



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Chaat Butsunturn, 415-391-7900 x1214

cbutsunturn@kearnswest.com

OR Amanda Piasecki, 202-535-7800 x1114

apiasecki@kearnswest.com

ACSI Launches New Website Satisfaction Index

*American Customer Satisfaction Index for Websites in 33 Industries:
Financial Services and Shipping Lead; Social Media Lags*

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (March 25, 2014) – A new measure from the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) rates user website experience across 33 different consumer industries, offering a first-of-its-kind index of website satisfaction at national, sector and industry levels. Inaugural results show that aggregate website satisfaction is 78.2 on ACSI’s 100-point scale, which stands 2% higher than overall customer satisfaction for all measured companies (at 76.7).

The website scores are based on more than 25,000 interviews and encompass user experience with websites of more than 200 companies within the 33 industry categories covered by ACSI throughout the year. Credit unions earn the top score of 86, followed by consumer shipping and banks at 85. In contrast, social media—which include companies with an enormous user base—perform less well with an ACSI score of 68.

“The huge amount of traffic on social media websites creates a user base where preferences, abilities and interests vary greatly—unlike the user base of a credit union, for example” says Claes Fornell, ACSI Chairman and founder. “The large number of users also has led to a degree of monopoly power such that the threat of user defection due to dissatisfaction is, at least for now, not very potent.”

A website is a business necessity, but for some industries it is more critical to the overall purchase process than for others. Website satisfaction by industry tends to correlate with overall satisfaction, but not always. Two of the top three industries for website satisfaction—credit unions and consumer shipping—also do well in terms of overall customer satisfaction. Banks, on the other hand, show an overall ACSI score of 78, which lags the industry’s website score (85).

“The websites of banks, airlines and hotels add a great deal of value to overall customer satisfaction,” says Fornell. “For these industries, website satisfaction is much higher than overall satisfaction, but it doesn’t make up for weaknesses in other areas of the customer experience.”

Airline passengers are pleased with their carriers' websites (80), but not with their flying. At 69, airlines rank close to the bottom for customer satisfaction among all industries and also show the biggest disparity between website and overall satisfaction (11 points). Another travel-related category, hotels, scores high for website satisfaction (84) but mid-range for overall customer satisfaction (77).

2014 WEBSITE SATISFACTION INDEX

Credit Unions	86
Consumer Shipping	85
Banks	85
Hotels	84
Full-Service Restaurants	83
Property & Casualty Insurance	83
Limited-Service Restaurants	82
Food Manufacturing, Soft Drinks, Breweries (combined)	82
Automobiles & Light Vehicles	81
Life Insurance	81
Apparel, Athletic Shoes (combined)	81
Department & Discount Stores	80
Airlines	80
Internet Brokerage	80
Specialty Retail Stores	79
Health & Personal Care Stores	79
Personal Computers	79
Supermarkets	79
National Website Satisfaction Index	78.2
Internet Retail	78
Televisions & Video Players, Household Appliances (combined)	78
Wireless Telephone Service	77
Cellular Telephones	77
Internet Travel	77
Internet Portals & Search Engines	76
Energy Utilities (cooperative, investor-owned, and municipal combined)	75
Computer Software	75
Ambulatory Care, Hospitals (combined)	74
Fixed-Line Telephone Service	74
Health Insurance	73
Internet News & Information	73
Subscription Television Service	72
Internet Service Providers	70
Social Media	68

“For airlines and hotels, websites are an important channel that consumers often turn to multiple times during the purchase process—from gathering information about prices to making reservations,” says David VanAmburg, ACSI Director. “For travelers, both the hotel and the airline website provide favorable experiences, whereas the hotel stay is no better than average in customer satisfaction and the flight customer satisfaction is dismal.”

Online brokerage (80) is the only Internet service that scores above the national website satisfaction average. Internet retail has modest user satisfaction (78), whereas the websites offered by brick-and-mortar retailers—including department, discount, and specialty stores; supermarkets; and drug stores—do slightly better (79).

“Websites present an opportunity for traditional retailers to go head-to-head with Web-only competitors, and the brick-and-mortar guys are doing a good job at the moment,” says VanAmburg. “With more shoppers embracing online, success for any retailer—traditional or Internet—may depend on having a top-notch website. While the in-store customer interface remains essential for traditional retailers, it does not compensate for an inferior online experience.”

For the health-related categories of ambulatory care and hospitals, website satisfaction actually trails overall patient satisfaction. For ambulatory care—which covers office visits to healthcare providers such as doctors, dentists or optometrists—patient satisfaction is quite high (82), but websites seem to be lacking (74). The two are closer for hospitals, but websites still lag by 4 points.

“With many healthcare organizations looking for greater efficiencies through Web-based patient communication channels, low website satisfaction might become problematic, especially as healthcare websites get more traffic,” says VanAmburg.

Follow the ACSI on Twitter at [@theACSI](#) and Like us on Facebook.

No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this release without the express prior written consent of ACSI LLC.

About ACSI

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) is a national economic indicator of customer evaluations of the quality of products and services available to household consumers in the United States. The ACSI uses data from interviews with roughly 70,000 customers annually as inputs to an econometric model for analyzing customer satisfaction with more than 230 companies in 43 industries and 10 economic sectors, as well as over 100 services, programs, and websites of federal government agencies.

ACSI results are released throughout the year, with all measures reported on scale of 0 to 100. ACSI data have proven to be strongly related to a number of essential indicators of micro and macroeconomic performance. For example, firms with higher levels of customer satisfaction tend to have higher earnings and stock returns relative to competitors. Stock portfolios based on companies that show strong performance in ACSI deliver excess returns in up markets as well as down markets. And, at the macro level, customer satisfaction has been shown to be predictive of both consumer spending and GDP growth.

ACSI and its logo are Registered Marks of the University of Michigan, licensed worldwide exclusively to American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC with the right to sublicense.

###