Elevate customer experience with feedback-powered transactional emails

Do you know for sure whether your transactional emails are delivering their maximum value? Have you ever signed up for your own service? If your answer is "Never", how can you be certain how people experience your product or service? How do you know if you're delivering on your brand promise until the very end of your customer's journey?

In this How to, we'll share our ideas on how you can elevate customer experience by utilizing the powerful combination of transactional emails and customer feedback.

Transactional emails:
- Are highly under-appreciated
- Beat all other emails on open and click rates
- Have great impact on how you are remembered
- Are ideal for asking for feedback

Why? Read on below.

Promotional versus transactional emails

You probably know how many promotional emails, such as newsletters, your company sent out this month. Creating the message, selecting the right customers, and scheduling the email were conscious decisions. You also know how many people opened the email, clicked through, and converted, because you checked the reporting afterwards.

It is likely you also send hundreds — maybe even thousands — of transactional emails every day. For instance welcome emails, order confirmations, shipping notifications, and more. But do you know how many you've sent and how well *they* performed?

Where marketers go wrong

Transactional emails are highly under-appreciated by most marketers. For them, these emails are only a necessary notice — a message that has to be implemented and can then be forgotten — instead of a powerful dialogue instrument and potential cost-saver. The marketer's attention goes to flashy online campaigns and bulk mails such as newsletters.

Transactional emails often lack styling, images and buttons. They look dated and deliver an inconsistent customer experience with your other marketing efforts. In our opinion, that's a big shame.

The power of transactional emails

Transactional emails beat all other emails if you look at open and click rates. They even generate greater revenue if done properly. Just take a look at this report from Experian.

"Knowing exactly what you can do to improve your processes can be a tipping point in your overall customer experience strategy"

Why are transactional emails so successful?

They are user triggered and very personal and are therefore extremely relevant. You *want* to receive these emails and you want them immediately, for instance to see if your order was processed or to be able to reset your password.

Where feedback comes in

Knowing exactly what you can do to improve your processes can be a tipping point in your overall customer experience strategy. Because of their high relevancy and utility, transactional emails are ideal touch points for creating dialogues and collecting feedback.

We believe feedback helps you better understand your customers. By better understanding them you can improve their experience. By improving their experience you will improve your results.
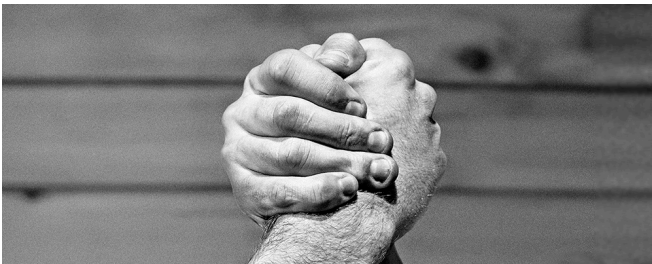
Combine the powers of transactional emails and feedback

Remember we downloaded this How to with the scenario where you might be losing potential customers - and money - due to bad customer experiences? A good way to find out if a bad customer experience has occurred is to ask for feedback from within your transactional emails.

Ask the right feedback question

You want to find out as soon as possible what causes a bad experience. To do so, ask the right question. Two examples:

1. "What do you think about this order confirmation?"
2. "The company made it easy for me to order product X"

If you ask a customer how they think about the email they received, stick with question 1. Take in mind that their feedback will not help you get the right insights to improve customer experience.

All your transactional emails are part of a process. So to improve the customer experience you should improve the entire process and choose the second question.

It can be answered with a thumbs up / thumbs down, or as an alternative, a 5-point likert scale (like the Customer Effort Score/ CES).

Asking the right questions is really essential in improving your customer's experience. If you ask the wrong questions you'll get useless information. Or no feedback at all

How Viking uses transactional emails

Our client Viking / Office Depot asks their customers after they receive their ordered product, how they rate the delivery. This way, Viking gains insight in the total customer experience, including the areas where another company is responsible for a part of the process.

How Swamp Rabbit Café uses transactional emails

After your lunch at Swamp Rabbit Café, you receive the receipt per email. The first thing you see is not the total cost of your foraging, but a question of what your experience was like.
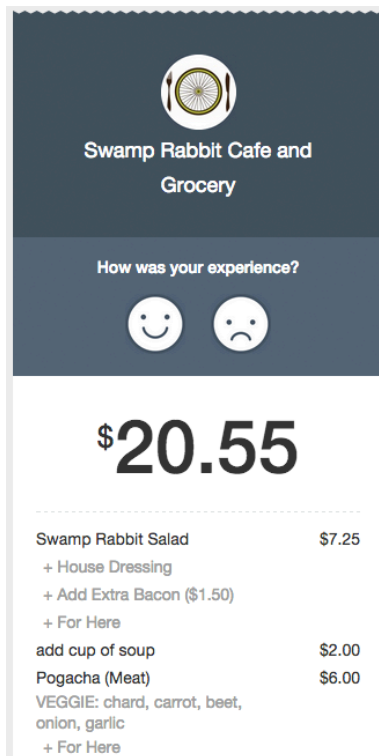
Conclusion

Think of the [peak-end rule](#), which states that 'our memory of past experience (pleasant or unpleasant) does not correspond to an average level of positive or negative feelings but to the most extreme point and the end of the episode'.

Transactional emails are important because they are often situated at the end of the experience. They therefore have great impact on how the entire company or service is perceived - and remembered.

Asking for feedback about the entire process someone went through within transactional emails will provide you essential insights on why you might be losing potential customers and money.

If your answer to the questions in the opening paragraph was "Never", then your first step after reading this article should be to start asking your customers questions in transactional emails. Go get that feedback!