



Customers who frequented self-checkout counters in supermarkets expressed greater satisfaction levels compared to those who used cashier counters.

Infocomm sector sees rise in customer satisfaction

Meanwhile, retail industry's adoption of digital channels seems to be paying off

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Singapore CUSTOMER satisfaction in Singapore's info-communications sector has improved on a year to year basis while the retail sector approximated its previous year's score.

Nonetheless, efforts by the retail sector to adopt digital channels seem to have paid off, with consumers particularly appreciative of initiatives such as self-checkout and omnichannel approaches.

This is according to the first-quarter Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore for the retail and info-communications sectors released by the Institute of Service Excellence (ISE) at the Singapore Management University.

A total of 6,070 locals and 830 tourists were surveyed in face-to-face interviews between January and April 2017.

According to the index, retail scored 72.1 points out of 100, a 0.37-point rise from 2016, while info-communications netted a statistically significant 1.10-point year-on-year improvement to 69.6 points to reach its highest rating in a decade.

Of the four sub-sectors in the retail sector – fashion apparel, supermarkets, department stores and e-commerce – department stores had the strongest performance with a marked 0.95-point annual improvement.

Said Neeta Lachmandas, executive director of the ISE: "This increase could be related to the revamps of various stores and product offerings, as well as increased promotional activities targeted at boosting sales."

Customers who frequented self-checkout counters in supermarkets also expressed greater satisfaction levels compared to those who used cashier counters.

According to the survey, respondents who shopped at online channels

belonging to physical department stores showed greater loyalty than those who shopped on e-commerce sites.

Chen Yongchang, ISE head of research and consulting, said staff can still be "a means of creating a competitive advantage" since the e-commerce advantage of product comparison may be "manifest differently" in an omnichannel environment.

Meanwhile, mobile telecom and broadband customers exhibited heightened levels of customer loyalty the longer they subscribed to a telco's services. These customers were more likely to re-contract and were less sensitive to prices, in part due to an appreciation for certain service attributes.

Service-related considerations such as "Makes the effort to understand your needs" and "Has your best interest at heart" have also surfaced as important attributes," said Mr Chen.

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