform with the use of the customer datamart as input to the "buy" solution makes it possible to fully leverage the tool's technical capabilities, while preserving and strengthening the core customer model. Reintegrating enriched data produced by Qualtrics (such as sentiment and derived insights) feeds and enriches the existing customer foundation with high-value VOC data, because it can be activated one-to-one (1:1) and one-to-many (1:M).

"

Knowing how to delegate to our partners the components of an architecture in which they excel is essential to amplify a shared vision. Clear governance, combined with a precise definition of the source of truth, enables better distribution of responsibilities and allows us to fully leverage each stakeholder, for the benefit of end customers as well as operational teams.

Lilia SADIKI
EY Studio+ France,
Director

3. Integrating the emotional and omnichannel dimension

Unified data only becomes meaningful if it captures the richness of human interactions. Customer feedback no longer comes only from surveys: social media, online reviews, chats, voice interactions and instant messaging generate large volumes of often unstructured information

Surveys are evolving :

- Contextual micro-feedback embedded within journeys;
- Combining survey data with operational data;
- Automated free-text analysis (NLP) to extract themes; sentiment and intent.

The challenge becomes to :

- Map "moments of truth";
- Combine structured and unstructured data;
- Segment by behavior, generation or culture;
- Detect weak signals in real time.

Listening is no longer enough. You must understand emotion, context and trajectory.

USE CASE - RETAIL PLAYER

A major global retail player undertook a significant transformation to move from a siloed approach to a customer-centric, global approach.

To address this challenge, the organization needed a flexible, reliable and continuously accessible solution, enabling customer data to be centralized in a single shared space for all teams. The transformation also included an evolution in how questionnaires were posed to customers and how results were reported.

The project was delivered in several phases over two years :

- Concept design (3-4 months);
- Proof of Concept (3-4 weeks);
- Concept refinement, governance and base architecture build (6 months);
- Global rollout of the first module (3–4 months).

A key element of the solution is the capture and analysis of unstructured comments. Initially, the AI used was a less mature large language model (LLM), with a framework built to categorize feedback into different themes. A pilot enabled rapid adjustments to this framework, for example, integrating a COVID theme within one month.

This end-to-end program, delivered in collaboration with EY (from needs expression to POC and then global implementation), relies on a third-party platform that evolved over time with different models. The adopted solution is modular, enabling integration with different platforms (Qualtrics, PowerBI, etc.) to meet specific needs, with components that are easily replaceable.

> A key objective was to establish a company-wide common approach to how customer feedback is collected, analyzed and interpreted, ensuring alignment across business functions and reducing fragmented or siloed insights.

Henrik LÖNNQVIST
EY Studio + Sweden,
Senior Manager

4. Reconnecting the human dimension: AI at the customer's pace

Even the best data infrastructure does not guarantee a satisfying experience. Research published in Harvard Business Review reminds us that trust and emotion are the true drivers of satisfaction.

With AI, a new challenge emerges: the gap between technological performance and human experience.

In other words, an interaction can be technically perfect yet still unsatisfying.

AI that moves too fast can generate confusion, loss of control or silent withdrawal. Camden emphasizes the importance of "human anchors": intentional moments that restore context and allow the customer to remain an active participant in their journey.

Satisfaction should be evaluated through the quality of "agent loops", the back-and-forth between system and customer :

1. The system acts;

2. The customer understands and responds;

3. The system adjusts appropriately.

When these loops degrade (hesitation, corrections, drop-offs), it signals that the experience is moving faster than the human. Completing a task does not guarantee true satisfaction if the journey was experienced as opaque or rushed. The best AI experience is not the fastest, but the one that maintains alignment between **machine tempo** and **human tempo**. Patricia Camden & John Dubois deep dive into why synchronizing human and machine speeds is essential to creating intuitive, trustworthy user experiences in a dedicated article "Why aligning human and machine rhythms is key to AI success"

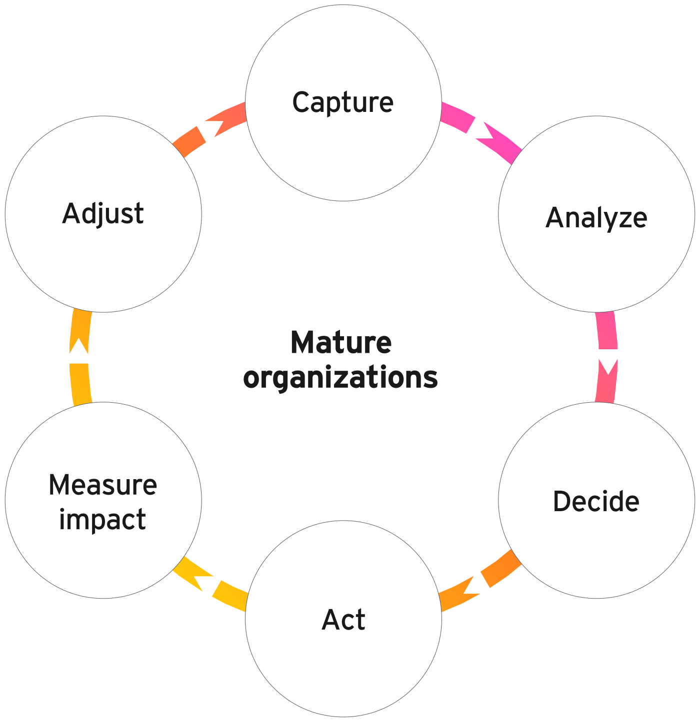
"

System performance tells us whether the technology completed the task. Human satisfaction tells us whether the experience respected «human tempo». As AI accelerates, the challenge is no longer speed. The challenge is the tempo gap. Systems can generate answers in seconds, while people still need time to understand, trust and act on them.

Patricia CAMDEN
EY Studio + USA,
Executive Director

5. Connecting measurement to action: activating the decision loop

Strategic satisfaction, enriched by data and attentive to people, only creates value if it triggers decisions. Mature organizations operate in a **continuous loop**:



The effectiveness of this loop depends on the ability to interpret signals quickly and collectively. This requires:

- Multiple but readable dashboards tailored to different organizational levels,
- Intelligent agents (chatbots, CX copilots or AI) able to answer business questions instantly based on customer data,
- Cross-functional CX committees to arbitrate and prioritize,
- Clear accountability so each insight has an owner,
- An embedded feedback culture where satisfaction becomes an action trigger.

A high-performing satisfaction dashboard does not merely display a score, it enables immediate understanding of:

- Why the score changes,
- Which segments are impacted,
- Which journey moments are at stake,
- Which actions must be prioritized.

USE CASE – GROUPE LA POSTE

To transform its distribution model, La Poste placed individual and professional customers at the heart of its priorities. For several years, collecting the Voice of the Customer has been a key lever to improve its brand image, customer engagement and employee engagement. The Voice of the Customer is also essential to defining the Group's strategy and transformation roadmap.

Since 2024, the Grand Public & Digital division has defined and implemented a SaaS listening and Voice of the Customer collection platform: the Customer Experience Hub, built collaboratively between headquarters and field teams, with EY, Ipsos bva and Medallia.

The platform centralizes quantitative data (SAT; TRO; CES; Google reviews) and qualitative data (AI-analyzed verbatims from 1M+ satisfaction surveys and 120K+ Google reviews) for both individual and professional customers.

The Customer Experience Hub enabled the deployment and sharing of a common omnichannel, multi-business view of customer satisfaction across the organization, reaching more than 9,000 users. This vision is built on the network of 17,000 La Poste distribution points and includes all Groupe La Poste brands.

The Customer Experience Hub and associated change management initiatives strengthened customer culture across the organization by putting customer satisfaction at the center of daily actions, from headquarters to the field, enabling:

- Identification and prioritization of high-impact topics,
- Capture of weak signals from customers (using AI),
- Steering action plans and projects through customer KPIs.

Satisfaction then becomes a true transformation engine: not a periodic snapshot, but an **organizational nervous system** that detects, illuminates and triggers action.

> "We place particular importance on putting customer culture at the center of the different layers of the organization.

Nathalie QUINTIN
Groupe La Poste France, Director of Customer Experience and Digital Transformation, within the Customer & Omnichannel Directorate

In practice, how to build a robust satisfaction measurement system?

Traditional satisfaction scores do not indicate where or how to act. **Sacha Van El**, a data scientist and customer experience expert at EY, proposes the **3E model** (Effective, Easy, Enjoyable) to transform satisfaction into a strategic and operational tool.

Dimension	What it measures	Data example
Effective	Does the customer achieve their objective?	FTF (First Time Fix), resolution rate
Easy	Is the experience simple and frictionless?	Number of clicks, steps, duration, drop-offs
Enjoyable	Is the experience emotionally positive?	Sentiment, tone in verbatims, qualitative feedback

How it works

- Customers are asked about their perception of the 3Es at each touchpoint,
- Objective data correlated with responses is identified (clicks, duration, abandonment, sentiment),
- When correlations are robust, these data points become predictive proxies for satisfaction, enabling the 3E score to be calculated without continuous surveying.

What it enables

- Pinpoint exactly where to intervene in the journey,
- Link satisfaction to business indicators (conversion, CLV, churn, sales),
- Prioritize actions based on real economic impact,
- Demonstrate that satisfaction directly influences business value.

A 3E system enables the creation of a global CX Score and dimension scores for each touchpoint, making satisfaction actionable and strategically relevant.

> Often, we start by asking customers to what extent their experience was effective, easy and enjoyable. We then form hypotheses about the data (for example the number of clicks or interaction duration) that could correlate with those responses. Over time, when we identify strong correlations, it is no longer necessary to ask the question in surveys: the data itself enables us to determine it.

Sacha VAN EL
EY Studio + Netherlands, Director

USE CASE – BANKING PLAYER

An advanced CX intelligence strategy enabled a leading Dutch banking player, supported by EY, to improve operational efficiency and profitability

The innovative approach is based on several pillars:

- **A holistic, multi-source view**
  Centralizing all qualitative and quantitative experience data into an intelligent system capable of linking each data point to a segment, a journey and a specific touchpoint in order to generate actionable insights.

- **A CX score based on the 3E framework**
  Automatic calculation of an overall score and scores for each of the three dimensions (Ease; Effectiveness; Emotion) at every stage of the customer journey, fueled by multiple data sources.

- **A clear correlation between CX and business value**
  Factually demonstrating the direct impact of CX on the bank's key indicators (sales, customer lifetime value, loyalty), aligning CX initiatives with strategic objectives and enabling prioritization.

- **Dynamic and interactive personas**
  AI-generated customer segments based on real data, serving as a virtual panel to guide and validate CX initiatives by profile.

- **A chatbot leveraging the full customer knowledge base**
  An intelligent assistant able to answer all CX-related questions based on internal customer knowledge, supporting customer service.

- **An automated insights platform**
  Maximizing AI to generate analyses without human intervention, scalable across journeys, enabling continuous monitoring and rapid actions.

This integrated vision places customer experience at the heart of the bank's strategy – not only as a differentiator, but also as a powerful lever for operational efficiency and sustainable value creation.

Conclusion

The measurement of customer satisfaction is undergoing a profound transformation. Long centered on a limited number of declarative indicators, organizations now face fragmented customer journeys, an explosion of touchpoints, widespread survey fatigue and significantly heightened emotional expectations. In this context, understanding the lived customer experience can no longer be reduced to tracking a single score; it requires managing a complex ecosystem of perceptions, behaviors, emotions and weak signals.

The insights are clear: customer satisfaction has become a strategic issue in its own right, yet its measurement remains challenging. Traditional indicators provide only a partial view, weakly correlated with business performance and rarely sufficient to guide decision-making. By contrast, more holistic approaches – combining structured data, qualitative feedback, behaviors and verbatims – enable leading organizations to move from reactive monitoring to truly predictive management. The use cases presented across luxury, retail and financial services illustrate this shift toward more integrated, analytical and human-centered models.

At the heart of this evolution lies a key challenge: rebalancing technology and humanity. AI enables a more continuous and granular understanding of customer journeys, but it also introduces a new pace, sometimes too fast for customers. Anchoring satisfaction measurement in human tempo, emotional perception and meaning-making becomes a decisive success factor. Organizations that align technological performance with lived experience are those that build genuine trust-based relationships.

Finally, satisfaction only creates value when it fuels action. The most effective models operate through a continuous decision loop: capture, analyze, decide, act and measure impact. This logic transforms satisfaction into a true organizational nervous system – one that detects, informs and activates.

As AI becomes ubiquitous, success will depend on using it transparently, without ever losing sight of the human dimension. The organizations that succeed will be those capable of combining technological power with relational authenticity.

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