



Press Release

KiwiHost New Zealand

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Telecommunications industry delivers shocking customer service levels – annual KiwiHost Customer Service Pulse

Customer service in New Zealand is getting worse according to 36 per cent of Kiwis, while "happiness ratings" are plumbing the depths for Government, ISPs and particularly the telecommunications industry.

Of the more than 600 New Zealanders surveyed in the fourth national annual KiwiHost Customer Service Pulse, 48 per cent said they were satisfied with the level of customer service in New Zealand – a reverse on previous years when the trend was upwards (54 per cent in 2010).

KiwiHost Managing Director, Jared Brixton, says that customer service in New Zealand remains a mixed bag.

"On a company by company basis, Air New Zealand scored the highest overall Happiness Rating of 79.6 and Slingshot fared the worst with a Happiness Rating of minus 23.8 (in effect, an Unhappiness Rating)," Mr Brixton said.

At an industry level, banks, hotels and the automotive industry lead the way when it comes to happy customers.

Previous research conducted by KiwiHost has shown that respondents have a more favourable perception of the level of customer service provided by banks. This year the Banks were pipped to the post by both the automotive repair and hotels/motels industries.

The motor repair industry, hotels/motels, banking and the accounting/legal professions were the only industries that finished with a 'Happiness Rating' higher than 50 per cent.

"People used to give the banks a hard time, but that's not what the facts say at all. They have really lifted their game, but telecommunications companies continue to be consistently poor.

"You have to wonder when they will start listening. It's a bit hard to argue that they have high numbers of customers when banks and power companies do too, and don't do nearly as badly.

"Overall, if you're going to deal with telecommunications companies, Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and local government, then good luck. There doesn't look like there's much of a chance of getting good service there," he said.

Alarmingly, telecommunications, ISPs, local councils and Government agencies actually scored a negative 'Happiness Rating'.

"We didn't expect anybody to score a negative rating."

Within the telecommunications sector, 2Degrees was the clear favourite with 50 per cent satisfied respondents and the least dissatisfaction at just 12 per cent.

TelstraClear however was on the other end of the scale with 22 per cent satisfied respondents and the largest percentage of unsatisfied respondents at a massive 50 per cent, leaving them with an overall Happiness Rating of minus 18.18

"2Degrees, Vodafone and Telecom should all be congratulated for scoring a positive Happiness Rating in an industry that scored the worst overall Happiness Rating.

"However, it's clear that they still have a wee way to go. A rating of less than 40 out of 100 clearly indicates they still have work to do if they want to retain existing customers and win new ones," Mr Brixton said.



He points out that Kiwis participating in the KiwiHost Customer Service Pulse since 2008 have made it clear that their needs are not complicated and should be simple to fulfil. Again customers are saying:

- Listen to me
- Demonstrate a willingness to help me
- Take responsibility for meeting my needs

Topping the customer wish list however, and then by some margin, is the plea to 'listen and understand my needs'.

"These results should give a kick in the pants to some organisations and hopefully a realisation that service is not something that can be tucked under the rug. It is highly relevant to a company's reputation, brand and overall success.

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KIWIHOST

KiwiHost are New Zealand's largest provider of customer experience management programmes, with special emphasis on developing people and service skills across a diverse range of industries.

Since 1989 KiwiHost has developed customer service skills for more than 50,000 businesses. All this experience has taught KiwiHost that a real customer service experience is what people are looking for. The one thing that customers want most is to connect with the distinct business personality, and the only way to do that is through a company's own personal brand of customer service.