Identifying the Critical Components of a Customer Comment Tracking System for the Cedar Park Fire Department

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I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions or writings of another.

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Abstract

The research performed analyzed how others tracked and trended customer service comments. The problem is that the Cedar Park Fire Department has received complaints regarding customer service and the fire chief is unable to track trends from these complaints. The purpose was to identify the critical components of a customer tracking system.

The research was descriptive using a literature review and fire service survey to answer the following questions; A) What is good customer service? B) What are the costs and benefits of tracking customer comments? C) What are the common components of a customer tracking system? D) How do others track customer comments? E) What are common identified flaws of customer tracking systems?

The procedures started by meeting with the Cedar Park Fire Chief to discuss EFO topics. The problem statement, purpose statement and research questions were written. Research started with a review of literature from the learning resource center of the National Fire Academy. Research continued over the internet looking for information on businesses and industry that were known for good customer service. 7 books from companies and experts in the field of customer service were read to obtain a bigger picture of the subject. A survey of fire departments was done to analyze how others handled this issue.

The major finding of this research was that most fire departments were reactive in nature and did not track trends in customer comments.

The result of this study is that the researcher recommends that the fire service learn for the private sector and becomes proactive with customer comments by; 1) Writing a customer
service tracking policy. 2) Surveying your customers to verify how you are doing? 3) Learning from your trends and training your staff to correct improper service and continue good customer service.
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Introduction

Like most service organizations, the issue of customer service within the Cedar Park Fire Department comes to the forefront from time to time. These customer service issues are initiated by both interior and exterior customers and have three main patterns. The first pattern is when the Cedar Park Fire Department sees customer service complaints come on a regular basis. The second pattern is when the same employees are involved in multiple customer service complaints. The third pattern is when the complaints are far between but originates from the same customer service issue. The Cedar Park Fire Departments slogan is “Service through Excellence”. (Cedar Park Fire Department) The researcher believes that the fire department cannot meet this slogan when customer service complaints are not addressed, followed and corrected. The ability to follow and correct these customer service complaints creates the problem I will be researching. The problem creating this research opportunity is that the Cedar Park Fire Department has received complaints regarding customer service and the Fire Chief does not have a way to track trends from these complaints.

The purpose of this research project is to identify the critical components of a customer comment tracking system. The descriptive research method was used to answer the following questions: a) What is good customer service? b) What are the costs and benefits of tracking customer comments? c) What are the common components of a customer comment tracking system? d) How do other organizations track customer comments? e) What are common identified flaws of customer tracking systems?
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BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Cedar Park Fire Department has created and instituted a mission statement, vision, core values and a slogan.

Mission
The Cedar Park Fire Department will strive for excellence in fire prevention, code enforcement, emergency operations, patient care, and customer service through a dedicated workforce that always goes beyond expectations.

Vision
The Cedar Park Fire Department will become the best fire department in the American fire service by focusing on firefighter safety, operational excellence, strong labor-management relations, and great customer service.

Core Values we believe and are committed to...
Integrity, Trust, Service, Accountability, Professionalism, Safety, Excellence, and Respect

Slogan – "Service through Excellence" (Cedar Park Fire Department)
They were all created and voted on by the entire department before implementation. All four of these statements include service as an important part of the Cedar Park Fire Department. The values are listed on the fire department shoulder patch, as a constant reminder to staff, and for all customers to see what the fire department believes. But the researcher believes showing them is not good enough. The fire department must follow them and live by them, if they are truly to be meaningful and how the department operates. The consistent or constant complaints regarding customer service from the Fire Marshal’s office shows that we still have a customer service
problem that we have been unable to fix. The problem is the fire department does not have a way to track complaints and understand why the department did not do its best.

The significance is that the city manager, city council, and members of the Cedar Park Fire Department continue to receive complaints from developers regarding the lack of customer service from personnel within the Cedar Park Fire Marshal’s Office. This lack of customer service could affect a developer’s future decision regarding other projects within the city, which directly relates to future budgets of the City of Cedar Park. When the employees of the fire marshal’s office have been asked about these complaints, they stated that the developers were just upset about the enforcement of the fire code at their buildings. To be fair, administration recognizes that the Fire Marshal’s Office is not the only department that receives complaints. Administration also recognizes that complaints come from customers who receive services from other divisions of the Cedar Park Fire Department. Finally, the researcher also realizes no one is perfect, and any enforcement division is going to get more complaints than a service division. This happens because you are telling someone to do something they may not want to do or spend money they didn’t plan on spending. Staff must learn to communicate, so while they are enforcing fire code, developers also see that they care about the economics of the issues.

The complaints are a concern of the city manager, city council and fire administration. Fire administration must track the complaints to learn from them and improve customer service, which is a core value of the department. To help understand the complaints coming in from the fire marshal’s office, the fire chief and assistant chief initiated a ride along program. For approximately three months, fire administration went on every fire inspection scheduled by the fire marshal’s office. Fire administration watched how the employees interacted and discussed issues with the customers. Fire administration watched how developers reacted to the code
requirements and how the inspectors stated them. Fire administration had discussions and meetings with the staff and customers who complained about their inspections. The significance is that while all this helped, complaints still arise. The ride along program cannot be continued. Fire administrations work load won’t allow for it. Prevention staff has to be able to maintain acceptable customer service performance without constant direct monitoring. But the significance is that the Fire Chief still didn’t have a way to track and categorize the customer service complaints that administration receives.

This study relates to the executive development course objective of developing effective management and leadership skills and enhancing team development. The research will assist both the fire marshal staff and fire administration with recognizing areas of improvement, through consistent monitoring of issues that can easily turn political in nature. The study also directly correlates with the United States Fire Administration operational goal of improving the fire and emergency services’ professional status. The ability to track and improve from our mistakes will improve the professional status of the Cedar Park Fire Department.

**Literature Review**

**Introduction**

The literature review for this project was broken into two main areas. First, research was conducted to show the importance/steps of customer service systems and their costs and benefits. Second, research was conducted to describe the components and flaws of customer tracking systems.

**Importance of Customer Service**
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Customer service means something different to everyone, but in order to be successful every business must understand its importance. This importance is understood by the following industry and customer service experts. In the book Raving Fans, “Delivering your product or service properly time after time without fail is the foundation of Raving Fan customer service" (Blanchard & Bowles, 1993, p110). In the book Nuts, Southwest Airline’s focus is on its employees and they say, “customer service doesn’t have to be serious, it isn’t bound by rules, and the customer doesn’t always have to be right…At Southwest Airlines, legendary service springs from the heart and soul of confident, loyal, and trusted employees” (Freiberg & Freiberg, 1997, p270). Disney says that customer focus is much more than just its employees and guests. Customer focus has to be a part of everything to be successful. In the book The Disney Way they say,

Customer Service is more than just taking care of customer-expressed needs and demands. Companies must also investigate and solve problems in the areas of product, process and service. Before this can happen, however, an organizations leadership has to create an environment that encourages everyone to listen to customer problems and try to accomplish the impossible” (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p69).

And finally the fire service describes customer service. In the article Counters and customer service,

Customer service is being responsive to the verbal interchange that goes on when an individual is confronted with the staff doing its job. This involves having a clear understanding of the differences between acceptable and unacceptable behavior that establish customer relations. (Coleman, 2009, p. 33)
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Marinucci also discusses customer service. In this article he specifically discusses customer service in the fire prevention environment. He says,

“Customer feedback” on nonemergency calls is similar. In fire prevention issues, rarely is the discussion about the technical aspects of the job. The public cares that you respond in a reasonable amount of time, you were polite, and you acted professionally. Complaints that cite specifics in the fire codes or technical competence are rare. Complaints usually are about perceived poor attitudes or a slow, or no, response to a request. Issues handled quickly with a phone call or personal contact and the proper demeanor will eliminate complaints and often provide support. (Marinucci, 2009, p. 96)

But understanding the meaning of customer service is not enough. All fire service employees must know the steps to good customer service in order to provide it. Just like the meaning of customer service, the steps to good customer service are different depending on the research.

Disney believes in the following steps to start good customer service.

If your organization is among the ranks of the clueless, do the following two things well and listen for favorable customer response:

- Become a master problem solver. We are convinced that the quality of orientation at most companies would have to increase tenfold to reach the “pathetic” level. Within the first week of employment, your front-line coworkers should be able to answer the following questions with assurance:
  - What products and services do we provide?
  - What are the organization’s vision and values?
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- What is the mission for my department?
- Who are our competitors and what is our competitive advantage?
- To whom do I turn for assistance with a problem I cannot solve?

- Gain customer feedback. Customer perceptions are very powerful and often become reality. Therefore, every system in the organization must be evaluated through customers’ eyes. Two critical questions to ask yourself are:
  - What is the level of ease of doing business with your organization?
  - What do we consider to be exceptional service? (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p75)

Fire Chief Alan Brunacini has also created rules for great customer service. The list is not only longer, but it is different as Chief Brunacini emphasizes the supervisor/employee relationship as the key step to providing great customer service. He says,

Workers and bosses connect in a personal and direct way. The boss is the major reference person for workers and represents the organization. The boss/worker relationship is a critical part of organizational behavior and performance because it creates the “stuff” that gets acted out at Mrs. Smith’s house (Brunacini, 2008, p 30). I’ve boiled it down to a set of 10 behaviors that support and assist workers in delivering added value directly to Mrs. Smith:

1. Taking care of the customers; Much of our focus is on customers. When we connect with them, we should deliver the best possible service to them. So the magnetic north that we talk about in this program has to do with what we are doing, managing or creating. Does this have impact on Mrs. Smith?
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2. Taking care of the workers; The relationships inside the organization are the launch pad for how we deliver services. The behavior of the boss is the most powerful thing in the everyday environment on our organizations. If bosses don’t take care of workers, how can we expect the workers to take care of Mrs Smith?

3. Build trust or go home; Trust is the basic part of any relationship and is what connects the boss to the worker and to Mrs. Smith. Mrs Smith trusts us to respond quickly, solve her problem and we’re nice to her. The workers trust Boss Smith because he responds quickly, solves the problem and has a supportive relationship with the workers. Bosses must foster, develop and then refine the trust relationship inside the system to provide the best service outside the organization.

4. Sweat the big stuff; The priority for every boss is that everyone goes home. The routine stuff is important and ensures we are ready for the tough stuff but the boss’s focus should be on the critical stuff that allows us to deliver service and survive that service. We should continue to work backward from there.

5. Set the workers free; When we became bosses, we gain authority and power that we use to create order, deliver service and take care of the workers. One of the best things a boss can do with that authority is empower workers to be independent and self-directed. This is an expression of trust in an organization and helps create an effective, integrated group.

6. Play your position; Organizations consist of of three levels: strategic; tactical, and task. For the organization to be effective, each level must be
independently functional and capable and they must be interconnected. The challenge here is to knit the levels together in a way that connects them to each other but points the organization toward the customer.

7. Keep fixin the system; We operate within a model of improvement. We follow procedures to deliver service and critique the outcome. That model is boss driven. Bosses must continually look at SOP’s, training and themselves to improve organizational performance.

8. Loyal disobedience/insubordination; The firefighters—the workers—have the best set of perceptions, experiences, and connections to Mrs. Smith, and often they have ideas about how to improve service. A willingness to make suggestions is a mature form of organizational commitment and respect.

9. Anatomy and Physiology; Every boss has strengths and weaknesses. A boss’s personal effectiveness depends on how the boss uses his skills and capabilities. This is where a boss and a worker might come together. Small improvements in the boss’s personal effectiveness can produce big time results in the boss/worker relationship.

10. Don’t do dumb stuff; Workers can identify anything the boss does that is self-serving or stupid, and this can be destructive in an organization. This simple stuff can quickly get complicated when it’s ignored. (Brunacini, 2008, pp. 30-31)

After understanding what customer service is, and the steps to good customer service, the remaining problem is being able to monitor and improve upon the successes and failures of your
customer service. Picking the correct tracking system is the last step of this important process. The Ritz-Carlton has done this by introducing a Guest they don’t want MR BIV.

The Ladies and Gentlemen are urged to immediately track the presence of MR. BIV, an acronym for mistakes, reworks, breakdowns, inefficiencies and variations. MR. BIV has brought us to the point where we honor defects. Our approach to MR. BIV is consistent with research that shows if you handle a problem quickly and well, you might get a more loyal guest than if there were no problem at all. While we wish there hadn’t been a problem in the first place, we believe there is a need to learn from each imperfection. We want people to report the breakdowns so we can build solutions to remove them from our hotels, not just sweep them under a rug. So MR. BIV has been a real way to take the stigma out of complaints and help us reliably track defects to make the necessary corrections. (Michelli, 2008, p. 155)

An article in Public Safety Communications advises; Every agency should have a formal complaint investigation process that includes how complaints are received, how they are investigated and what is done with the findings. Below, some tips for developing (or updating) a formal complaint process.

Step 1: Document it. The policy should require the complaintant to complete a form or submit some type of documentation to kick off the investigation.

Step 2: Designate a point person. Agencies should have a formal chain of investigation that determines who investigates complaints.

Step 3: Collect information. Investigators should gather as much information as possible when investigating complaints.
Step 4: Act: An agency’s policy for complaint investigation should ultimately have a component for releasing the findings, if appropriate, after the investigation.

The bottom line: A formal, objective process for the receipt, processing, investigation, and follow up of complaints is imperative to agency customer service levels and successful operations. (Smith, 2009, p. 18)

From an article in JEMS we see there are 3 monitoring systems used by EMS agencies. An ideal satisfaction monitoring tool is designed to measure feedback on important elements of key moments of truth. There are three popular methods of assessment:

Third-party approach: Most health-care experts advocate this approach that utilizes such groups as EMS survey and research consultants. Using a third party provides an economy of scale, level of objectivity and anonymity that in-house programs cannot achieve. In addition, they allow you to benchmark your agency against a large database of other providers.

In-house approach: Many agencies use an in-house approach. Direct mail and personal calls are the most common and can be a cost-effective way to assess the customer’s perspective. In-house approaches are easy to administer, but they may not be statistically validated and could contain unintentional bias. Under this approach, trending of patient satisfaction data can be accomplished, but comparative data isn’t available unless agencies partner for this purpose.

Point-of-service approach: This assessment approach is less common, but it’s the one we use at Montgomery County Hospital District. Our agency provides an on-the-spot survey to patients upon delivery at the hospital. Typically a business reply card, this survey tool
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asks four key questions about our service and offers the opportunity to comment.

Questions include:

1. Did we arrive in a timely manner?
2. Did we explain the treatment you received?
3. Were you treated in a respectful manner?
4. Were we able to make you comfortable? (Johnson, 2010, p. 94)

Instead of picking one of the above, some companies are melting multiple tools together to make a system that works for them.

An approach that is gaining acceptance in the fire services is known as Customer Relationship Management (CRM). CRM is an information industry term for methodologies, software, and usually Internet capabilities that help an organization manage customer relationships in an organized way. In the business world CRM has swiftly moved from being something companies used to gain an edge to its status now as a necessity in almost every business. Managing relationships with customers has become a critical organizational competency. (Community relations Fire department and public interaction, 2007)

Why is customer service so important? Especially in a service organization where little choices for other services are available? There are many benefits of good customer service. Good customer service does the following for your organization. First, focusing on customer service prevents criticism. I know that I won’t be criticized for taking care of a customer, I will only be criticized if I don’t take care of a customer (Spector & McCarthy, 1995, p. 235) Second,
focusing on customer service gives the organization a good image. Everything the customer sees, hears, touches, smells, and tastes creates an impression—“everything speaks.” Customers may not consciously pick up on every detail, but, make no mistake about it, an impression is made. (Snow & Yanovitch, 2010, p. 7) Third, focusing on customer service prevents waste. We have tried very hard to find out how we are meeting our customers’ needs and where we need to improve. Putting all the emphasis on the customer’s need and continually improving how we meet those needs—that’s how we have been able to eliminate waste from our systems (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 73).

Forth, focusing on customer service provides lessons for the department. The additional benefit of maintaining a database of breakdowns is that it affords the opportunities to be proactive so that processes can be modified and training can be delivered (Michelli, 2008, p. 156). Finally, focusing on customer service helps create departmental values.

Service springs from sincerity. It’s difficult to provide service that is sincere when you operate in an environment that is superficial, cold and unfriendly. A lot of companies say they treat people with dignity and respect; Southwest actually does it. Company executives are very approachable, not at all into creating barriers between themselves and other members of the organization (Freiberg & Freiberg, 1997, p. 274).

There are many costs of not providing good customer service. The first cost of unacceptable customer service is: that bad news lingers; when problems are not resolved satisfactorily, they also produce people who are vocally negative about the brand. Even if the problem area is rectified at a later time, the initial negative impact can be lasting (Michelli, 2008, p. 182). The second cost is not planning for customer service issues. Service breakdowns will
occur in all businesses that are vulnerable to the inevitable shortcomings of humans. But trusting environments encourage staff to quickly circumvent blame and move constructively in the direction of problem resolution (Michelli, 2008, p. 111). The third cost is when customers feel like staff doesn’t care. Then it hit us—the trouble with U.S. education is not unlike the trouble with typical U.S. customer service: both are rooted in apathy and a “that’s someone else’s problem” mentality (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 271). The fourth cost is the bad reputation a business gets from just a few customer service issues,

The Technical Assistance Research Programs Corporation of Washington D.C., which publishes statistics on customer complaints, has found that for every customer complaint that an organization receives, there are 26 other dissatisfied customers who will remain silent. Each of the 27 dissatisfied customers will tell 8 to 16 others about the experience, and 10 percent will tell more than 20 other potential customers. If you do the arithmetic, you will find that three complaints translate into more than 1,000 potential customers hearing about the poor service a company provided. No company can afford to drag its feet when handling customer complaints (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 65).

When a customer complains, you know you’re hearing the truth. Listen to him. When a customer is a Raving Fan and is enthusiastic, listen to him too. But when a customer is silent or says ‘Fine’ with a smile, you really have to perk up your ears. You’ve got a problem. If nothing else, that customer isn’t a Raving Fan (Blanchard & Bowles, 1993, p. 64).

The final cost is the loss of customers or their backing.

The results of a recent customer service study conducted by Coldwell Banker indicated “a strong correlation between the quality of a company’s customer service and it’s long-
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term success.” The findings also reveal that a typical consumer switched businesses they
felt dealt with twice in the past three years because of “bad service.” When asked to
define the differences between great and poor service, customers ranked the top
characteristics of companies with “great service” as follows:

- Resolving questions and problems (66 percent)
- Knowledge of the product or service (49 percent)
- Being easy to reach (35 percent) (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 65)

Components and flaws of tracking systems

Components of a tracking system vary but these expert say use teams.

Teams have a variety of roles and potential uses. We have set them up to examine
customer complaints and determine their root causes. Teams can be set up for a specific,
one-time goal, of course, but we suggest that they continue to function on an ongoing
basis after they have fulfilled their primary purpose (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 97).

Another component is everyone doing and knowing their job.

Often senior-level leaders are far removed from the customer and how work really gets
done. To be effective, leaders have collect data from their people, analyze the data for
trends, and have the front line help remedy broken processes. Senior managers are most
effective when they perform “the 3C’s”: collecting, compiling, and communicating

Nordstrom’s most important component is making sure the customer is always first.

Nordstrom is informally organized as an “inverted pyramid”, with the top position
occupied by the customers, followed in descending order by salespeople; department
managers; store managers, buyers, merchandise managers, regional managers, general
managers; co-presidents, directors and at the bottom the co-chairmen. What sets
Nordstrom apart is that, from department managers to co-chairman, all tiers of the
inverted pyramid work to support the sales staff, not the other way around. “The only
ting we have going for us is the way we take care of our customers,” explained Johnson,
“and the people who take care of the customers are on the floor.” (Spector & McCarthy,
1995, pp. 98-99)
Continuing improvement is another component.
“We all know that mistakes will be made, and that every now and then there will be a bad
apple. But that shouldn’t deter a company from following a process of continuing to
improve how it functions. The leadership has to make it clear that empowering workers
is part of the ethics and approach of the organization (Spector & McCarthy, 1995, p. 24).
Customer service consultant Peter Glen writes: “Companies that manage service the best
are those that develop a policy and then stick to it.” (Spector & McCarthy, 1995, p. 230)
Monitoring system should include the entire process.
We can’t emphasize strongly enough the importance of implementing some system for
gauging quality level, process time, customer satisfaction, and product cost, as well as
negative elements such as errors of judgment and process mistakes. All too often,
companies give little thought to measuring processes in their entirety, even though doing
so need not be a complicated task (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 208).
Dunn Hospitality Group believes the person that hears it owns it.
Like Disney, Dunn Hospitality Group has a great reputation for handling complaints.
Each DHG employee has very specific responsibilities, but a complaint from a guest is
owned by the employee who receives it, no matter whose area of responsibility the complaint involves. At the Dunn hotel any complaint is solved directly by the person receiving the complaint, from the front-desk manager to a bellhop or a housekeeper (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 67)

Marinucci believes the biggest component is asking your customer. Marinucci says,

“You can find out what your “customers” think the same way any other business would, by asking them! You can develop a simple survey form that provides quick feedback”.

(Marinucci, 2009)

Flaws of customer tracing systems include;

The Ritz-Carlton has taken the flaws they see to heart and track them. In a playful spirit, Ritz-Carlton has identified one guest it doesn’t want in its hotel: MR.BIV. The Ladies and Gentlemen are urged to immediately track the presence of MR. BIV, an acronym for mistakes, rework, breakdowns, inefficiencies, and variations (Michelli, 2008, p. 155).

Flaws are everyone’s responsibility.

All too many owners and CEO’s are like the rental car executive or the newspaper distributor. They feel it is beneath them to concern themselves with dirty-car stories, or late deliveries from their docks, or doing whatever it takes to make a customer happy. Although a “customer first” policy usually makes its way into most of the mission statements we’ve read, far too many companies really live those words (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 63).

The lack of communication and consistency is a huge flaw.
It is imperative that process improvements be discussed between management and employees. Process improvements may also require changes in management policy. Management needs to assume a proactive role by asking the following questions:

- What do you need from management to reach your objectives?
- How can we both achieve great success?
- How can we both remove barriers to success? (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 162)

Regardless of what you promise, though it’s consistency that’s important. Customers allow themselves to be seduced into becoming Raving Fans only when they know they can count on you time and time again (Blanchard & Bowles, 1993, p. 109).

Consistency alongside ongoing improvement plus the ability to alter course quickly were keys to crating Raving Fans. Promise more only up to the point you can deliver consistently and then deliver more using The Rule of One Percent. That is the way to go. That was the way to do it (Blanchard & Bowles, 1993, p. 124).

Leadership, of course, must set the tone by walking the everything speaks talk. Leaders can’t just tell employees to pay attention to details while ignoring the same details themselves. Employees quickly see through such hypocrisy. When employees see a member of management walk by a piece of trash, not picking it up, a clear message is sent. A very different message is sent when employees see the boss take the time to pick up that piece of trash. Some of the best training comes from leaders modeling the values of the organization. Employees are watching to see what’s important to the boss (Snow & Yanovitch, 2010).

Flaws also include being too detailed.
“You can get to the point where you saturate yourselves with information, and you get paralyzed. We have more interest in broader categories, rather than analyzing and assessing blame. It’s easier to adjust with broader categories, rather than analyzing and assessing blame. It’s easier to adjust with broader categories. Maintenance could come up with 50 categories of flight delays, if it wanted to. But you end up chasing your tail.”
Jim Wimberly, Executive Vice President of Operations, Southwest Airlines (Gittell, 2003, p. 139)

Flaws also include not supporting or managing your employees.

How many times have you been so frustrated by a company’s processes that it didn’t matter how friendly the employees were? When employees are setup to fail, you can see it in their faces and you can hear it in your voices. When employees know they can’t win, they disengage from the customer experience and progressively bury their emotions. If the system sets an employee up to fail and to be humiliated, a natural reaction is for him to shut off his emotions and protect his dignity. Everyone loses when that happens (Snow & Yanovitch, 2010, p. 184).

Without accountability it’s easier for employees to just keeping doing things the way they’ve always done them. In fact, we can confidently state that the number one reason we’ve seen service initiatives fail to achieve desired objectives is a lack of accountability. Service excellence behaviors must become nonnegotiable (Snow & Yanovitch, 2010, p. 202).

Intolerable service exists when intolerable service is tolerated. When we turn our heads from problem performance, we’re actually condoning that performance. We’re telling our employees that, while we wish they would treat customers well, it’s okay if they
don’t because there won’t be a consequence. “That’s just the way she is” really means, “I’m not going to do anything about the problem.” (Snow & Yanovitch, 2010, p. 211)

Lacking a plan is a huge flaw.

The fire prevention bureau needs to have a very specific process for the input and processing of a complaint for several reasons. The first is that having a standardized approach encourages uniformity in the handling of the problem. There is less room for variation. So, here is a series of questions for you as an Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). Do you have a:

- Written policy on how to handle complaints?
- Specific form that you document the complaint?
- Means of identifying the complaining party?
- File where you keep the outcome of a complaint?

### Procedures

**Research Type**

This research was focused on finding a customer service system for monitoring and tracking customer complaints. The research method chosen was descriptive, which would help build a useable system that could be implemented to fix our problem. Research started before the Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Executive Development class by meeting with the Cedar Park Fire Chief. The meeting brought up various topics which might be used for the researchers EFO project. The problem statement, purpose statement and research questions were written during the executive development class. Research continued with a review of literature from the learning resource center of the National Fire Academy. Literature reviewed included EFO
papers, books and magazine articles. After returning home from class, research continued over
the internet looking for information on businesses and industry that were known for good
customer service. Amazon.com was searched for books relating to customer service. 7 books
from companies and experts in the field of customer service were read to obtain a larger variety
of literature on the subject.

Survey and Population

A blind survey was sent to 45 fire departments representing Williamson County and the
US. The population was chosen by: a) the fire departments in the region the researcher’s
department serves and are measured against b) departments in the researcher’s EFO class which
represent fire departments from most regions in the United States. Twenty-six fire departments
responded to the survey representing 58% percent of the departments surveyed. The survey
asked the following research questions: a) What are the common components of a customer
comment tracking system? b) How do other organizations track customer comments? c) What
are common identified flaws of customer tracking systems?

Limitations

It is assumed that the departments that responded to the survey answered the questions
correctly and honestly. It is also assumed that the survey population represents what the average
Fire Department within the United States does in regards to customer comment tracking.

Results
Results of Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is good customer service? The research conducted during the literature review showed customer service meant something different to each entity. But it also showed that to be successful each entity or expert saw the importance of customer service to an organization. In the book Raving Fans, the authors say customer service is the foundation of Raving Fans (Blanchard & Bowles, 1993). In the book Nuts, Southwest Airline’s says "legendary service springs from the heart and soul of confident, loyal, and trusted employees” (Freiberg & Freiberg, 1997, p270). Disney says, “Leadership has to create an environment that encourages everyone to listen to customer problems” (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007). And finally in the article Counters and customer service, the fire industry says, “Customer service has a clear understanding of the differences between acceptable and unacceptable behavior that establish customer relations.” (Coleman, 2009, p. 33)

Research Question 2: What are the costs and benefits of tracking customer comments? The Literature review came up with many benefits and costs of customer service. Benefits of good customer service are: a) Focusing on customer service prevents criticism. I know that I won’t be criticized for taking care of a customer, I will only be criticized if I don’t take care of a customer (Spector & McCarthy, 1995, p. 235) b) Focusing on customer service gives the organization a good image. Everything the customer sees, hears, touches smells, and tastes creates an impression—“everything speaks.” Customers may not consciously pick up on every detail, but, make no mistake about it, an impression is made. (Snow & Yanovitch, 2010, p. 7) c) Focusing on customer service prevents waste.

We have tried very hard to find out how we are meeting our customers’ needs and where we need to improve. Putting all the emphasis on the customer’s need and continually
identifying the critical components of a customer

improving how we meet those needs—that’s how we have been able to eliminate waste from our systems (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 73).

d) Focusing on customer service provides lessons for the department. The additional benefit of maintaining a database of breakdowns is that it affords the opportunities to be proactive so that processes can be modified and training can be delivered (Michelli, 2008, p. 156). 

E) Focusing on customer service helps create departmental values.

Service springs from sincerity. It’s difficult to provide service that is sincere when you operate in an environment that is superficial, cold and unfriendly. A lot of company’s say they treat people with dignity and respect; Southwest actually does it. Company executives are very approachable, not at all into creating barriers between themselves and other members of the organization (Freiberg & Freiberg, 1997, p. 274).

The costs of not providing good customer service are: a) Customers talk to others. “Bad news lingers; when problems are not resolved satisfactorily, they also produce people who are vocally negative about the brand. Even if the problem area is rectified at a later time, the initial negative impact can be lasting.” (Michelli, 2008, p. 182). 

b) Shows bad organizational planning. “Service breakdowns will occur in all businesses that are vulnerable to the inevitable shortcomings of humans. But trusting environments encourage staff to quickly circumvent blame and move constructively in the direction of problem resolution.” (Michelli, 2008, p. 111).

c) Shows customers that staff doesn’t care. “Then it hit us—the trouble with U.S. education is not unlike the trouble with typical U.S. customer service: both are rooted in apathy and a “that’s someone else’s problem” mentality.” (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 271). 

d) Bad reputations grow quickly.
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The Technical Assistance Research Programs Corporation of Washington D.C., which publishes statistics on customer complaints, has found that for every customer complaint that an organization receives, there are 26 other dissatisfied customers who will remain silent. Each of the 27 dissatisfied customers will tell 8 to 16 others about the experience, and 10 percent will tell more than 20 other potential customers. If you do the arithmetic, you will find that three complaints translate into more than 1,000 potential customers hearing about the poor service a company provided. No company can afford to drag its feet when handling customer complaints (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 65).

e) The loss of customers. A report by Caldwell Banker’s finds “that a typical consumer switched businesses they felt dealt with twice in the past three years because of “bad service.”” (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 65)

Research Question 3: What are the common components of a customer comment tracking system? The researcher asked this question through a survey sent to a population of 45 departments within the United States. Twenty-six or 58% of the departments responded. Responses were as follows:

- Team lead: 3 responses
- Supervisor lead: 6 responses
- Employee focus: 13 responses
- Process focus: 19 responses
- Customer focus: 17 responses
IDENTIFYING THE CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF A CUSTOMER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy focus</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue focus</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (comment cards to random customers)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped question</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 4: How do other organizations track customer comments? The researcher asked this question through a survey sent to a population of 45 departments within the United States. Twenty-six or 58% of the departments responded. Responses were as follows:

- Software program: 2 responses
- Database: 4 responses
- Files: 11 responses
- Do not track comments: 11 responses
- Other (comment card, website/journal, excel reports): 3 responses
- Skipped question: 1 response

Other—comment card, our department website/email journal, excel and reports made for board

Research Question 5: What are common identified flaws of customer tracking systems? The researcher asked this question through a survey sent to a population of 45 departments
within the United States. Twenty-six or 58% of the departments responded. Responses were as follows:

Manpower issues 1 response

Sampling is difficult without a tightly defined target audience. Sample pool typically too small. Questions must be concise; broad or vague questions lead to broad and vague comments without any real value and no measurable data. 1 response

We don’t have a formalized customer tracking system 7 response

Personnel approach to patients 1 response

Does not allow an easy way for my customers to report good and bad items to me. 1 response

Not enough comments/data 3 responses

N/A 2 responses

Follow up is not documented and filed 1 response

Too early to tell 1 response

Comments not databased 2 responses

Timely response to customer 1 response

Not yet 1 response

Skipped Question 3 responses

Discussion

Relationship of study and others findings
IDENTIFYING THE CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF A CUSTOMER

The private sector and the fire service both agree in the importance of good customer service to their organization. Examples of this importance from the private sector include the book Raving Fans where they say, “Delivering your product or service properly time after time without fail is the foundation of Raving Fan customer service” (Blanchard & Bowles, 1993, p110), and Disney who says, Customer Service is more than just taking care of customer-expressed needs and demands. Companies must also investigate and solve problems in the areas of product, process and service. (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p69). The fire service agrees with the experts regarding customer service. In the article Counters and customer service the fire service says, Customer service is being responsive to the verbal interchange that goes on when an individual is confronted with the staff doing its job. (Coleman, 2009, p. 33) Marinucci discusses customer service. In this article he specifically discusses customer service in the fire prevention environment. He says, the public cares that you respond in a reasonable amount of time, you were polite, and you acted professionally. Complaints usually are about perceived poor attitudes or a slow, or no, response to a request. (Marinucci, 2009, p. 96)

The fire service also agrees with private business when it comes to the steps to good customer service. Disney believes in the following steps to start good customer service. “If your organization is among the ranks of the clueless, do the following two things well and listen for favorable customer response; a) Become a master problem solver B) Gain customer feedback. (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p75) Fire Chief Alan Brunacini also has rules for great customer service. He says; A) Take care of the customers B) Keep fixin the system. (Brunacini, 2008, pp. 30-31)

To understand the real importance of customer service to the private and public sector, the costs and benefits must be discussed. The benefits include; A) Focusing on customer service
IDENTIFYING THE CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF A CUSTOMER

prevents criticism. “I know that I won’t be criticized for taking care of a customer, I will only be criticized if I don’t take care of a customer.” (Spector & McCarthy, 1995, p. 235) B) Focusing on customer service gives the organization a good image. “Everything the customer sees, hears, touches smells, and tastes creates an impression—“everything speaks.” Customers may not consciously pick up on every detail, but, make no mistake about it, an impression is made.” (Snow & Yanovitch, 2010, p. 7) C) Focusing on customer service prevents waste. “Putting all the emphasis on the customer’s need and continually improving how we meet those needs—that’s how we have been able to eliminate waste from our systems.” (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 73) D) Focusing on customer service provides lessons for the department. “The additional benefit of maintaining a database of breakdowns is that it affords the opportunities to be proactive so that processes can be modified and training can be delivered.” (Michelli, 2008, p. 156). The costs of bad customer service include. A) Unacceptable customer service gives negative impact. “Bad news lingers; when problems are not resolved satisfactorily, they also produce people who are vocally negative about the brand. (Michelli, 2008, p. 182). B) Unacceptable customer service issues must be planned for. “Service breakdowns will occur in all businesses that are vulnerable to the inevitable shortcomings of humans. But trusting environments encourage staff to quickly circumvent blame and move constructively in the direction of problem resolution (Michelli, 2008, p. 111). C) Unacceptable customer service is felt when customers feel staff doesn’t care. “Then it hit us—the trouble with U.S. education is not unlike the trouble with typical U.S. customer service: both are rooted in apathy and a “that’s someone else’s problem” mentality” (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 271). D) Unacceptable customer service causes the loss of customers. “The results of a recent customer service study
IDENTIFYING THE CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF A CUSTOMER

conducted by Coldwell Banker indicated “a strong correlation between the quality of a company’s customer service and it’s long-term success.” (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 65)

Private industry has their idea of common components of a tracking system. They include; A) This expert say use teams. Teams have a variety of roles and potential uses. We have set them up to examine customer complaints and determine their root causes. (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 97). B) Another component is everyone doing and knowing their job. Leaders have to collect data from their people, analyze the data for trends, and have the front line help remedy broken processes. Senior managers are most effective when they perform “the 3C’s”: collecting, compiling, and communicating quality performance data (Michelli, 2008, p. 157). C) Nordstrom’s most important component is making sure the customer is always first. “The only thing we have going for us is the way we take care of our customers,” explained Johnson, “and the people who take care of the customers are on the floor.” (Spector & McCarthy, 1995, pp. 98-99) D) The monitoring system should include the entire process.

We can’t emphasize strongly enough the importance of implementing some system for gauging quality level, process time, customer satisfaction, and product cost, as well as negative elements such as errors of judgment and process mistakes. All too often, companies give little thought to measuring processes in their entirety, even though doing so need not be a complicated task (Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 208).

E) Marinucci believes the biggest component is asking your customer. Marinucci says, “You can find out what your “customers” think the same way any other business would, by asking them!” (Marinucci, 2009)
The results of the researcher’s survey didn’t always agree with the private industry. When looking at a team vs. supervisory lead process, the fire service said two-to-one it should be supervisor lead. But the fire service agreed that the process must be process and customer focused. Seventy-nine percent of responders said the tracking system should be customer focused and seventy-one percent said the system should be process driven. Finally the fire service agreed that information is important from the customer. Sixty-six percent of the respondents stated that comments tracking must be issue focused. In order to understand issues information is the key.

Where the fire service seems to fall short is with tracking the complaints. The Ritz-Carlton has taken the flaws they see to heart and track them. In a playful spirit, Ritz-Carlton has identified one guest it doesn’t want in its hotel: MR.BIV. The Ladies and Gentlemen are urged to immediately track the presence of MR. BIV, and acronym for mistakes, rework, breakdowns, inefficiencies, and variations (Michelli, 2008, p. 155). In the book Unleashing Excellence, Snow and Yanovitch say;

Without accountability it’s easier for employees to just keeping doing things the way they’ve always done them. In fact, we can confidently state that the number one reason we’ve seen service initiatives fail to achieve desired objectives is a lack of accountability. Service excellence behaviors must become nonnegotiable. (Snow & Yanovitch, 2010, p. 202).

Yet in the survey conducted by the researcher 44% of the respondents, from the fire service, do not have a system for tracking customer complaints. Another 44% place these comments in
files, which do not allow for finding trends. The remaining respondents use a software program or database for tracking comments.

Common flaws with tracking systems identified by the private sector include;

The Ritz-Carlton has taken the flaws they see to heart and track them. In a playful spirit, Ritz-Carlton has identified one guest it doesn’t want in its hotel: MR.BIV. The Ladies and Gentlemen are urged to immediately track the presence of MR. BIV, and acronym for mistakes, rework, breakdowns, inefficiencies, and variations (Michelli, 2008, p. 155). The lack of communication and consistency is a huge flaw.

It is imperative that process improvements be discussed between management and employees. Process improvements may also require changes in management policy. Management needs to assume a proactive role by asking the following questions:

(Capodagli & Jackson, 2007, p. 162)

Flaws also include being too detailed. “You can get to the point where you saturate yourselves with information, and you get paralyzed. We have more interest in broader categories, rather than analyzing and assessing blame. Jim Wimberly, Executive Vice President of Operations, Southwest Airlines (Gittell, 2003, p. 139)

Without accountability it’s easier for employees to just keeping doing things the way they’ve always done them. In fact, we can confidently state that the number one reason we’ve seen service initiatives fail to achieve desired objectives is a lack of accountability. Service excellence behaviors must become nonnegotiable (Snow & Yanovitch, 2010, p. 202).

Lacking a plan is a huge flaw.
IDENTIFYING THE CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF A CUSTOMER

The fire prevention bureau needs to have a very specific process for the input and processing of a complaint for several reasons. The first is that having a standardized approach encourages uniformity in the handling of the problem. There is less room for variation. So, here is a series of questions for you as an Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). Do you have a:

- Written policy on how to handle complaints?
- Specific form that you document the complaint?
- Means of identifying the complaining party?
- File where you keep the outcome of a complaint?

The customer comment survey identified a glaring difference when it came to flaws from the fire service. Ten respondents identified we don’t have a system, comments are not data based or that follow up on comments are not made. Five others advised N/A or skipped the question. One each stated they don’t have enough manpower or are not timely in their response to customers.

Author’s interpretation of results

The author agrees with the importance of customer service to both the private sector and fire service. Both businesses and the fire service needs backing from their customers to survive. The fire services survival comes on two fronts. First the political reality that bosses will not accept constant complaints form services that fire departments survive. No fire chief can expect to hold onto their position if the community is continuing to call regarding issues. Second is the need for budgetary support. The fire service relies on its customer to support the future endeavors of the department. Addition of staffing, replacement of equipment and expansion of
services all take support from their citizens, who expect good customer service from them. Support of the department is gained by limiting the costs and increasing the benefits of good customer service. While it’s understood that service breakdowns will happen, planning on the breakdowns and focusing on the customer will give the fire service a good image. While it’s known that unacceptable service creates a negative impact, focusing on customer service provides lessons for the department to turn into a positive image. While focusing on customer service takes time, it also prevents waste by being proactive to the needs of your customers.

The fire service really missed the mark when it came to the results of research questions asked by the author. Of the three questions, the question what are the common components of a customer comment tracking system was probably answered the best. It was answered the best because the fire service at least had answers to this question. But unfortunately the fire service chose just about every option possible. The twenty-six respondents were asked what type of focus the system should have. Thirteen advised an employee focus, nineteen advised a process focus, seventeen advised a customer focus, ten advised a policy focus and sixteen advised an issue focus. The author believes to be effective, the system must be policy focused. This will allow for consistency, accountability and continued improvement. The policy to be effective should explain the importance of the customer, the employee and the process that will be used to track customer comments.

The question how do other organizations track customer comments showed the author where the fire service biggest issue was. Twenty-three of the twenty-six respondents stated they do not track comments, place them in a file or skipped the question. How are we supposed to improve and find trends if comments are not tracked or not data based? Placing items in a file,
which the author is assuming is a personnel file allows for one trend. Is an employee getting a large quantity of commendations or complaints? This trend will not allow for the department to focus on continued improvement through tracking of customer comments. This also lead to the out of touch answers to the question, what are common identified flaws of customer tracking systems. Sixteen of the twenty-six responses or sixty-two percent of the answers included manpower, no system, comments not data based, not timely, N/A or skipped the question. What they are saying is we don’t care or aren’t willing to take the time to be proactive with customer comments. We cannot be satisfied with the results of this survey.

Organizational Implications

In order to implement a customer comment tracking system, fire administration is going to have to take the lead in the program. The program will have to be explained to all staff. This explanation will need to stress that this is not a system being set up to discipline personnel. This system is being setup to learn from our mistakes and maximize our successes. The program will hinge on the ability of our city communication department to work closely with fire administration to setup, monitor and reset the customer comment survey to try and gain the most accurate information as possible. Administrative staff will have to take on the added role if inputting data and performing random sampling of services provided. Finally the entire department will have to take the lessons learned from the trends seen and maintain them or change them depending upon the positive or negative nature of analysis of information.

Recommendations
The Cedar Park Fire Department needs a tracking system that fixes its problem and fits its budget issues. The system will have three parts. 1) A customer service tracking policy. The policy should be based on the core components found in this study. They components include; A) Everyone doing and knowing their job, B) Putting the customer first without overlooking the importance of your employees. C) Continuous improvement, D) Having a complete process, E) Asking your customers what they think. The policy must also look to avoid the common flaws scene in tracking systems. These flaws include; A) Lacking a plan, B) Not tracking the comments, C) Lack of communication, consistency and accountability, D) Not teaching that everyone is responsible and F) Being too detailed. By concentrating the organization focus on these components and the flaws to avoid, the customer tracking should create a system that fixes the current issues of not being able to track and trend customer comments. 2) Surveying your customers to verify how you are doing? Due to limited funding we must take advantage of the equipment and personnel we currently have. The limited funding does not allow the department to consider purchasing tracking software. Also, while we are receiving complaints, there are not that many so manual input of information could be effective. The author recommends a multi tier gathering system. First a link to the department website will be created asking for customer comments. This link will be added to business cards, office letters, inspection reports and office emails asking for comments regarding our service. The link will open a short and easy survey which will include the following questions; A) Date of Service? B) What type of service did we provide you today? Answers will include; emergency call, city event, tour or demo, training class, fire inspection, plan review or other (please specify). C) How was our service? Answers will include; excellent, good, fair, poor or unsatisfactory. D) How can we improve our service to you? Answer will be typed comments. E) What did we do well while serving you? Answer will
be typed comment. F) Please provide your name and phone # or email address so we can contact them with further questions. The second tier of the gathering system will be manual input of customer comments received outside of the survey and random phone calls or emails to people who schedule events or use fire department services. For most of these customers, we already have contact information from when they originally schedule the event. This two tier system will hopefully acquire enough data to be successful in trending. Excel will be used to database the information for searching. Examples of the headers used could include the following and any other information the Fire Chief deems necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type Service</th>
<th>How did we do?</th>
<th>Improve</th>
<th>Sustain</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
<th>Personnel Involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3) The final part of the system will be learning from your trends and training your staff to correct improper service and continue good customer service. Training will include reviewing the positive and negative comments received so crews can grow and learn from their experiences with the customers.
Bibliography


Appendix 1 Customer Service Survey

1. Default Section

1. What are common components of a customer comment tracking system? (check all that apply)
   - What are common components of a customer comment tracking system? (check all that apply)
   - issue focus
   - team lead
   - customer focus
   - process focus
   - employee focus
   - policy focus
   - supervisor lead

   Other (please specify)

2. How does your organization track customer comments? (check all that apply)
   - How does your organization track customer comments? (check all that apply)
   - software program
   - database
   - files
   - do not track comments

   Other (please specify)

3. Have you identified any flaws in your customer tracking system?

   Have you identified any flaws in your customer tracking system?

   Done
## Appendix 2 Survey Results

### Tracking customer service issues

#### Response Summary

**Total Started Survey:** 26  
**Total Completed Survey:** 26 (100%)

1. **What are common components of a customer comment tracking system? (check all that apply)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>team lead</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervisor lead</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employee focus</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>customer focus</td>
<td>79.2%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>process focus</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy focus</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>issue focus</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other (please specify)** We send a customer service survey randomly to medical patients we encounter. 1
2. How does your organization track customer comments? (check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>software program</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>database</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>files</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do not track comments</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>replies Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Excel and reports made for board. Fri, Oct 15, 2010 2:40 PM
2. Comment card Wed, Oct 13, 2010 11:56 AM
3. Have you identified any flaws in your customer tracking system?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. lack of usable data</td>
<td>Sat, Oct 16, 2010 7:59 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Because it's random we are only sending out less than a third of our runs.</td>
<td>Fri, Oct 15, 2010 2:40 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. non existent</td>
<td>Thu, Oct 14, 2010 6:13 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Flaws are usually identified as not being timely due to shift schedule and closing the loop with all involved.</td>
<td>Thu, Oct 14, 2010 5:28 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sampling is difficult without a tightly defined target audience. Sample pool typically too small. Questions must be concise; broad or vague questions lead to broad and vague comments without any real value and no measurable data.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 2:31 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Other than the fact that we don’t have one?…No.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 1:14 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Need to have one.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 12:22 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. personnel approach to patients</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 11:56 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Does not allow an easy way for my customers to report good and bad items to me.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 11:32 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Not really enough comments (positive or negative) to create flaws.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 11:10 AM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Have you identified any flaws in your customer tracking system?

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 10:21 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Yes. Follow up is not documented and filed. Need to convert to some database and/or software program.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 10:18 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>We don't have a formalized customer tracking system</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 9:51 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>It is still in its infancy stages so it is too early to determine.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 9:47 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>We do not have a database so we are unable to measure results of solutions that we implement other than anecdotal responses.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 9:47 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Getting back to customer in timely manner if needed, and the day to day computer issues.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 9:22 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>difficult to track trends</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 9:18 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>not yet</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 9:17 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>DO not have one to identify any in flaws in. We need one though.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 9:15 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 9:09 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Lack of a specific system or process</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 7:17 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Do not currently have one.</td>
<td>Wed, Oct 13, 2010 6:04 AM</td>
<td>Find...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>