

# The Analysis of the Consumer Satisfaction with the Quality of Logistics Services in the DPD Company

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Customer service is one of the leading elements of modern logistics. The issues connected with the quality of services as well as to the level of customer service are the subject of interest of many researchers. Based on the literature of the subject, it can be safely stated that the most of the available papers focus on the theoretical aspect of this matter. Therefore, in the following work one can see an attempt of presenting the process of implementing logistic customer service based on one of the leading courier companies in Poland. Dynamic Parcel Distribution (hereinafter referred to as DPD) is a company that owns nearly 30% of shares in the Polish courier market. The significant position of the national leader in the courier service business obliges the company to conduct the responsible and efficient customer service that is adjusted to the demands of the buyers. The purpose of this study was to investigate how logistic customer service improves the relationship between company and its customers. The evaluation of research findings will result in proposing solutions that will aim to improve the processes connected with the customer service in the DPD Company.

**Keywords:** customer, service, logistic company.

## 1. THE ESSENCE OF THE LOGISTIC CUSTOMER SERVICE

Increasing demands of customers as well as increasing choice of suppliers force companies to focus on the sources of competitive advantage. Courier companies have to know how to distinguish themselves from the competition in the eyes of customers and try to build stable relations.

According to the theory of maximizing utility, the customer will strive to shape the cart of purchased goods and services so that the use thereof will lead to the maximum benefit for the buyer. In the era of global information exchange and Internet access, the information flow is much faster, on an unprecedented scale. Before the right choice is made, a consumer has the possibility to get acquainted with the opinions about the desired product or service. The choice of the most advantageous offer is definitely easier thanks to a number of websites offering the comparison of the sought goods and services. In order to maximize sales and thus maximize profits, businesses should perform customer service according to one's requirements and even exceed them.

Due to the increasing costs of acquiring new customers in many sectors, it is necessary to maintain the existing contractors. Loyalty in the eyes of business customers can be built by providing customers with the services and products of the highest quality and affordability. These types of activities may lead to the growth of the satisfaction of the clients. The high level of satisfaction of customers with the goods and the services can be achieved by [6]:

- Constant, unchanging and high quality of offered products,
- Competitive price and convenient form of payment,
- Availability of the product at the time and place required by the consumer,
- Comprehensive and ethical service,
- The possibility to consult for the choice of optimal type of product or service,
- Access to the trial version of the product (free of charge trial version of the service);
- Performing the service in full accordance with the contract,

- Quick response to complaints and comments of the customers,
- Immediate improvement of detected issues,
- Carrying out the informative and promotional campaigns related to the sold goods.

A company can gain good reputation in the eyes of the customers which can further on result in another purchase, by applying at least one of the aforementioned methods. Customers are willing to recommend the products or services which they believe are worth considering. This relation works in an opposite direction as well, especially when a dissatisfied customer conducts "negative campaigning".

To conclude, we can say that the effective logistic support, defined as a whole of the actions taken to deliver the product in a way that is consistent with the expectations of the customers, has an important role in building the competitive advantage. The level of customer service in the company has a direct impact on its market share, total logistics costs, and profitability [8]. Based on the research conducted by Adams B. Steven, one can state that there is a link between customer service, consumer satisfaction, and the level of profitability [7].

The quality of a logistic customer service can be considered by regarding many aspects. Table 1 [1, 2] presents the short characteristics of key factors of the customer service discussed in this publication.

Table 1. Main customer service factors [1, 2].

Customer service factors	Description
Waiting time	The time from receiving the order to delivering the finished product to the customer.
Flexibility	The ability to change the already made order in terms of quantity and the ability to adjust the delivery time to the requirements of the buyer.
Precision	Proper quality, product, price, and delivery of the product with documents, receipt, and warranty card.
Reliability	The ability to deliver the ordered goods to the recipient without delays.
Asset ratio	Percentage of the products available on request.
Frequency	Number of goods delivered to the customer within the expected time.
Organizational availability	The possibility to make queries regarding the services and offered products.
Managing the process of complaints	Solving problems or issues and analyzing their causes.

By analyzing the customer service factors in Table 1 [1, 2], one can say that efficient customer service is a realization of received orders in a manner consistent with the obtained information, in the time required by the customer and in an acceptable rate. If logistic customer service is indeed efficient, then according to the above assumption, the customer will certainly be satisfied. The satisfaction of the customer is influenced by the range of factors such as the quality of the service, the emotional mood of the customer, social relations with the company, and prior expectations towards the product or service [4]. The omission of one of these elements may result in a negative response from the buyer and a critical assessment of the performed services. To this end, the companies are pursuing strategies in order to focus on the needs of customers, what results in better fulfillment of the crucial consumer demands. Juga, Juntunen, and Grant believe that the companies which pursue strategies that orientate the needs of clients, use the collected marketing data and information to develop new services and understand how customers evaluate their services. Employees of these companies are more focused on their clients than employees of the competitive companies. They believe that their businesses are mainly for the service of the customers, and their needs are always in the first place [3].

In the pursuit of maximum customer satisfaction of offered services, one shall remember that the level of satisfaction is also often dependent on the subjective assessment of a particular buyer. Companies are increasingly trying to influence the level of customer satisfaction while purchasing the goods. Currently, a very good example of such phenomenon are the shopping malls, in which customers experience specially selected scent right after entering the shop. This method affects the sense of smell. Its aim is to induce in the person the desired emotional state that is beneficial for shopping. Large-area retail chains apply other tactics that is based on offering customers a range of promotions and discounts, which often encourage the customer to make more purchases that originally planned.

Logistic customer service is an advanced mechanism aimed at maximizing the satisfaction of the customers with the offered serviced and building a lasting relationship with them to achieve the highest possible revenue. The key element of this mechanism is the continuous maintenance of activities aimed at improving the quality of the

serviced provided in the area of customer service. The studies conducted by R. Leauschner, F. Charvet, and D.S Rogers indicate that through efficient logistics the company can create a unique value that will be difficult to imitate by competitors [3, 5]. This is why the purpose of this study is to determine the current level of customer service at DPD. By carrying out this analysis, it will be possible to identify areas that are ineffective and propose ways to correct them.

## 2. THE ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

In order to evaluate the level of customer service in the DPD Poland company, a questionnaire survey was conducted. 51 randomly chosen respondents participated in the survey. At the further stage of the survey people who use the courier services of DPD, were distinguished. The age structure of the examined people is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Main customer service factors.

Age	Number of people	Percentage share
Under 18	1	1.96
19-25	46	90.2%
26-35	4	7.84%

Source: own preparation.

The data observed in Table 2 indicate that the largest group of respondents were mainly young people aged 19-25 (90.2%). The remaining interviewed people were in the age group up to 18 years old (1.96%) and aged 26 to 35 years old (7.84%). As for the education, the largest group of respondents were those with secondary education (68.63%) and with higher education (27.45%). The number of people participating in the study with vocational or primary education was the smallest and jointly amounted to 3.92%. Of all respondents participating in the survey, 30 answered the optional question regarding the monthly income at the household. Half of them declared that they would earn no more than 1,500 PLN (50%). Other respondents' income was in the range of 1,500-2,000 PLN (26.67%) and above 3,000 PLN (20%). One person declared the income between 2,000 and 2,500 PLN.

While summarizing the data presented here, it is difficult not to notice that this study was mainly attended by young people, mostly with secondary education and low income in the household.

The first issue raised in the conducted survey was the determination of frequency of using courier services. The results are presented in Figure 1.

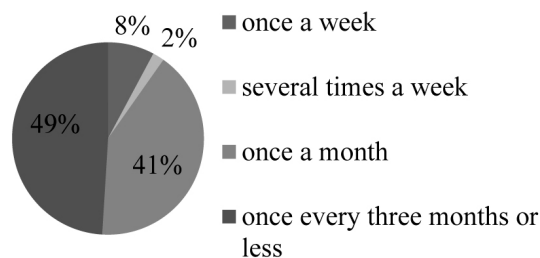


Fig. 1. The frequency of using the courier services. Source: own preparation.

The results included in Figure 1 show that almost half of the people (49%) use the courier services once every three months or less. Not so fewer respondents (41%) use the courier at least once a month. Another group, as far as the frequency of using the courier services is concerned, is the group of people who use the services at least once a week (7.84%), and the last group includes people who use courier services several times a week (1.96%).

The purpose of elaborating the answers to the next question was to determine the most common way of ordering a courier. The results have been depicted in Figure 2.

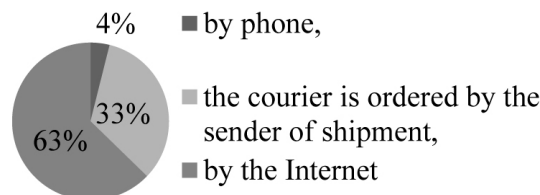


Fig. 2. The method of ordering the courier services. Source: own preparation.

The vast majority of people (63%) prefer to order a courier via the Internet. The next larger group is the people who wait for the courier (33%), which is the courier ordered by the sender of shipment. The smallest group of respondents (4%) order courier services by the phone. In the survey there was also the possibility to order the courier via e-mail, but none of the respondents did choose it.

Another raised issue was the source of the information about the offers of courier companies. The relations of the sources of information were presented in Figure 3.

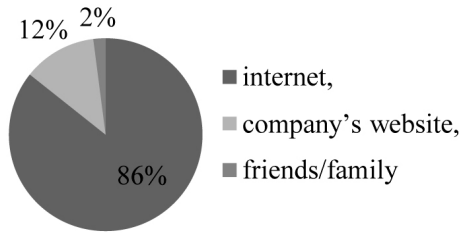


Fig. 3. The most common sources of information on the offer of courier companies.  
Source: own preparation.

As it turns out, the most popular method of both ordering courier services as well as acquiring information regarding their offer is via the Internet. The biggest group of people (86%) seek information on the particular courier company on more than just one website. A significant minority (12%) uses the home page of the company whose services they are interested in. The smallest proportion (2%) are people, who gather information about the offers of companies from family and friends. None of the respondents looked for information about the courier companies in the press or on the television.

In order to obtain information concerning the frequency of using the services of offered courier companies, the following question was asked. The results of the analysis of the question given to respondents are in Figure 4.

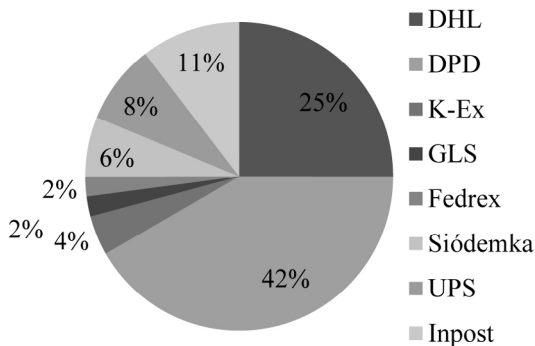


Fig. 4. The frequency of using the services of selected courier services.  
Source: own preparation.

Based on the results it is easy to notice the most of the respondents use DPD courier services (42%). Quite large group of people use the services offered by DHL (25%). The minority respondents use such companies as Inpost (11%), UPS (8%), 7 (6%), K-Ex (4%), GLS (2%), and Fedex (2%).

The next issue covered the criteria of selecting a courier company. The results on the presented question are available in Figure 5.

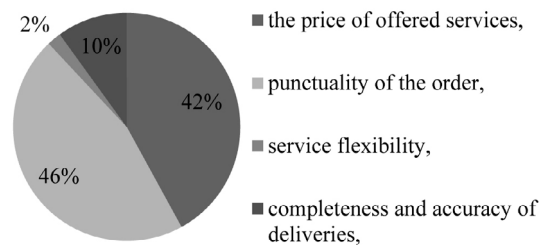


Fig. 5. The criteria of selecting a courier company.  
Source: own preparation.

While choosing a courier company respondents focused on two factors. The first one is the compliance with the punctuality of the order (46%), and the second, but no less important, is the price offered by the courier company (42%). These are rather large indicators of responses. If couriers focused on these factors, they would be able to satisfy the expectations of more than 80% of costumers. A significantly smaller proportion of respondents believe that the completeness and accuracy of deliveries are the most important factors in choosing a courier service (10%). Even fewer people have opted for customer service flexibility (2%).

In many forms regarding the customer service in the courier company, the question on the level of provided services arises. It can be often found while making an order through many websites. This was also a concern of another question. The results are shown in Figure 6.

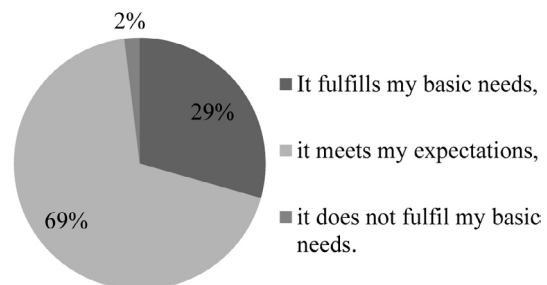


Fig. 6. The level of courier service.  
Source: own preparation.

As you can see from Figure 6, the vast majority of people were satisfied with the level of provided services by the courier company, that is, they met their expectations (69%). Another group of people included those people, whose basic needs were fulfilled (29%). Only a small percentage of respondents believe that the courier company does not meet their basic needs (2%). None of surveyed people said that the level of service exceeds customer expectations.

Another issue moved in the conducted research was the investigation of the probability of a situation, in which the respondents were dissatisfied with the level of customer service represented by the courier company. The ratio of people unhappy and happy therewith is shown in Figure 7.

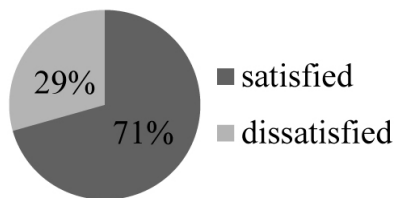


Fig. 7. The customer satisfaction ratio.  
Source: own preparation.

The results in Figure 7 show that most of surveyed people (71%) are satisfied with customer service. The group of dissatisfied people is significantly smaller (29%), yet such customers exist. In order to know the reason for respondents' dissatisfaction, they were asked to provide at least one reason for the negative opinion. As it turned out, some of the stated reasons repeated. The most common issue regarded the time "long waiting time" or "long delivery time". Three respondents gave the same answer, in which they expressed dissatisfaction with "not delivering the package on time". The incident also happened to a person, who had a "long waiting time and damaged package" problem. It wasn't the only person, whose "ordered product was damaged during the shipment", because there were 4 other people with similar responses. The last known reason for expressing a negative opinion was "no contact with the courier to determine the convenient receipt time".

The purpose of developing the answer to the next question was to determine the main reason for choosing DPD's offer for the carrier. The results are presented in Figure 8.

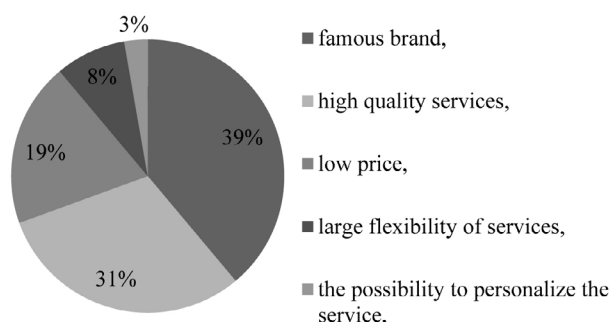


Fig. 8. The reasons for choosing DPD for the carrier.  
Source: own preparation.

The most important element for respondents while choosing the company's offer was a brand that in a symbolic way reflects the quality of the products and suggests the received benefits. It is highly probable why the largest part of the group (39%) pays attention thereto in the first place. Nevertheless, another important reason why surveyed people choose the DPD company is the high quality of the offered services (31%). Another most common factor chosen by almost 1/5 of respondents (19%) is low price of the services when compared to other companies. The rest of the people pay attention to the flexibility of the services (8%) and the possibility of personalizing the service (3%).

The goal of another question asked in the next questionnaire was to determine the ratio of the people who had any problems with DPD delivery to the people, who have never encountered any difficulties with them. The quantitative proportions are shown in Figure 9.

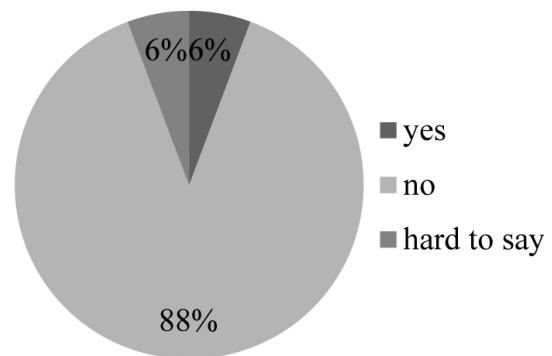


Fig. 9. The comparison of the number of people having problems with the order execution in DPD.  
Source: own preparation.

On the pie chart, it is clear that the vast majority of people (88%) have never encountered any difficulties with DPD. The equal amount of people (6%) have responded that they had problems with implementation of the order in this company, and that it is hard to say.

In order to find the answer about the most common unpleasant incidents, the respondents were asked the question regarding this topic. The results are presented in Figure 10.

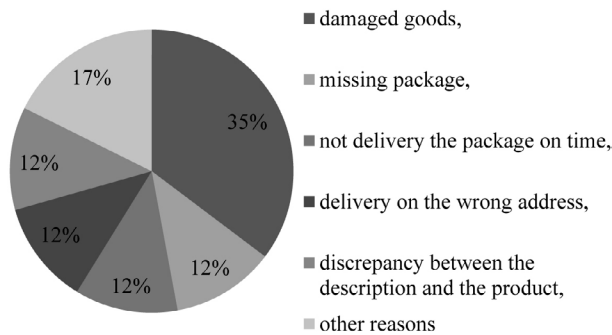


Fig. 10. The reasons for DPD order processing problems.

Source: own preparation.

Respondents reported that damaged goods (35%) were considered as the most common reason. The realization of shipment was not successful for other reasons. The second most common one was the lack of receipt or invoice (17%). Four other groups stated that the biggest problem of order realization in DPD was a missing package, not delivery on time, delivery to the wrong address, or its discrepancy with the description (12%).

To obtain information on how often the service performed by the DPD courier did not meet customer expectations, the following question has been asked to respondents. Their responses are depicted in Figure 11.

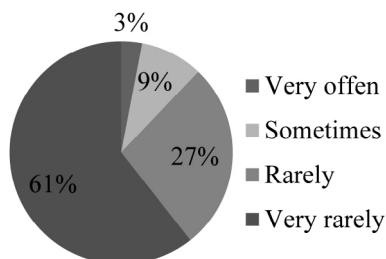


Fig. 11. Frequency of failing the customer's expectations at DPD Company.

Source: own preparation.

As Figure 11 indicates, according to the majority of respondents the DPD company has been failing their expectations very rarely (61%) or rarely (27%). A small number of people responded that it sometimes happens (9%), and only a few people stated that it is very often (3%).

The people who stated that the company sometimes or very often does meet their expectations received another question. The following question was to depict the main reason why the customers were dissatisfied with the expectations. Figure 12 presents the results of their responses.



Fig. 12. The reasons for lack of satisfaction with the provided service.

Source: own preparation.

Among presented reasons, the majority of respondents expressed their satisfaction with the damaged package (33%). Not much less part (29%) chose delivery of the package after deadline. Another group of people (10%) indicated other reasons for dissatisfaction, for example it was a missing package and late delivery. The parts of respondents very close to the earlier one (9%) had their difficulties with contacting the courier and delivering the package at the wrong address. The smallest percentage (5%), however still important, regarded the dissatisfied people due to errors in documentations or missing packages.

At the end of the research, the respondents were asked to evaluate the logistic customer service in the DPD company based on several chosen criteria, presented in Figure 13.

The answers could have been given in a five-tier scale – the evaluation of the selected criteria ranged from very good to very bad. The vast majority of opinions were very good and good. The highest amount of “very good” evaluations was in case of the completeness of delivery (44.12%). Competence of employees (38.24%) and accuracy of the delivery (35.29%) were not much worse. As “good” opinion, the biggest amount regards the product availability (62.50%). The biggest number of average opinions concerns the competence of employees (20.59%) and flexibility of the delivery (18.18%). At the same level of opinion, average that is, are the frequency, reliability, the accuracy of the delivery, as well as after-sales services (17.65%), which include warranty, replacement of damaged parts, and complaints. However, after-sales services received the biggest number of bad opinions (5.88%). It was the only negative feedback on DPD's logistic customer service.



Fig. 13. The evaluation of selected logistic customer service criteria in DPD.

Source: own preparation

### 3. SUMMARY

The main goal of logistic customer service is the ability to satisfy the key needs of consumers by proper organization. The company focused on a development shall strive to constant improvement of the quality of provided services. As the results indicate, people evaluated the level of DPD's customer service relatively well. The participants of the research stated that the most important criteria for choosing a courier company is the price and timeliness of the order realisation. The main reason for customer dissatisfaction with DPD services were issues related to late deliveries or damaged goods. The last question of the survey had a significant impact on familiarizing the companies with the detailed feedback on the actions that could improve processes related to the DPD's customer service. What is more, respondents offered such solutions as:

- Reducing the cost of shipping parcels;
- Increasing the number of DPD pickup points;
- Additional staff training;
- Employing more staff;
- Increasing the safety of the packages;
- Working on the culture and the competence of couriers.

In order to improve the quality of customer service, respondents recommended, in particular, to hire more staff and to increase the number of places, where they can pick and ship the package. They also recognized the importance of the competences of the employed staff. A courier is a person with whom the customer has direct contact.

The consumer's perception of the level of provided services is dependent on them to a great degree. It is not difficult to draw the conclusion that in order for DPD to achieve a significant competitive advantage in the market, they will be forced to take actions to improve the services and, above other things, to improve the competence of employees in relation with customers.

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