



## DELIVERING A CONSISTENT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AT THE PETROL PUMP

It's no easy task for petroleum retailers. More than in any other sector their shops and forecourts need to service a diverse range of shopper missions across all times of day, so

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delivering a consistent customer experience presents a significant challenge. The typical forecourt might contain a mix of commercial, commuter and leisure motorists, along with pedestrians at any given time; all of whom want different things, with varying amounts to spend. Proximity, price and loyalty cards always feature prominently on the list of footfall drivers in any forecourt shopper survey, but after that forecourt appearance, quality of offer and customer service tend to be the most voiced factors in defining brand choice and loyalty. So given the clear importance of both appearance and service, how well do the petroleum brands understand their performance, and how consistent is the customer experience from one forecourt to the next?

### **What really matters to the average motorist?**

Despite ongoing competitive pressure on margins, petroleum brands continue to invest in revamping their retail estates in an effort to capture a larger share of the ever-increasing number of motorists. Big brands dominate the roadside and their forecourts and retail offer have moved on a long way in the last decade. On the whole, they manage to provide clean and safe environments to fill up, with a huge array of food and goods in well-presented stores. But equally, we can be quickly turned off by long waits at the pump or queues in store, a dirty pump handle or overflowing bins on the forecourt. Add in out-of-order coffee machines or lack of a greeting at the till you can see why even the most basic elements of the refuelling experience can make the difference between a motorist revisiting the same brand next time they need to fill up, or hanging on until the next garage.

### How best to measure what matters?

At GfK we have a wealth of experience in the Petroleum retail sector built upon our deep Shopper understanding through segmentation and shopper mission work, digital advertising effectiveness, forecourt auditing and extensive customer service tracking across multiple geographies. The huge range of customer segments, missions and forecourt formats adds a level of complexity when considering the optimum research design but, in our view, the best programmes are those that can measure both the service essentials consistently and combine different streams of research activity, all of which drive local level actions. There's no one size fits all approach but typically the optimum mix will consist of;

- **Forecourt & Retail audits:** checking that all the key customer essentials on the forecourt and in-store are clean, stocked and functioning (from pumps through to toilet facilities)
- **Mystery Shopping:** covert checking of the entire forecourt and shop experience to understand how staff at sites are performing
- **Customer feedback:** the all-important capture of customer satisfaction data as to understand what's good and what's bad in the eyes of the customer
- **Tactical deep dive activity:** ad-hoc studies to better understand issues unearthed by the above activity, and explore better conversion opportunities with particular customer segments

Pulling all of these data streams together is not always straightforward but the most successful customer experience programmes form a common measurement currency within the business and one which is relevant to senior management and forecourt managers alike. Aggregated and trended results highlight consistent problem sites or issues needing to be addressed, whilst the granular site level data drives local actions to improve the customer service of that location.

### Questions? Contact us!

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### About GfK

GfK is the trusted source of relevant market and consumer information that enables its clients to make smarter decisions. More than 13,000 market research experts combine their passion with GfK's long-standing data science experience. This allows GfK to deliver vital global insights matched with local market intelligence from more than 100 countries. By using innovative technologies and data sciences, GfK turns big data into smart data, enabling its clients to improve their competitive edge and enrich consumers' experiences and choices.

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